

The Blue & White

Methuen High’s New Interim Associate Principal

by Allison Kelly

This year, Methuen High School welcomed a new Interim Associate Principal for the junior class, Ms. Javier. Many students recognize Ms. Javier as their chemistry teacher but this year she has taken on a new role.

Ms. Javier started teaching chemistry at MHS in 2012. Before teaching at Methuen, she taught chemistry at Lawrence High School for 16 years. She went to college as a chemistry major. After tutoring some of her friends for upcoming tests, she realized she has a passion for teaching. This is when she added education onto her major.

Ms. Javier is very passionate about working with students. With this new position, she can interact with all the students in the junior class. She said, “ I have always enjoyed helping my students understand chemistry but my greatest fulfillment came when I was able to help a student grow both academically and personally."



Courtesy of Ms. Javier

New interim associate principal Ms. Javier.

This new position has Ms. Javier jumping from interacting with 120 students to nearly 500 students. Going from teaching in a classroom to becoming an associate principal has many differences. Last year

she had her focus on her 120 students, chemistry and her classroom. As described by Ms. Javier, “As an associate principal my main concerns have amplified to include all of our approximately 2000 students, all the subjects they are learning and the entire building.” These differences have helped change her perspectives on both teachers and administrators.

Covid- 19 has also brought the administration closer together this year. They have created a support system and have been helping Ms. Javier with this new role.

“ I feel that I am adjusting well to my new role this year because Covid-19 is no match for the dedication that MHS teachers, counselors and administrators have,” said Ms. Javier.

Her goal for this year is to have every student become successful and to increase student engagement. She wants to achieve this by focusing primarily on supporting teachers, students and families.

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COVID-19 Safety Tips

by Alexsa Carreiro

This school year is not like any we've seen before. With all new regulations and precautions, school does not feel the same. Many schools have opted for a hybrid approach for a partial return to in-person learning, while many others have decided to stay remote where their students learn from home. Whatever situation you may fall into, here are some tips for going back to school with Covid-19:

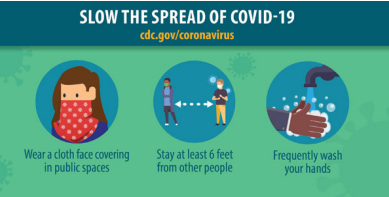
Masks,Masks,Masks: To help everybody control the spread of

the virus and keep everyone healthy, please wear masks while in school. Some schools might not require masks because of social distancing or safety regulations, but it is proven (according to cdc.gov) that masks help control the spread of the virus and keep you safe. So always keep extra masks in places that you could easily access: your backpack, your cars, even your pockets, just in case you ever really need one.

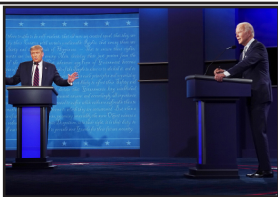
Proper Hygiene: Always keep

hand sanitizer on you, frequently cleaning your hands and any supplies that you are using. Whenever you can, go to the bathroom to wash your hands for at least 20 seconds with warm water and soap to keep yourself and all of your surroundings clean. Always be cautious when using supplies and materials. Keep them clean to protect yourself and the people that might be using them after.

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Methuen High’s New Interim Associate Principal

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by Allison Kelly

As she is an interim associate principal, the position might not be permanent. Mrs. Javier said, “ I am learning the new position and I have the opportunity to decide if this is a good fit for me and if I am a good fit for the position.” Stay tuned for a permanent answer in the spring!

When asked if she had any favorite moments at Methuen High, Mrs. Javier expressed her love for the annual pep rally that is held every year before Thanksgiving. She proclaimed, “The MHS pep rally has got to be the best pep rally in the Merrimack Valley!”

Aside from teaching and this new position, Ms. Javier enjoys spending time with God, her family and friends.

COVID-19 Safety Tips

Continued from front page...

Keep your distance: I know it might be hard since you haven’t seen many people in a long time, but everyone should try and stay a safe distance away whenever it’s possible. Many schools, such as Methuen High School, have one way hallways, desks placed 3 feet apart and stickers to indicate where to stand. When back in school try your best to keep your distance while going throughout your day.

Feeling sick? Stay home!: Now, with any sickness you may immediately think you have Covid. But that is not usually the case. Only about 5.5% of all Covid-19 cases come back positive. In any situations where you might feel you are experiencing any symptoms of any illness you were

advised to stay home, rest up and keep yourself safe so that you do not infect any of the other people you were around. Whether that be symptoms of Covid, loss of taste or smell, high fevers, sore throat,

though you feel sick are pretty much over and anyone who feels any symptoms of anything should just stay home and that will help keep everybody safe.

Courtesy of Google Images

Remember that we are all in this together: I know these changing times may seem tough but everybody is experiencing it and it’s own way. Teachers have never taught this way before, just like you’ve never learned this way before. So just be kind to everybody and give everybody the benefit of the doubt. This is new to everybody and we are all trying our best to have a great school year and make the most of these strange times.

NHS Inductions of 2020

by Allison Lâm

Every year, National Honors Society at Methuen High School inducts students into their chapter for juniors with exceptional academic reports, and a strong representation of scholarship, character, leadership and service.

Typically, the school holds a large event for the induction in the auditorium, with inductees wearing formal clothing, family and friends coming to congratulate the students, and staff members and current members helping run the event. However, that the plan for the event has changed this year due to the Coronavirus pandemic.

Having an event like this in an online format may not feel the same as the original ceremony in school, but with the help of the school advisor for National Honor Society, Mrs. Ring, and the chapter officers, the inductees were able to have a wonderful ceremony, even if they were stuck at home.

The ceremony was conducted at school, in MHS’ media center, where Mrs. Ring, Mr. Barden and the Chapter officers, Jaden Oun, Lucille Cook, Gabriella Fiato, Stephanie Tardugno, and Bella Keaney had spoken for and ran the event that was projected on television, and live on YouTube.

Each inductee was given a slide to present themselves, adding information such as their first and last name, a photo of themselves, and answers to questions like, ‘Who is a person who has influenced you the most’, and ‘What is a school or community service activity that you are proud of the most?’

It was a wonderful night, and even if the students couldn't have their usual lighting of candles, walking onstage, and taking a big picture, there will always be one thing that the current pandemic cannot change: the pride for the students who have been inducted into the chapter. Congratulations to all of the students inducted into MHS’, National Honors Society 2020-2021 Chapter!

MHS Clubs: The BIPOC Student Coalition

by Caitlin Moriarty

Following the Black Lives Matter movement demonstrations in Methuen this past summer, the BIPOC Student Coalition was added to the list of MHS' after school activities. BIPOC, an acronym for Black Indigenous People Of Color, is an umbrella term for people of a marginalized race or ethnicity. Each Tuesday at 2:15, the student-run club alternates between Socratic seminar-style educational sessions, and a student support group. Two founders and co-executive officers, seniors Amania Galloway and Karla Cabrera, are excited to see how their work can create positive change in the community.

Galloway said that her inspiration started when the Black Lives Matter movement saw a lot of growth. "At the peak, there were a lot of tensions. It felt like people who supported the BLM movement were in the minority, and that we didn't know how to take action." Amania posted on her Instagram story, asking her peers about creating a space where students at MHS could work towards educating the student body on anti-racism. A large majority of responses were in favor of the idea.

As conversations about systemic racism in the school system continued, Galloway reached out to former Associate Principal, Mr. Moody. "He was a Black administrator who I thought might understand better. We talked about how Black affinity groups helped the schools he taught at, and that his own children attended. We wanted to make a space for people to learn and share experiences they faced in Methuen."

Together, Amania and Karla dedicated themselves to creating a welcoming space for students of color at MHS. "We had phone calls in May with Mr. Moody. We would all talk about being Black for three hours, making connections between systemic racism we had witnessed. We had in-person meetings with Mr. Moody, Ms. Javier, and Mr. Barden over the summer about what needed to change at MHS. We talked about the durag rule, the policy about bandanas, and how enforcing those was akin to racial profiling," Karla said.

At first, Mr. Moody was a temporary advisor to the club, along with Ms. Javier. However, they had to find replacement advisors before Mr. Moody accepted another job in the Andover Public Schools system, and before Ms. Javier became interim Associate Principal. "Ms. Javier had talked to Mrs. Dumont about

anti-racism over the summer. They had sat in on a seminar about anti-racism in the classroom. It was something they were both passionate about," so Mrs. Dumont became the first advisor at Ms. Javier's suggestion. Karla knew Mrs. Grant personally, and felt that her inclusive lessons created a safe and educational space for young women of color. "We felt comfortable in her class—she made an effort to make us feel comfortable."

"We decided we wanted the club to have a support group aspect for kids of color, and an education aspect overall," Karla explained. As one of three co-executive officers, it meant a lot of work. "We come up with ideas that we want to talk about, and do the majority of the research that goes into lesson planning. We design the slides. We read the slides. We draft an agenda. It's very student driven. We work closely about planning what we should talk about. We want to talk about white fragility, white saviorism, and allyship. Mrs. Dumont and Mrs. Grant make suggestions, but we decide what goes into the educational days." All three student officers review discussion protocols and run the support group meetings while the advisors sit in.

Running a club remotely isn't exactly what Amania, Karla, and their advisors had been planning. "It isn't as intimate, and people are less willing to share than they likely would be in person," Amania pointed out, "All of the ideas we had for fundraising, or protests, or guest speakers are at a stand-still. Our interesting events are kind of on hold."

"To future BIPoC leaders: when things go back to normal, I would want to see a lot of involvement with the rest of the student body. Guest speakers, or a field trip to the museum of African American history in Boston. Fundraisers, petitions, to make MHS and our community more aware and safer and equitable for everyone. I want to see the BIPoC Student Coalition be more engaged with the community. I want to see posters in the schools, telling students of color that the way they feel is normal," Karla added.

Karla says her main goal was to bring a sense of community to kids of color at MHS. "Being a student of color in honors and AP classes, you feel alone. It's a very lonely, difficult, time and process. I want students of color to know they aren't alone. There are more kids like them. Mr. Moody looked at the numbers. 48% of MHS'

student body is students of color. When I heard that, my jaw dropped. You don't see that. I feel like I'm the only Black person in all my classes." Karla believes that a sense of community empowers marginalized students to stand up against prejudice. "It's hard to stand up for yourself and say 'that was racist,' or 'I'm being racially profiled.' That support system, that community component, is the most important thing to me and the aspect I'm most proud of."

So far, feedback from students who attend is overwhelmingly positive. "I've received messages thanking us for creating this space, saying it was something we really needed. After the support group, someone messaged us saying it felt good to have that outlet, because it felt like no one else was listening," Amania explained.

"It's a relief, because it's overwhelming and lonely being a person of color and not knowing how to face racism. People want to learn about their history. Certain historical events we want to focus on are the Tulsa race massacre, Ax Handle Saturday, and all the obscure events that we don't talk about... and from the perspective of people of color," Karla added.

If you're interested in learning more about how to combat racism in our community, or you're searching for a community of people who share your experiences, Karla says, "Come to BIPOC meetings every other Tuesday! Everyone is welcome."

If you're interested in independent study, Karla and Amania recommend the following resources:

Books such as *The Bluest Eye* by Toni Morrison, *Invisible Man* by Ralph Ellison, *The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao* by Junot Díaz, *Why Are All the Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria?* by Beverly Daniel Tatum, and *Caste* by Isabelle Wilkerson. Films such as *The 13th*, *Blackkklansman*, *I Am Not Your Negro*, and *When They See Us*. Online resources such as the websites for the ACLU, the NAACP, Color of Change, and the Alberta Civil Liberties Research Centre; the Black Lives Matter Carrd; instagram accounts @soyouwanttotalkabout and @diversifyournarrative; and as Karla put it, "any article written by a person of color—especially a woman of color—from a credible newspaper organization."

The Three Presidential Debates

by Allison Kelly

The First Debate

The 2020 presidential debate started on Tuesday, September 29. The debate was held at Case Western Reserve University and Cleveland Clinic in Cleveland, Ohio. Fox News’ Chris Wallace was the moderator between President Donald Trump and former Vice President Joseph Biden. Six 15-minute segments were dedicated to these topics: Trump and Biden’s records, The Supreme Court, Covid-19, economy, race and violence and election integrity.

The Second Debate

The second debate for President Trump and Mr. Joe Biden was canceled. The decision was made after President Trump contracted COVID-19. Both candidates held town halls on the same night on separate channels. Biden scheduled his town hall on ABC News while Trump had scheduled his with NBC News. Trump took questions in Miami from NBC moderator



Courtesy of Google Images

President Donald Trump and Democratic candiate Joe Biden face off in the first debate.

Savannah Guthrie. Biden answered questions from ABC's George Stephanopoulos. Trump talked about the topic of his handling the pandemic, when failed to denounce white supremacy in the first debate, and if he was going to agree to a peaceful transfer if Biden won the election. Biden was given questions on the pandemic, the economy, foreign policy and transgender rights.

The Last Debate

The last 2020 presidential debate happened on Thursday, October 22. It was held at Belmont University in Nashville, Tennessee. Compared to the first debate, this last one between President Trump and Mr. Biden was a lot more civil. NBC News’ Kristen Welker was the moderator. They were both asked and answered questions on the Coronavirus pandemic, the economy and foreign interference in the election, as well as each other's finances. This time around, the debate commission issued a mute feature so that each candidate could speak without getting interrupted.

The Vice Presidential Debate

by Emma Yahiaoui

On Wednesday, October 7th, the Vice Presidential debate was held. While this one was more professional than the Presidential debate held previously, it still involved some interruptions.

Both candidates were asked about Coronavirus, and how they plan to get it under control. When asked about Covid-19, Democratic candidate Kamala Harris said the way the Trump Administration dealt with the virus was “the greatest failure” to Americans. The Covid conversation went on for a while and just before it ended, Vice President Mike Pence said the Biden-Harris Covid plan sounds like “plagiarism”, citing the focus on more PPE and a vaccine.

Another topic of conversation was race. When asked about the race issues in the U.S, VP Pence avoided some of the questions, though Vice President Candidate Harris was avoiding some questions on other topics. When both candidates began answering questions they were asked about the victims of police brutality. They both agreed that what happened to victims was awful and shouldn’t happen again, but it didn’t end without Pence adding in his own question that undermined Biden-Harris’ ability to battle race issues in the U.S.

Although the commentator didn’t have to interrupt the two as much as the first presidential debate, there were some interruptions before the next topic of conversation. They were asked about science, from Covid-19 to hurricanes and wildfires in California. This topic was over quickly and it ended with Harris quoting President Trump's comment that, “science doesn’t know” the answers.



Courtesy of Google Images

Vice President Mike Pence and Democratic nominee Kamala Harris debate through Plexiglass barriers.

Later on, VP Pence acknowledged how historic it was for Harris to be nominated for Vice President. She is the first woman and woman of color to be nominated for Vice President. No matter which side you’re on, this is a historical thing.

Not short after, taxes were brought up. Pence brought up the tax plan. He said Joe Biden will raise everyone’s taxes in the U.S. Harris then corrected him by saying raising taxes will only be for people who make \$400,000 or more. They also briefly discussed Trump's taxes.

All debates are serious, and while this one was, a special guest made an appearance on VP Pence’s head: A fly.

Lots of people focused on this instead of the actual debate. But, in serious times, sometimes you just need a good laugh.

MHS Volleyball-A Season in Review

by Izabela Waniek

This year, volleyball season has been a lot different than it usually is. The COVID-19 virus is the main cause of that. The season recently ended on Thursday, November 12th, with the last game being against Billerica. Here is how the varsity, junior varsity, and freshman teams did this season.

The way the games were set up this year was the Rangers played the same team twice, one home game and one away game. However, because some schools were in the red zone or didn't have a big enough gym, there were more home games than away games. Another result of this was the Rangers also had to play some of the same teams more than twice.

The varsity team went 5-4 this year. They won against Dracut and Tewksbury. They lost both games against Lowell and won one game against Billerica. Coach Matt Twomey said, "I am definitely proud of the way the girls were able to handle such a difficult season. We took to the court everyday not knowing what COVID was going to bring us, but the girls worked harder than ever to make sure that they were prepared for any situation. Their energy and work ethic was truly something for them to be proud of."

The junior varsity team went 3-6 this season. They won their games against Tewksbury and one game against Billerica. When asked about the season, Timothy Gordon, the junior varsity coach,

said, "This season was great. It gave the student athletes an opportunity to bring some positivity into their lives. It also taught us all to adapt to the ever changing situations that we were dealing with. Everyone involved worked hard and showed a lot of improvement. I just wish the season could have gone on a little longer."

The freshman team won both games against Dracut and Tewksbury. They lost both games against Lowell and lost all three games against Billerica.

Katie Cronin, the freshman coach, had a few things to say about the season. "This season was different, to say the least, not only because of all the last second adjustments and lack of normalcy due to Covid safety protocol, but mostly due to the fact that I had the pleasure of coaching such an adaptable group of true athletes," she said. "These girls came in with an open and willing mindset and the growth in their volleyball skills and knowledge blew me away. This year's freshman team will truly help build this program for the years to come. I can't wait to continue to watch their volleyball journey."

This volleyball season was very different than it normally would be, but the teams did great this season with all the new rules because of COVID-19. Hopefully, next year the season will be normal again!

The NFL During COVID-19

by Anthony De Leon

2020 and Covid-19 has had a very big impact on the NFL, players and staff. This was first seen when they announced, week 1 into the season, that there would be no in-person attendance. Despite the changes, the NFL has still had many positive Covid-19 tests. They have been trying to cut down on all of the positive testing, but there have been many errors that were made when trying to test everybody in the league. The NFL continues to try to minimize the risk of getting the virus.

Let's take a look at the NFL testing methods that they have put into place. They test players every week, according to NFL.com, but there is a problem that comes with that. Most players have games a couple days or a day after they have been tested and that's how most players are catching the virus. Most players do not know the results of the test until gameday. There had also been many incidents in the league where players and

staff don't use their masks, which the NFL has taken action against.

The Pittsburgh Steelers, Tennessee Titans and Las Vegas Raiders are perfect examples of these incidents.

The Tennessee Titans were fined \$350,000 for breaking Covid-19 protocols and rules. The reason for this fine was that there were players and staff on the sidelines with no mask, and they found players working out outside the facility. The facility is somewhere players can work out in a safe environment.

Lastly, the Steelers were also fined for the same reason--not wearing masks on the sidelines. They were fined \$250,000 and head coach Mike Tomlin was fined \$100,000.

There have been many talks, according to ESPN, that the playoffs might have to wait if

Covid-19 positive tests keep going up. These are only rumors but there is a chance of this happening.

The NFL will keep on testing many players at a time and keep on fining teams so that Covid-19 restrictions and rules are kept in line and followed.



Courtesy of Google Images

The NFL continues its struggle to play during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The NFL took quick action against the Raiders, who the NFL decided to fine \$500,000 dollars. The league fined Jon Gruden, the head coach, an additional \$150,000.

Election 2020: Divided Reactions

by Tori Minkovitz

On Saturday, November 7, 2020, Joseph Biden Jr. was projected to win the 2020 election and became the 46th President of the United



Courtesy of CNN

Biden voters react with joy and celebration....

States. Biden currently has at least 279 electoral votes to President Donald Trump’s 214. Prior to the election, stores were preparing for riots, families were dividing, and people didn't respect others’ opinions. The reactions from each party have been drastically different. From views on Amy Coney Barrett to voter fraud, America seems more divided now than ever.

Many supporters of Joseph Biden celebrated their victory by dancing in the streets while the majority wore masks, as seen in photos from CNN and other news outlets. From New York to Chicago, neighbors came from their porch, car, and homes to dance with each other and celebrate a special moment together. Pictures were taken of people happily crying while hugging family members, singing songs, and hugging each other. Smiles were brought upon multiple faces in what seemed to be a moment of unity. Even though celebrating was enjoyable, many people still made sure to wear masks to protect themselves and others.

On the other hand, most Republicans and Trump supporters were not having as great a day. Neither was Trump, who has sued 12 states already. An article written by Mark Sherman, a writer for

AP News, tells readers Trump has filed lawsuits against Pennsylvania, Georgia, and Michigan. A video posted by *The Telegraph* claims that the suits are due to unsubstantiated electoral fraud claims.

In Georgia and Michigan, some Trump supporters are protesting Biden's win and tax hikes against the rich, while holding up signs that state “liberty not liberal” and “black sharpies matter.” In this time, some Republicans are filled with anger, defiance, and disappointment in Biden’s victory.



Courtesy of CNN

After researching Republican’s reactions to the election, I decided to do my own research and ask fellow Republicans that I know on Snapchat how they feel about the election. I talked to two teenagers named Dimitrios and Justin. They allowed me to explain their answers but asked that I not reveal their last names. I asked them both the same question, “what are you feeling and what are other Republican’s doing since he lost the popular vote?” Both boys mentioned that most voters are concerned about voter fraud. They explained how many supporters insist that the election is not over because Trump will win his court cases and aren’t worried about losing.

The First Amendment declares freedom of speech and the right to expression. Sometimes, people forget that this amendment exists--not just with protesting but also with voicing your opinion, then shutting down others if their views are different. We must remember to value each other’s viewpoints in this country right now, even if we oppose them.

Stress Management Strategies

by Kylee McCue

Even before the pandemic, any student could easily say that they were stressed or felt stress regularly. With school and extracurriculars, there are few students who would say they don’t feel overwhelmed at least occasionally.

In order to understand how to lessen this stress, we have to understand where it’s coming from. Here are what some students had to offer on what makes them stressed:

“Homework and upcoming tests”

“My grades and missing assignments”

“The future”

“My job, I work a lot of hours”

“AP classes”

“The virus spreading and going back to school”

“I participate in a lot of sports and I always expect myself to do well. The continuous competition takes a toll on me.”

Every student I interviewed offered something that made them stressed. However, a quarter of students said that they did nothing at all to de-stress. Here is what some students said that they do to relax and de-stress:

“I listen to music.”

“Going on walks helps me de-stress.”

“I text my friends”

“Playing sports”

“Play with my dog”

If you are looking for a way to de-stress, try to take an idea from your fellow students. Something as simple as exercising or even listening to music can help to relax you. Maybe try finding a new hobby so that you can have something that you enjoy putting energy into.

If you are stressed about grades and sports performance, it is important to give yourself a break every once in a while. Being critical of yourself is okay, but not all the time! Think about all of your achievements for a second instead of your mistakes. It is beyond important to take any necessary steps to alleviate your stress and improve your mental health.



The Pros and Cons of Online Learning

by Allison Lâm

This year Methuen High School began its academic year fully online. Students in all grades had different perspectives on this type of learning. Is it easier to learn online or in person? Is it easier to teach for either?

Certainly the situation all students and staff are in can have its ups and downs, advantages and disadvantages, but what can all of us do to make this experience much more use of our time and our education.

Each student and staff member's situation is different. The world has rarely been impacted by this large of a virus, one that had to close schools and forced people to stay at home, so the certain circumstances that people are stuck in aren't something society is used to. Students don't typically learn their courses at home, and teachers don't usually teach through a computer screen. So what's the real problem? What are the things people are struggling with? But also, what is good this new dynamic?

There are many pros and cons of online learning. Senior, Lizzy Staugler, part of MHS' volleyball team, gives me her thoughts on the subject. "We are able to sleep in a little later, making us more awake for our classes. We don't have to worry about missing a bus or missing class due to being sick." More sleep helps students concentrate more on their studies and overall could make them happier, and now there are more opportunities to attend class easier and more efficiently.

As for the cons, Staugler said, "There is a lot less interaction with peers. Group assignments are harder to accomplish." It's obvious that with the lack of interaction with fellow students, and teachers, online learning could pose to be rather difficult. Many

assignments can require people to work together, which is harder now that everyone is stuck at home.

What about teaching? Certainly it must be a hassle having to teach kids from a computer screen. Photography teacher, Ms. Varasconi, understands the struggle that "it doesn't feel authentic", but uses the best of her ability to make learning more engaging for students, even if we're all staring at teachers through a screen.

"I tried so hard to figure out a way to get a camera in kids' hands." She relayed to me her journey of trying to find different ways to teach photography without actually giving kids a camera. There's so many things teachers won't be able to do since kids aren't always in classrooms. "Having to teach online, I have shifted my focus to teaching kids the fundamentals of how to build and craft an image. In some ways it's been an interesting thing to shift my practice and shift my curriculum in that direction. I think moving forward when it is safe and relatively normal again, I think we can do a hybrid of the two."

Online learning has proven that it could bring new ideas to curricula some teachers have never thought of. For example, Ms. Varasconi plans to incorporate the fundamentals of photography into the curriculum that was placed before when it is safer to go to school.

Online learning has posed as an advantage and disadvantage to many students and staff, and it's obvious that everyone would rather school back to normal, but in times of a pandemic, staying home for the time being is the best option. For now, it's best to try and take advantage of whatever online learning makes available to all students and staff.

Halloween Movie Review

By Izabela Waniek

Halloween recently passed. Because of COVID-19, we weren't really allowed to go trick-or-treating or go to any parties, so most of us stayed home and watched Halloween movies. Some Halloween movies are considered to be some of the best movies of all time, while others can be corny and difficult to watch. Here are my 10 Halloween movies ranked from worst to best:

10. Blair Witch (2016) Watch it on: Netflix, Amazon Video, YouTube

Blair Witch is about a young man and his friends venturing into the Black Hills Forest in Maryland to find out more about his sister's disappearance. They believe that her disappearance could be connected to the legend of the Blair Witch. But as the group spends more time in the forest, a menacing presence makes them realize that the legend is real.

This movie had some good jump scares and you never knew what was going to happen next. However, it was not filmed like a regular movie. Instead, they made it so it looked like the actors were recording on a regular filming camera. So, you could never see anything clearly because of the unsteady camera movements. Also, we never really got to know the characters, they were just plain and shallow. The ending of the movie was also disappointing. I had no idea what happened and had to search up what happened in the end.

9. Hubie Halloween (2020) Watch it on: Netflix

Hubie Halloween is about Hubie Dubois, the town's good-natured community volunteer who wants to make Halloween safe and fun. However, Hubie is the town's victim of bullying and pranks. But, as Halloween night goes on, Hubie finds himself in a real investigation of a real murderer.

Many people had high expectations for this movie because it featured many beloved actors from childhood shows such as Noah Schnapp, Peyton List, Paris Berelc, Karan Brar, and many more. It also featured Adam Sandler as Hubie. However, the actors that everyone was excited for were only in the movie for a few seconds, and some didn't even have any lines. The movie was very confusing at first and here were many different side stories for other characters and it was very difficult to understand. But, everything tied together at one point in the movie. Overall, Hubie Halloween was pretty corny and not super entertaining. Adam Sandler did a great job portraying Hubie Dubois, but the movie seemed to be making fun of 90s- Halloween movies, and didn't do the best job.

8. Alien (1979) Watch it on: Hulu, Amazon Video, Video

Alien is about a crew of astronauts woken up halfway through their sleep on their way back home to investigate a call from an alien vessel. One of the crew members encounters eggs inside the alien ship and an organism jumps out of one of the eggs, attaches itself to him, and puts him in a coma.

Alien was not an extremely scary movie, but it was very unexpected and had a good plot. I wish we got to see more of the alien and I wish there were more jump scares. The lighting in this movie was also just very dark and gloomy which was somewhat fitting for the story, but made it hard to see what was going on. This movie was pretty average so that is why it is not the best on this list.

7. Halloweentown (1998) Disney+, Amazon Video, YouTube

Halloweentown is about Marnie and her kids following their grandma to Halloweentown and they find out that they are a family

of witches. They also find out that their family is involved in a battle with evil that is trying to take over the world.

Halloweentown is a classic Disney Channel movie and is a good one if you want to watch a throwback. But, the special effects were not realistic and the acting from the children was less-than-stellar. But, if you grew up in the Disney Channel era, then this movie is a good one for you. The ending was also pretty unexpected.

6. Twitches (2005) Watch it on: Disney+, Amazon Video, YouTube

Twitches is about two twin sisters, Camryn and Alex, who were separated at birth. They reunite on their 21st birthday and find out that they are royalty in a magical realm named Coventry. They then find out that their birth mother is still alive and needs to be saved from the Darkness that once separated them.

Twitches is another classic Disney Channel movie that is great if you want a throwback. The plot is corny in the best way possible. They characters are also all very lovable and we get to know most of them pretty well. The movie was full of typical 2000's cliches and was very predictable but is still very entertaining to watch.

5. The Shining (1980) Watch it on: YouTube, Amazon Video

The Shining is about Jack Torrence, a writer who agrees to take care of the Overlook Hotel in Colorado during the winter. He moves in with his wife and son. The hotel caretaker tells Jack that other winter caretakers have gone psycho because of the hotel, but Jack doesn't take it too seriously. His son, Danny, starts to have demonic visions and Jack starts to become a homicidal maniac who is hell-bent on terrorizing his family.

The Shining is an iconic horror movie that has phenomenal acting and Jack Nicholson did an amazing job portraying the creepy role of Jack Torrence. However, the movie does not make it higher on the list because it does get dragged on for a little while. The Shining is 4 hours and 33 minutes long, and could easily be cut down to at most 3 hours and 30 minutes. It got boring to watch because there were unnecessary scenes. The ending was also confusing and I had to look up what it meant, but when I figured out what it was, the whole movie made more sense and it felt complete.

4. Us (2019) Watch it on: Hulu, HBO Max, Amazon Video

Us is about Adelaide Wilson returning to her childhood home for summer vacation accompanied by her husband, son, and daughter. She starts to remember the traumatic events that happened to her when she lived there. Her fears become a reality when four masked strangers invade their home, but when the masks come off, Adelaide and her family realize that the strangers look just like them. These strangers put their family in a fight for survival and horror.

Us was a very entertaining movie to watch. The acting was amazing and the setting and lighting made the movie seem more realistic. However, the movie was hard to understand at times. They never really explained how the "Tethered", or strangers, came to be. There were many details in the movie that symbolized things but you wouldn't know unless you looked up what they meant.

Continued on next page....

Halloween Movie Review cont.

continued from page....

But once you understand what the whole movie’s message and point is, it makes it that much better. The ending of Us is probably one of the best endings I’ve watched, but again, was confusing. Once I looked up what actually happened, I understood the movie better as well.

3. It (2017) Watch it on: Hulu, HBO Max, Amazon Video

It is about Bill Denbrough and his friends. They are trying to find Bill’s little brother, Georgie, who mysteriously disappeared when he went outside in the rain to play with a paper boat. Bill and his outcast friends must come together and find him. Little do they know that a shape-shifting demon, known as Pennywise, has come out after 27 years of hiding. The children have to battle their worst fears in order to defeat Pennywise, who isn’t so easy to defeat.

It was another great movie with amazing acting and a great portrayal of Pennywise, which must have been such a difficult role to play. The movie was easy to understand and incorporated humor, horror, and drama. They way that the teenagers acted was spot on, and that’s what made it more entertaining. There were some jump scared and creepy scenes, and even Pennywise was funny and creepy at the same time. The only negative thing I have to say about this movie is I wish Pennywise had more screen time.

2. Hocus Pocus (1993) Watch it on: Disney+, Amazon Video, YouTube

Hocus Pocus is about Max Dennison, who recently moved to Salem, Massachusetts from Los Angeles, California. When his sister and their new friend, Allison, go to explore the Sanderson

Sisters’ house, Max lights the black-flame candle, a candle that is rumored to bring the three witches back from the dead. The rumor turns out to be true, and Max, Allison, and his sister, have to stop the Sanderson Sisters from becoming immortal.

Hocus Pocus is a classic Disney movie that is great for families, but isn’t too childish. The acting was amazing and it had many funny moments in it as well. The movie was not scary, but more of an entertaining movie. It was easy to understand and everything was explained well. The characters are all so lovable and you really get to know them by the end of the movie. Although it’s not scary, it is a great movie to watch on Halloween, it is definitely one of my favorites.

1. Annabelle (2014) Watch it on: YouTube, Amazon Video

Annabelle is about Mia and John Form, who are expecting a baby. John thinks he found the perfect gift for Mia, a porcelain doll, which she likes to collect. But when two devil worshippers invade their home, they take the doll and put a demon inside it. Now that the demon is in the doll, Mia and John do everything they can to get rid of it, but it keeps coming back. Once Mia has the child, and the demon does everything it can to get rid of the baby.

Annabelle is one of my favorite horror movies. Dolls are just so creepy to begin with, and the way Annabelle was designed is just very scary. This movie had jump scares, was entertaining, unexpected, and had amazing acting. The prequel makes the movie that much better as well. This movie incorporates murder as well as demonic things, which are both two big aspects of horror. That fact that Annabelle is based on a true story makes the movie that much more scary. Annabelle is definitely a must-watch movie for Halloween. It left me scared for a few nights as well.

AMC Theatres and Universal Studios Brawl Ends

By Caitlin Moriarty

In April, as crowded businesses were forced to close their doors, the film industry saw immediate losses. Major film studios were struggling to adapt to a post-pandemic environment. For most, that meant delaying all theatrical releases until November. Universal Studios, however, made an unprecedented choice.



Trolls: World Tour was slated for release on April 10th, and Universal Studios had an undisclosed but clearly large budget for marketing their new sequel. Instead of delaying the film and expanding their marketing, Universal decided to release the new movie straight to their on-demand services.

Three weeks following the release, the film made an estimated \$100 million in premium video-on-demand rentals in North America, with rentals costing \$19.99 each. The move was so profitable that Universal Studios CEO Jeff Shell announced that even after movie theaters reopened, they would continue to release all of their films to on-demand the same day they released them in theaters.

Movie theater companies were outraged. Theaters typically have exclusive rights to a film for 75 to 90 days before the studio is allowed to release the film for rental on-demand or to streaming services. NBCUniversal did not consult or inform any of their partners about the decision. The National Association of Theatre Owners responded with their own public statement to point out that

the success of PVOD releases, “should not be interpreted as a sign of a ‘new normal’ for Hollywood.” The Hollywood Reporter published a letter from AMC Theatres addressed to Donna Langley, the Universal Studios film chairman, claiming that, “effective immediately AMC will no longer play any Universal movies in any of our theatres in the United States, Europe, or the Middle East.” The statement called out Universal Studios by name, but made it clear that this policy would apply to any film or studio that did not honor the standard 90-day window. NATO and AMC later clarified that their responses were not coordinated in any way.

In July, AMC Theatres and NBCUniversal announced that they had settled the issue privately. They came to a multi-year agreement to reduce the average 90 days of theater exclusivity to only 17 days. In return, AMC will share in the revenue from PVOD rentals. The deal came a little too late, as AMC lost over 900 million dollars this year. There are rumors that they are on the verge of bankruptcy.

The nearly four-month long feud and its outcome had moviegoers and CEO's alike discussing the longevity of movie theaters. The cost of seeing a theatrical release has increased dramatically in recent years, and compounded with the new threat of illness, it has been predicted that the rate of moviegoers for non-blockbuster films will decline even further. CEO of NATO John Fithian, however, feels confident that when theaters are allowed to reopen, they will regain popularity. “Theaters provide a beloved immersive, shared experience that cannot be replicated – an experience that many of the VOD viewers of this film would have participated in... studios will continue to benefit from the global theatrical box office, followed by traditional home release.”

The 'Me Too' Movement in Gaming

By Cole Wilkinson

The fighting game scene will never be the same after what happened over the summer.

During the summer, there was a massive 'me too' movement in the fighting game community. In case you're unaware of what the “me too movement” is, it began as a way to raise awareness about abuse, gaining national attention with the sexual assault allegations against Harvey Weinstein. The Super Smash Brothers community has since become one of the most heavily impacted in the gaming world.

Gonzalo “ZeR0” Barrios



Gonzalo Barrios, better known in the community as ZeR0, was the biggest player in the Smash community. When people were playing Smash 4, he won 56 tournaments in a row without ever losing. But this career would end when someone named “Jisu” who was a minor at the time of what happened, claimed that he had shown her explicit ads on Craigslist. Later, a woman named Katie came out saying that he was messaging her in a sexually suggestive manner while she was 14.

ZeR0 would leave the scene and go to get himself help while giving himself a permanent ban, according to his posts on Twitter.

Nairoby “NairoMK” Quezada



Nairo was the 2nd biggest player in the world, having been playing the game since Super Smash Bros. Brawl. He was well known in the community and would also stream the game he loved to play.

Quezada would end up getting banned when it was found out that he was having an intimate relationship with a minor at the time named CaptainZack. When this came out, the team he was signed to, NRG, cut ties with him and Nairo deleted his Twitter account and everything else. He would then release a Twitlonger concerning the incident.



D’Ron Maingrette “D1”

D’Ron Maingrette or better known as “D1” was a Smash player who would also commentate on matches in tournaments. He was considered to be one of the best commentators because he would bring an energy that other commentators didn’t have. In July of 2020, Kaitlyn Redeker, who goes by 'KTDominate' in the Smash community, alleged that Maingrette raped her during a party at the 2016 Smash the Record tournament when she was drunk. Maingrette responded immediately on Twitter, saying that he was also drunk at that party and doesn’t remember that night. However, others in the community at that party spoke out about it, claiming Maingrette was not drunk and contradicting other details of his story.



Joey “MrWizard” Cuellar

Joey Cuellar, better known as “MrWizard”, was the CEO and one of the Co-founders of the biggest fighting game tournament, the Evolution Championship Series, or Evo. He ran the events and told the public what games would be shown at the event. However, Evo was cancelled in July of 2020 after allegations of sexual misconduct were made against Cuellar.

According to reporting from Polygon.com, the first allegation came from Mikey Pham, known as 'CrackPron', who claimed the abuse happened when he was under the age of 18. When this and other allegations came out, Cuellar was immediately was fired by the organization and companies such as Capcom and Bandai Namco that had their games in the tournament cut ties with it for the year.

Rihanna's Runway Show

By Cooper O'Neil

On October 2, 2020, Rihanna's Savage X Fenty Show Vol. 2 was aired on Amazon Prime. The show was filmed at the Los Angeles Convention Center in September.

Rihanna said in an interview with The Cut that she wanted to make the show as, "visually enticing as possible." She also stated that she wanted to present "complete extreme levels of inclusivity," with every body type, gender identity, age, sexuality, and skin tone representation. Bella Hadid, Lizzo, Normani, Demi Moore, Willow Smith, Cara Delevingne are a few of the notable names included in the show worth watching.

The show opens up to three words being said: "Skin ... Touch ... Feel ...". Parris Goebel, a choreographer who worked on last year's show, opens with a spotlight down upon herself. Rihanna told The Cut that she loves how Goebel makes everything sexy, despite society's views on what sexy looks like. She also told them that Parris gives her hope. The effect that Goebel tries to convey is power and confidence. She deliberately highlights the ways a body can naturally bounce, move, and flex. Rihanna made her lingerie the way she did so that the dancers could easily move around in it and feel comfortably supported.



Courtesy of Google Images

Rihanna at the Savage X Fenty show.

The show seemed to be more serious based on the various types of black lingerie, fishnets stockings, and mullet haircuts in the first

section of the show. Rihanna said that she wanted the mood of this moment particularly to be more somber and sultry. Stars such as Indya Moore, Bella Hadid, Demi Moore and others were featured during that first section. Demi Moore spoke about feeling a bit nervous when doing her performance, but that the support of the cast made her feel comfortable. She also talked about how she found the love and support from the cast to be the most incredible thing.

Lizzo was one of the appearances to make a lasting impression. The way she danced, you could definitely tell she felt comfortable in her own skin. Taking center stage in blue-themed lingerie she danced to D'Angelo's "Brown Sugar". The theme then switches to a Garden of Eden-type set. Performers then danced to Frank Ocean's "Self Control," while Rihanna arose from a flower looking stunning.

The last part of the show takes place in a neon colored factory. This part of the show features most of the menswear, after Rihanna stated that she received so many requests for a men's line. Willow Smith, alongside Paris Hilton, Rico Nasty and others, make appearances looking ever so fabulous. Rihanna did one last strut before joining everyone, to a thunderous round of applause. To close out, Travis Scott does a bonus performance just before the credits roll.

A week after the show aired, there was some backlash and criticism for the use of sacred Islamic text included in one of the songs. A Hadith was included in a song Rihanna used for her show. In Islamic faith a Hadith is a record of the Prophet Muhammad. Rihanna therefore addressed the issue over a direct statement on Instagram. In the statement she first started by thanking the Muslim community for pointing out the issue and addressing it. She then took to Instagram to apologize for using a song that included that word.

The London producer and singer Coucou Chloe was the one who included the dance track for the lingerie performances. She stated that it was also unintentionally put in the show and that it was a careless and honest mistake. She also took to Twitter to apologize and explain why she used samples from Baile Tracks that she found online. She said she was not aware they were samples used in texts from Islamic Culture.

Self Care and Social Distancing

By Sofia Bovenga

Starting in March of 2020, the world has changed rapidly due to Covid-19, forcing everyone to experience a new "normal". Stay at home orders, social distancing, wearing masks, and spending the majority of our time isolated at home is definitely new and challenging since no one has ever been through an experience like this before.

Being physically distant with other human beings is tough! It can cause you to feel lonely and isolated. That is why it is so important to practice self care while you have this time alone. Self care can consist of mental and physical health.

First, let's start off with the implications of Covid-19 for mental health. Isolation for an extended period of time, loss of income, and stress is triggering the mental health of millions. Difficulty concentrating or sleeping, changes in eating patterns are all caused by stress. I noticed even in myself I was having trouble falling asleep every night as well as many other friends who have said they were experiencing the same thing.

Taking breaks from electronics and watching the news helps you clear your mind. Stretching, going for walks, and simply going outside to get some fresh air really improves how you feel. When you do use technology, make sure you're using it in a way that you're benefiting from it, and not just scrolling aimlessly on social media.

Stay in touch with friends and family that may live far away from you- seeing people's faces can definitely be a mood lifter, especially if you haven't seen anyone in a while. Writing letters is also something I found my friends and I doing during quarantine. This was a very fun thing to do because we would look forward to receiving them to see what they have to say, and letters are so much more meaningful than text messages!

The other struggle with being in quarantine is getting less exercise than we usually would on a daily basis. We are spending less time walking around in public, and spending more time on our couches at home. But being physically active actually plays a huge role in your mental health- it reduces stress and can be a big mood booster.

Even though many people may be skeptical about going to the gym, there are many ways you can still get physically active while in quarantine and practicing social distancing. Walking your dog, playing basketball outside with a sibling, riding your bike- these are all ways you can stay healthy during this pandemic. Even if it's just ten to fifteen minutes per day, doing *something* each day is key. Keeping some sort of routine is very helpful as well, like going for a short walk every morning.

These are some of the ways you can stay healthy during this uncertain time of life, physically, and mentally.

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Pictured Above--The Blue & White Staff.