Sun Chronicle, Sunday, June 10

KP's top students to be in spotlight

By Stephen Peterson

WRENTHAM -- Sunday is the big day for King Philip Regional High School graduates after four years that at times likely seemed to drag but other times moved along too swiftly.

Valedictorian Jeffrey Yatsuhashi of Norfolk and Salutatorian Bethany Murphy of Plainville are the keynote speakers at the commencement exercises, scheduled to begin at 3 p.m. at Stonehill College in Easton.

"I'm very excited. It's been a long four years and I'm glad I get to represent my class at graduation," Yatsuhashi said.

Yatsuhashi, 18, is the son of Kathleen and Keith Yatsuhashi.

Yatsuhashi participated in the school's highly successful DECA business program for which he and other students traveled in April to Atlanta for international competition.

In fact, he is headed to Notre Dame, where he plans on studying in the School of Business.

But his favorite subject is calculus.

He played football and winning the Super Bowl the past two years is among his proudest accomplishments, adding another fond memory is practicing football with his teammates. He also took part in spring track, captaining the team.

What does Yatsuhashi attribute his success to?

"A lot of hard work, dedication and help from people around me motivating me and always supporting me," Yatsuhashi said.

He works at Dunkin' Donuts.

"I think it's a great atmosphere and I thought teachers are very encouraging," Yatsuhashi said of KP High.

Murphy says she was caught by surprise upon learning she was ranked second in her class.

"I didn't know I was that high in my class. Usually I just focus on my work," Murphy said. "All the years of hard work kind of paid off."
King Philip High School grads encouraged to use skills to better the world

By JUDEE COSENTINO
FOR THE SUN CHRONICLE

EASTON — The wall of noise in the lobby of the Sally Blair Ames Sports Complex at Stonehill College quickly dwindled to nervous giggles and whispers of amazement as King Philip Regional High School’s Class of 2018 proceeded into the field house during the school’s 61st commencement on Sunday.

As the school band began the opening refrain of “Pomp and Circumstance,” the spectators
turned, rose from their seats and activated their cameras in a single unified motion as the 331 graduates entered.

While the graduates were preparing for a new chapter in their lives, so was Superintendent Elizabeth Zielinski, who addressed a King Philip graduating class for the final time before preparing to move on as superintendent.

"Today, when you cross this stage, you are now going off into a new journey," Zielinski told the graduates. "You are young adults, you are young Americans, and your voice counts. Don't let your voice be silent."

The students, bound by a sense of community that developed over the years, were encouraged by school committee chairman Michael Gee to apply their community-building skills into the "KP difference."

"As you go forth from this time and place, carry forward your spirit of openness to opportunity, to new experiences... carry forth your community-oriented focus and commitment to service," Gee said.

Principal Lisa Mobley told the graduates they had "amazed and impressed" her like no other class with their "warrior spirit."

The class advisor, Loreen Meyer, told the students that it was their graduation accomplishment that mattered more than the path they took to get there.

"You are here. You are getting your diploma. And that opens the gateway to the next trail in your life," Meyer said.

Class president Lauren McSweeney expressed confidence that her classmates were ready for the world, even if she wasn't sure if the world was ready for them, and salutatorian Bethany Murphy offered a solution to any challenges that would present itself in that world: Turn it inside out.

And at the end of the day, valedictorian Jeffrey Yatsuhashi said, what mattered the most was the friendships he and his classmates had made with each other.

"These friends, and these moments, have been central in shaping who we are," Yatsuhashi said.

Alexa Canning was the recipient of the King Philip Cup, with other recognitions given to Collin Glaser and EmmaRose Powers.

The Teacher Of The Year award was given to Jennifer McCann Black.

To view a list of graduates, visit thesunchronicle.com.
Of interest.

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---------- Forwarded message ----------
From: <creegee2@gmail.com>
Date: Tue, Jun 12, 2018 at 3:39 PM
Subject: Suspect identified in KP High School threat | Local News | thesunchronicle.com
To: creegee2@gmail.com

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Suspect identified in KP High School threat

By Stephen Peterson speterson@thesunchronicle.com 4 hrs ago

WRENTHAM -- Local police have identified a suspect who allegedly wrote a threatening message on a bathroom wall at King Philip Regional High School last week that mentioned today's date.

"The suspect was a student when this incident occurred (but) is no longer enrolled at KP and has moved out of state," Police Chief William McGrath said in a statement issued late Monday.

The chief said there are no immediate plans to charge the suspect. "We have to establish probable cause to charge" and the investigation is ongoing, he said.

The graffiti read “6/12/18 - R.I.P.” and included a drawing of a tombstone.

There was an increased police presence at the high school Tuesday to ease fears.
"Whether you send your children to school or not is your choice. Personally, I would send my children to school," McGrath told parents on the police department's Facebook page. "The graffiti, though disturbing, was vague and did not describe a specific act or threat of violence. Many of you, including myself, considered the graffiti could be a potential suicide threat as opposed to a threat of violence.

"I would also consider, in general, people who plan or commit an act of violence do not post their intentions with an exact date to alert everyone well in advance," McGrath added. "While offering these assurances, the reality is there in no such thing as 100 percent safe. Not in the schools or anywhere else."

Parents last week were alerted to the threat, and Superintendent Elizabeth Zielinski subsequently said that based on the investigation, it was not considered to be credible.

A forum on safety at the high school and local elementary schools is set for 6 p.m. Thursday in the high school library. School, town, police and fire officials will be on hand.

"This will be an opportunity for everyone to share thoughts and concerns about school safety," McGrath said. "Since the Florida and Texas school shootings, there has been heightened concern about school safety."

Police and the schools jointly train for emergencies including fire drills, shelter in place and active intruder incidents. There is enhanced building security including electronically locked exterior doors, emergency buttons for staff and radios for staff that provide direct contact to police, officials added.

"Creating the perfect environment to assure the safest schools is an extremely difficult and highly controversial task. The balance between protecting our children while maintaining a vibrant learning environment is challenging," McGrath said. "We want the most secure school possible, (but) don't want a prison environment either. Understanding that, we are constantly adding to our security plans on every level and will continue to do so."

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