

The Blue & White

Relay for Life

by Lauren Schena
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On June 11, 2022, the Methuen Relay for Life Leadership Committee will once again be holding an in-person relay ceremony to reunite the community and bring back a night of fun, entertainment, and togetherness.

The theme of this year’s ceremony is “Relay Reunion” where survivors, loved ones, students, and other members of the Methuen community can come together once again and fundraise for the fight against cancer. With all that the committee has in store for this year, it’s sure to be an event to remember.

For those of you that aren’t familiar with Relay for Life, it’s an annual event run by student leaders at Methuen High School to rally the community and gather funds for the American Cancer Society. ‘Relay’ takes place at the Nicholson Memorial Track and lasts through the night in celebration of those who’ve won their battle and in memory of those we’ve lost. The event is filled with activities and games that participants can enjoy, allowing them to have an experience like no other all while fighting for a worldwide cause.

Relay for Life is a meaningful event that many people hold close to their hearts because it gives them the perfect opportunity to honor and remember the loved ones they’ve lost. That’s why it’s important that people know “why we relay” to see how great of a community we have and what we’re capable of accomplishing together.

Senior Relay for Life Committee Tri-Chair, Ella Campbell, said, “I relay because I have lost so many to cancer. I’m eighteen years old and I have no grandparents left.” Ella, like many others, hopes that one day a world can exist that isn’t plagued with the devastations of cancer. Senior Relay for Life Committee members Meghna and Anoushka Mehta can also speak to the tragic effects of cancer and why we should continue to fight for a cure. Meghna said, “I relay for my grandfather and to raise awareness to support cancer research,” while Anoushka said, “I relay for my grandfather who is a cancer survivor and for those who have lost their lives to cancer.” It’s clear that with cancer affecting people worldwide, the fight never stops, so neither should we!

The Relay for Life Event always begins with an opening ceremony where cancer

survivors lead the first lap around the track. The survivors are the driving force behind Relay and they give us a reason to celebrate, having the opportunity to honor them and their fight makes for the perfect kickoff to our event. In addition to this symbolic lap, caregivers are recognized in a lap around the track to thank them for their dedication to helping patients on their journey.

Relay teams take camp at their fundraising tents and collect donations throughout the night. Food, games, contests, and music are provided for the entirety of the ceremony to help bring the community together while raising money for a high priority cause that affects so many. In previous years, participants would gather together and watch movies, test their aim at the dunk tank, and play Just Dance through the night to make the most of their experience.

One of the most memorable moments of Relay comes later in the night during the Luminaria Ceremony. The ceremony gives everyone a moment to reflect on why they’re taking part in this movement and why it’s important to keep fighting for a cure against cancer. During this time, participants walk a silent lap as the luminaria bags provide the only light surrounding the track, allowing us to honor those we have lost and those that are still fighting. Remember, anyone can get involved in Relay and it’s never too late to join a team or start your own with friends! If Relay is something that interests you, don’t hesitate to get involved.

If you’d like to be a part of this remarkable overnight event where you’re sure to make friends, memories, and a difference, you can register now at:

www.relayforlife.org/methuenmvma. Join the fight and let’s work together!



The Relay for Life Methuen flyer.

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MHS Senior Places 3rd in Poetry Out Loud State Competition

by Allison Kelly

For this year’s 2022 Poetry Out Loud competition, Irianny Solorin, a senior at Methuen High School, placed 3rd in the Massachusetts state competition.

Irianny first chose a poem called *Oranges* by Roisin Kelly to recite in her class competition. “As someone with an interest in theater and a love of acting, I went in looking for a poem that had a story I felt I could convey to my audience,” Solorin said. “I would also choose poems on the longer side because I personally feel like nailing a longer poem shows a deeper understanding of the author’s message.”

Irianny was the champion in Mrs. Symonds’s 2nd block English class. She eventually became MHS champion, and moved onto the state finals, which was broadcasted through Zoom on March 13.

To memorize her poems

Irianny breaks them down into stanzas. She starts memorizing by line and continues to add on lines until the whole stanza, and eventually the whole poem, is memorized.

To prepare herself for states, she focused on knowing it was going to be virtual, just as it was last year. That means she got to record herself on her own time and was able to send in the best take to the judge.

Irisnny is involved in many extracurricular activities at Methuen High. She is part of theater, choir, National Honors Society, SADD, and she plays for the field hockey team. Irianny is attending Bridgewater State University and she is majoring in Health Science. She plans to become a physician’s assistant.



Two-time MHS Poetry Out Loud Champion Irianny Solorin.

When asked if she could give any motivation to someone who was about to head on stage to recite their poem, Irianny said, “Though it can be nerve wracking to perform in front of your peers, once you start and get into it, it gets much easier. Trust in yourself and the work you put into learning your poem. Most people get caught up on trying not to mess up but that’s only one portion of the scoring.”

Feature

MHS Healthcare Heroes

by Brady Antaya

Our school nurses here at Methuen High School have been working very hard behind the scenes to make sure that we all stay healthy. Let’s learn more about the heroes that do so much for us every day.



Nurse Erin Heath

Q: “How long have you been a school nurse?”
A: “I have been a nurse for over 20 years, but I just started as a school nurse at Methuen High School about 5 years ago.”
Q: “What made you want to become a school nurse at the high school?”
A: “I saw an opportunity to help older kids and see them succeed in school.”
Q: “What is your favorite part of the job?”
A: “Being able to help kids who come to us sick feel better.”

Q: “Has COVID changed your job in any way?”
A: “COVID made our jobs more stressful and overwhelming with COVID guidelines constantly changing.”
Q: “What is one thing you want students at MHS to know?”
A: “If you ever need help, we are always here at the nurses office.”
Q: “What is one thing you like to do outside of school?”
A: “Going to the beach and walking my dog.”



Nurse Jennifer Sawyer

Q: “How long have you been a school nurse?”
A: “I have been a nurse for over 16 years”
Q: “Why did you decide to become a nurse at the high school?”
A: “I like educating older kids and they are easier to talk to.”
Q: “What is your favorite part of the job?”
A: “Being able to help kids; Makes me feel like I made a difference in their day.”
Q: “Has COVID changed your

job in any way?”
A: “COVID made our jobs more stressful and overwhelming with COVID guidelines constantly changing.”
Q: “What is one thing you want students at MHS to know?”
A: “If you are not feeling well, PLEASE come and tell us! We can’t help you if you won’t tell us what is bothering you.”
Q: “What is one thing you do outside of school?”
A: “I am a sports mom, so when I am not at school, I am most likely at my kids sports games. I also teach after school sometimes.”

K-pop Club 2022

by Emma Lam

Kpop club is starting once again and is humbly accepting new members! The former president, Allison Lam, graduated last year, but the club has been taken over by senior Lilian Nguyen.

There are fun activities planned for the future such as random dance, jeopardy, talking about our favorite artists, and many more. Interested students can become a new member anytime, and can always get the classroom code from the president, Lilian.

Lilian, when asked about the comeback of this club, stated, “I’m extremely excited to get the club back together again since I’ve been a member since my freshman year. I just love dancing with everyone and being able to freely express, and I encourage others who are interested to join in if they’re looking for a club that’s fun and welcoming.”

In addition, Vice President Jerenny Palma spoke about the sense of welcoming in the club. She said, “I like that we have a Kpop club because a lot of people get embarrassed to admit that they like Kpop. I hope that the club grows and we have like a nice little community where we don’t feel embarrassed to admit we like something. Stan SHINee (a popular K-pop band).”

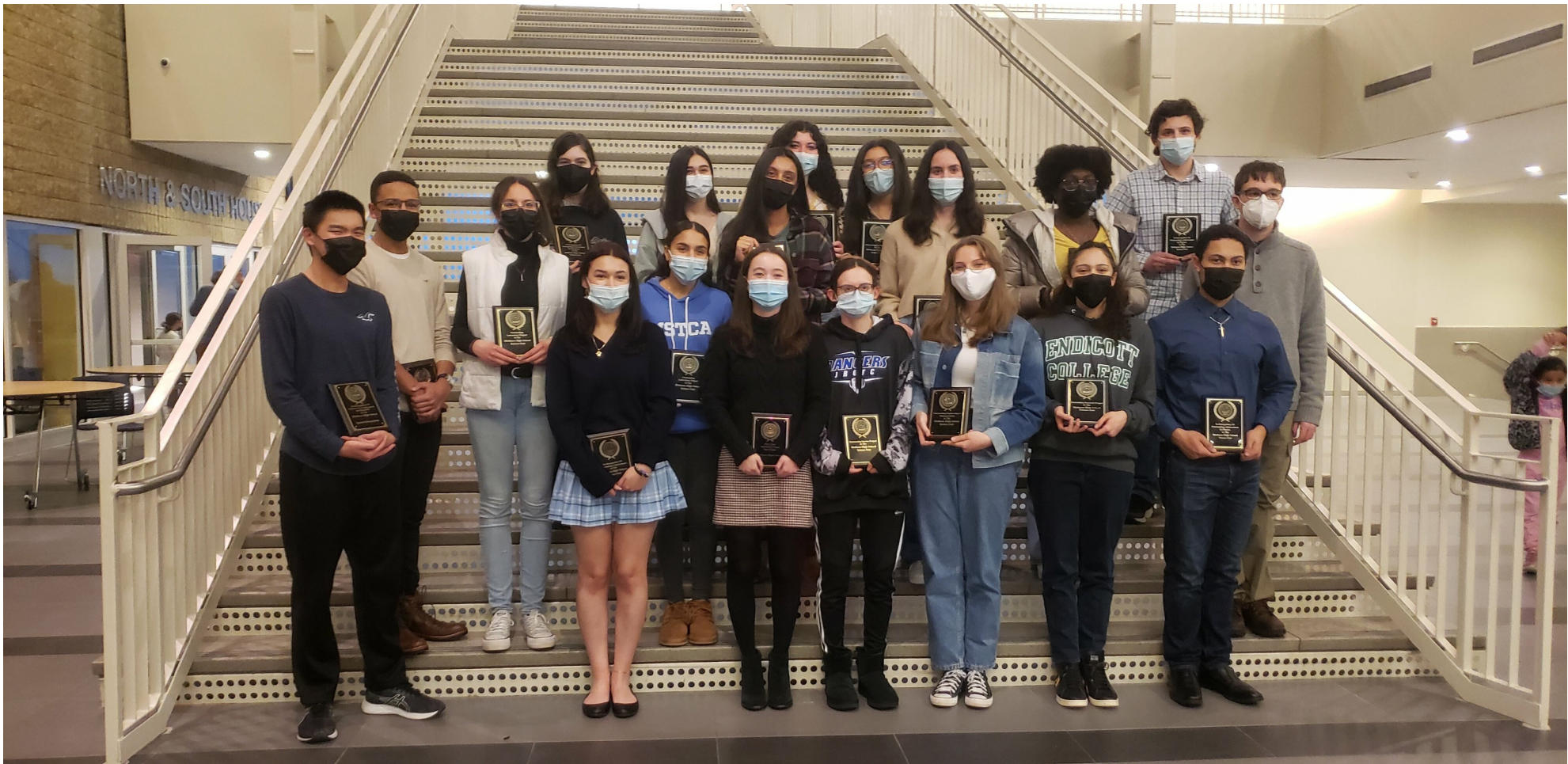
So come to Kpop club if you’re interested, they’d be happy to have you! Meetings are every Tuesday from 2:00-3:00 after school in Mr. Scammon’s room, 1006. Stop by to do some random dance, or hang out and talk about K-pop.



The popular K-pop band, BTS.

Courtesy of Google Images

Feature



Science Fair Winners

by Allison Kelly

Methuen High School hosted its 36th annual Science Fair. The science fair allows students enrolled in an AP science class to showcase their knowledge on a particular topic. These are the students recognized at this year’s science fair!

First Place Overall

Emma Kwong - DIY Star Tracker vs. Commercial Star Tracker
(MHS representative for the Mass State Science Fair in May 2022)

Outstanding Biology Project

Yah Obenge - Effect of the Meat Industry on Climate Change
Ana Letourneau - Clothing Waste and the Environment

Outstanding Environmental Science Project

Miqueas Pita - Does Your Grass Hold Onto Your Soil?

Outstanding Chemistry Project

Bryan Diep and Rory Smith - Anyone Order Some Stairs?

Outstanding Physics Project

Daniel Garcia, Tristan McDermott, and Michael Marchand - Effect of Mass on Conservation of Kinetic Energy

Outstanding Biotechnology Project

George Hbaiter - Bacteria Meats Media

Outstanding Research Project

Angeliris Cabrera - The Effect of Hormones on Acne

Outstanding Service Project

Elanor Murphy, Olivia Murphy, Naiyma Pina Cabral - Effect of Limited Access to Healthy Foods on People in Low-income Communities

Outstanding Laboratory Project

Meriem Elkoudi and Miana Caraballo - The Effects of Mass on Running Performance

Outstanding Engineering Project

Samantha Jabak - Sea Bin Prototype

Outstanding Team Science Fair Project

Tanvi Patel, Madison Chin, and Ava Duffy - Mental Health in Teens

The following students completed an approved Individual Research Plan and will represent MHS at the Region IV Science Fair on Sunday, March 6, 2022:

- Angeliris Cabrera - The Effect of Hormones on Acne
- Emma Kwong - DIY Star Tracker vs. Commercial Star Tracker
- Bertha Posada Villanueva - Environmental Effects on Pediatric Brain Tumor Patients

Sports

The Boys are Back

by Allison Kelly

Varsity scrimmages for the MHS baseball team started on March 30th at Greater Lawrence. Games officially started on April 11th against Leominster.

The team is coached by Cam Roper, who is in his 2nd year of coaching at Methuen High.

“Coach Roper has developed our program into what it is today,” said senior captain Alex Borrelli. “He’s implemented a winning culture here at Methuen High.”

The boys prepared for the season with a throwing program held once a week. It started on January 10th and has been held every Monday. When asked how he felt about the program, captain Jason Silverio said, “I like it a lot. I can tell my arm is going to be ready for the season and I notice I’m throwing harder. I regret not doing it last year.”

The 2022 season is already looking a lot different than the 2021 season. Last year, between Covid-19 related challenges and Fall 2 sports, there wasn’t much time to prepare.

This year, “[We] have more time in the offseason to work on things we need to improve on,” said captain Sam Kalivas. “Last year was a lot different. I went from football to baseball within a week. I had no time to get ready for the season.”

The team finished their 2021 regular season with a 7-8 record. The Rangers played in the Opt-In Tourney, and lost to Haverhill in the first round.

“Last season, everyone made the state tournament because of Covid. We have to play every game with intensity and consistency in order to make it this year,” said Silverio.

Captains were announced during the summer. Sam Kalivas, Alex Borrelli, Wesly Martinez, and Jason Silverio were given the leadership position. Kalivas, Borrelli, and Silverio were also captains of the Varsity football team during the fall.

Regarding his captain status, Kalivas said, “I am honored to lead this program. I like how [coach] Roper has made this team become a family.”



The boys' baseball team huddling up.

"No Fear" For Girls' Lacrosse

by Allison Kelly

The Girl’s Lacrosse season started off with tryouts on March 21. Tryouts take up to 2 days, and then players find out what team they made.

Krystal DePaolo is the head coach of the varsity team. She coached the girls back in 2013 and 2014; both years in which they won MVC titles. After 2014, she went on to coach division III at Dean College in Franklin, MA.

DePaolo returned to Methuen in 2020. Aryanna Poirier, who was a player under DePaolo, is also a coach. “Both coaches provide unbelievable support and make the girls love the sport even more,” said captain Mackenzie Tierney.

During the 2021 season, the team finished second in the MVC. They lost to Woburn in the first round of states.

This year, the team motto is “No Fear”.

“I think ‘No Fear’ is a good representation of what our goals should be for this season,” said Ellis.

Senior Alexsa Carreiro explained, “Having this team motto represents something that we always talked about and what our coach wants us to live by. It’s good motivation for this year.”

This year’s captains include Tierney, Elise Ellis, Julia Bryant, and Jenny Nguyen.

When asked about the captain’s practice, Tierney said, “The main focus is to get the stick in everyone’s hand and even help introduce the sport to new players. It’s been difficult with cold weather and snow, but when the field isn’t under the greatest conditions we do some wall ball as well as a team run or sprints to still maintain the movement for upcoming tryouts in just a few weeks.” Practices started in mid-January on Mondays and Wednesdays.

Junior Varsity will have its home opener against Haverhill on March 31. Varsity will head to Billerica for an opening jamboree on March 26. Their first home game will be on March 31 against Haverhill.



Coaches DePaolo and Poirier addressing the girls' lacrosse team.

Tom Brady Retires From The NFL . . . For a While

by Brianna Trachtenberg



Tom Brady celebrating his 2021 Super Bowl win with the Tampa Bay Buccaneers.

Courtesy of Google Images

After 22 years, Tom Brady officially announced his retirement from the NFL on Tuesday, February 1.

Until he didn't.

Tom Brady announced his retirement on his Instagram page that Tuesday morning. In the post he wrote, "This is difficult for me to write, but here it goes: I am not going to make that competitive commitment anymore. I have loved my NFL career, and now it is time to focus my time and energy on other things that require my attention."

Not long after, Brady reversed his decisions and decided that he no longer wanted to focus on "other things." He decided that 40 days was enough time to do what he needed to do outside of football. Many fans and players were shocked but happy to see Brady come back so soon. But the question is: will he be able to play to the same level as before?

Brady has so far had a very impressive career as an NFL quarterback. He has been able to make it to the age of 44 and still play at the top of his game. Tom Brady ranks first in completions, passing yards, passing touchdowns, game-winning drives, fourth quarter comebacks, and Super Bowl wins. As he continues to play, Brady will be able to continue to widen the gap and keep future players from breaking his records.

Brady is re-entering the NFL with seven Super Bowl rings, five Super Bowl MVP awards, three league MVP awards, and six All-Pro selections. Throughout his 22-year career, he has become one of the greatest NFL players of all time. Brady will continue to be an essential part of the Buccaneers offense, and will hopefully help them continue the success of the past two years with him as their quarterback.

While most people would agree that Brady is one of the greatest players of all time, not many thought that at the beginning of his pro career. Brady was drafted by the New England Patriots in the sixth round with the 199th pick. This wasn't a setback for him, though. Brady took this as motivation and told the Patriots owner Robert Kraft that he would be "the best decision this organization has ever made." He has kept to this promise throughout his career, and has brought great success for both teams he's played on so far.

There will be one major change to the team this upcoming season. Bruce Arians will no longer be on the field as the head coach of the Buccaneers, but will be working up in the front office. Instead, Todd Bowles will be stepping up and become the head coach for the Buccaneers. This will only be the third head coach Brady has played for in his NFL career. Many are wondering if Brady and Bowles will be able to work as well together and have similar success as Bruce Arians previously did with Tom Brady.

The Buccaneers season will definitely be an interesting one to watch. The one thing to learn from Tom Brady's short retirement is that the sports world can change quickly. All eyes will be on Brady, Bowles, and the Bucs as they make their next moves during this upcoming season.

China Olympics Boycott

By Lauren Schena

In December, as the world waited for the start of the Olympic season, the United States, United Kingdom, and Canada began a diplomatic boycott of the Beijing Olympics, which is taking place from February 4 to February 20.

After this declaration, many other countries followed in their footsteps and joined the movement. Other boycotting countries include India, Lithuania, Kosovo, Belgium, Denmark, and Estonia.

All of these countries decided to send their competing athletes to the Olympics, but did not send ministers or officials to help oversee the games. The primary reason for these actions is because of China's human rights abuses against their Muslim Uyghur population.

In addition to this, some countries have other reasons for boycotting. India is boycotting because the torchbearer for the games is a Chinese army officer that was part of a deadly battle between China and India on their country's border.

Countries like Japan made the decision to send ministers to the games but will not send their officials. Other countries such as New Zealand, Austria, Slovenia, Sweden, and the Netherlands have also decided not to send government representation, but they stated that the COVID-19 pandemic is their reason for not doing so.

Although many countries have joined together in this universal boycott, there are some that have done the opposite and stood by China during this time. France is one of these countries. In a BBC interview, President Macron stated, "I don't think we should politicise these topics, especially if it is to take steps that are insignificant and symbolic."

With all the controversy that's surrounding this year's Olympic Games, human rights activists around the world have taken a stand to protest against the Beijing Games.



Calls to boycott the 2022 Olympics, held in Beijing, China, have come from all corners of the world.

Courtesy of Google images

Now, people are left to wonder what impact these allegations will have on China and the International Olympic Committee (IOC), and if this symbolic boycott will generate any changes in their policies.

Arts and Entertainment

The Batman

by Lauren Schena

Batman may have already been portrayed by more actors than anyone can count, but this hasn't stopped excitement from rising for the upcoming movie, *The Batman*.

Known such roles as Edward Cullen in *Twilight* and Ephraim in *The Lighthouse*, Robert Pattinson will play the starring role of Bruce Wayne/Batman. The movie is set to premiere on **March 4, 2022**, so DC fans, be sure to mark your calendars!

Ever since the trailer was released, people have wondered what the movie will entail. In response to this curiosity, Warner Bros. released a new synopsis claiming that the movie is, "an edgy, action-packed thriller that depicts Batman in his early years." Bruce Wayne will navigate his complicated double life while attempting to "balance rage with righteousness" to save Gotham.

Fans' excitement levels have been at an all-time high since the announcement in May of 2019 that Robert Pattinson would be the starring actor of the film. With Batman being one of the most popular action figures in the DC cinematic universe, Pattinson has a lot of pressure on him to live up to his character's high expectations. However, being an experienced and well-known actor, Pattinson has a large fan base to support him in this new role.

It has also been confirmed that this rendition of Batman will be the longest running version of its kind, set at a whopping two hours and fifty five minutes including the credits, nearly rivaling *Avengers: Endgame*, which ran for three hours and one minute.

According to Pattinson, the movie is sure to be memorable and different from what we've seen in the past. In an interview with Collider, he said, "I just knew [the movie] was something radically different from anything we've seen in Batman movies before."

Fans, get prepared--because this movie is sure to be full of interesting twists and turns that we've never seen in a previous Batman film.

In addition to the pressures of portraying Batman well, Pattinson has also had to deal with backlash from the DC fanbase when he told the press that he wasn't preparing for the role in the ways that people had hoped. In an interview for a cover story for the June/ July 2020 issue of GQ magazine, Pattinson told GQ that he wasn't consistently working out to match Batman's physique.



A promotional poster for *The Batman*.

Courtesy of Google Images

According to Insider magazine, GQ senior staff writer Zach Baron made note that, "the trainer hired by Warner Bros to work with Pattinson gave him a Bosh ball and a weight but the star hasn't utilized either item."

In a later statement, Pattinson clarified that his lack of exercise was due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the newly surfaced dangers of public gyms and training facilities. Pattinson also stated that his comment wasn't meant to insinuate that he wasn't working out at all, only that he would have likely been spending more time exercising if not for the limitations of the pandemic.

All things considered, fans are still excited that "The Batman" is up and running, and soon they'll be able to see what has come of all of the hard work and time Warner Bros spent creating this film. Get ready to experience the thrill and excitement of saving Gotham City...again!

FNAF Security Breach Quick Review

by Eliz Santiago

Five Nights At Freddy's has made a comeback with their tenth game in the franchise. To some people, it is just a simple horror game, but for the fans of the franchise, it is a game full of backstory and lore.

In *FNAF Security Breach*, players play as a young boy named Gregory. He manages to lock himself in a Pizzaplex and has to face challenges and deal with dangerous animatronic enemies. He also finds himself in trouble with the security guard named Vanessa. Luckily, you have one animatronic, Freddy Fazbear, who helps and guides you through the missions. You can even temporarily hide inside of him and control him in certain parts of the game.



Promotional art for Five Nights at Freddy's: Security Breach.

Courtesy of Google Images

Although it is the first free-roam game in the franchise, it has major glitches and poor design choices that still need to be fixed.

It is definitely very different from the previous games and has less restrictions in it, such as being able to move around, hide, use a flashlight, and use a Fazbear watch that is connected to Freddy so he is able to guide you.

Even though the game has its flaws, if you are persistent enough you can reach the 6 different endings that the game offers you. In the end, you are given the chance to stay or leave. If you stay, you are able to keep adventuring with Fredbear but can no longer save your progress and will have to restart if you die.

The attention to details is very prominent in the game and the characters and animations are outstanding. It also pays homage to the previous games in many different ways.

Pete Davidson vs Kanye

by Aliyah Martinez



Kanye West (left) and Pete Davidson.

Courtesy of Google Images

There has been so much talk recently about Pete Davidson and Kanye West. This talk has mainly focused on Kanye, now legally known as 'Ye', feeling like he's being pushed away from his own family.

In October of 2021 Kim Kardashian and Davidson appeared on Saturday Night Live (SNL) together, and also spent Halloween together on an amusement park date. It was

sometime after this that Kanye started to make disturbing statements about the new couple. Kanye then started going on a downward spiral while Kim was with Pete and the kids.

After Ye posted some statements directed at Kim on Twitter and Instagram, Davidson tried to take matters into his own hands. In a text message he had sent to Kanye, Davidson said, "Can you please take a second and calm down. It's 8am and it don't gotta be like this." He continued, saying, "I decided I'm not gonna let you treat us this way anymore and I'm done being quiet."

I understand where Kanye is coming from at this moment. The man isn't doing anything wrong. He's not making the children unhappy and he's not making Kim's life miserable.

I think first off Pete has no right. He doesn't understand what it feels like to have someone else raise your kids. It's a hard pill to swallow. He then made matters worse by sending a picture of just his face saying "in bed with your wife". This is where I lost all respect for Pete because he did the same thing with Mac Miller and Ariana Grande. He has no respect for others.

I'm definitely on Kanye's side lately after hearing all this. As for Kim, she's making things worse. I understand she doesn't agree with everything Kanye is doing and saying, but he is the father of her children. She acts like he's crazy for feeling this way, but he's a human and he loves her and his children. #teamyee

Arts and Entertainment/Opinion

Legacy of Lunatic Kingdom Review

by Conner Puskar

Legacy of Lunatic Kingdom is the 15th main line gain in the Touhou Project series. Widely considered one of, if not the hardest game in the series, I set out to complete it and see whether or not it truly was the hardest.

Touhou Project is a danmaku (Japanese for 'barrage') 'shoot-em-up' game made by ZUN. In Touhou Project you select a character and have to dodge enemy bullets called danmaku. Each stage has a boss fight at the end and if you lose all your lives you have to start from the beginning. Bosses use special attacks called spell cards. Players also have access to their own spell cards called bombs that are used to clear danmaku on screen.

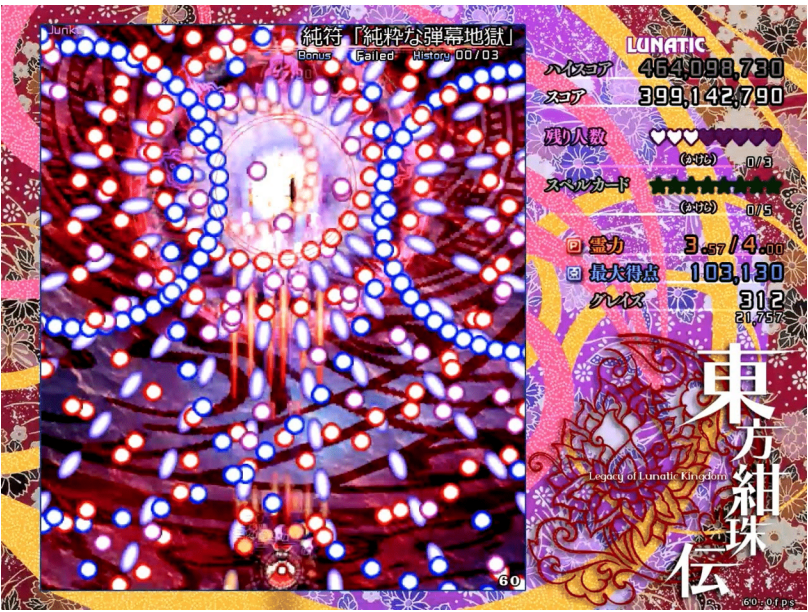
Touhou Project takes place in the land of Gensokyo, where humans, aliens, and Gods live together. In each game you have to stop an incident threatening Gensokyo. In *Legacy of Lunatic Kingdom* you have to stop a war on the moon. Each game has 6 stages and a bonus extra stage. In this review I will look at all 7 stages.

I will be rating each stage by their difficulty, the music, the stage danmaku complexity, the boss danmaku complexity, and spell card beauty. Each criteria will be rated out of 10 for a score out of 50 then multiplied by two for a score out of 100 with an overall average score at the end. The music criteria is split into two parts, the stage theme and the boss theme, both scored out of five and added together. Mid-stage boss fights and the first boss in the extra stage will be considered stage enemies. For this review I will be using the character Reisan, on normal mode, and in legacy mode.

Stage one is harder than most stage ones but isn't really that hard, scoring a 2/10 on difficulty. The music of stage one is very good. The stage theme fits with the setting of the Lunarian war coming to Gensokyo and does a good job in hyping me up for the upcoming battles. The boss theme also helps pump me up for the upcoming stage and is really catchy. The music scores an 8/10, four points from each. The first stage isn't meant to be too complex or challenging, scoring a 3/10 on stage danmaku complexity. Seiran is the first boss of the game. Her danmaku is complex for a stage one boss. This stage scores a 4/10 on boss danmaku complexity. Like most stage one bosses their spell cards aren't much, scoring a 4/10 on spell card beauty. With an overall score of 42/100, stage one ends and the next one starts.

Stage two has a noticeable difficulty spike. This stage is mostly difficult because of Ringo, the mid-stage boss. The Lunarians are shaping up to be just as powerful as they were hyped up to be, scoring a 5/10 on difficulty. The stage theme is catchy and has a nice opening to set the mood. The boss's theme isn't one I like that much but is still a good listen. This stage scores a 7/10 on music, four points from the stage theme and three points from the boss theme. Stage two has a lot of danmaku going on for a second, Ringo's mid-stage fight also adding a lot to the score. This stage scores a 5/10 on stage danmaku complexity. This stage scores a 6/10 on boss danmaku complexity. Ringo's spell cards are nice to look at when I'm not actively dodging for my life. Strawberry Dango has a nice spread and the danmaku are small. September Full Moon's floral patterns are nice. This stage scores a 6/10 on spell card beauty. With an overall score of 58/100, I moved on to stage three.

Stage three takes place in the dream world. This is apparently how the Lunarians get to Earth from the moon so fast. Stage three also has another large difficulty spike. Reisan's spell card gives her a shield which lets you get hit a



A gameplay screenshot from *Legacy of Lunatic Kingdom*.

Courtesy of Google Images

few more times before losing a life, which is something I use a lot in later stages. The stage enemies are difficult, but manageable. The real challenge comes from the boss, Doremy. With Doremy being the ruler of dreams it only makes sense that this stage would be incredibly difficult. This stage scores high on difficulty with a 7/10. The music on this stage is a good listen. The stage theme isn't as catchy as stage two's, but does help in hyping up Doremy. I think her theme fits well with her. This stage scores a 7/10 on music, 3 points from the stage theme, and 4 points from the boss theme. Doremy's mid-stage fight is also a challenge for me, she also uses a spell card which helps in giving points in stage danmaku complexity. This stage scores a 7/10 on stage danmaku complexity.

The real beauty comes from Doremy's actual boss fight. I like the curves on Indigo Dream of Anxiety, and I love the spiral pattern of Ochre Confusion, with it being my favorite of Doremy's spell cards. I also love how the lasers in Dream Catcher dance around the player at the start, and reflect off the walls of the play area. Even while actively dodging for my life I like looking at her spell cards. This stage scores high on spell card beauty with an 8/10. With an overall score of 72/100, I moved on to stage four.

This is incredibly hard for a stage four. The enemy's danmaku is incredibly fast and hard for me to dodge, they also use a lot of danmaku. The boss, Sagume, is also incredibly difficult, earning an 8/10 on difficulty. The stage's theme is too calm for the lunacy that's happening. Sugeme's theme is really good. Much like Doremy's theme, I also have it in my personal music playlist. This stage gets a 6/10 on music with 2 points from the stage theme and 4 points from the boss theme.

There is so much danmaku going on practically all the time, most of it rapidly depleting Reisan's shield when I have it on and killing me quickly. The danmaku can get really fast at times and has small gaps, being incredibly difficult for me to dodge. The overwhelming danmaku earns this stage an 8/10 on stage danmaku complexity. Sugeme's last spell uses a large amount of lasers that are, for me, ridiculously hard to dodge. This stage scores a 7/10 on boss danmaku complexity. There's a lot going on but I find her spell card to be simple in pattern, so I score this stage a 5/10 on spell card beauty. This stage ends with an overall score of 68/100.

"It's Lunatic time!" according to stage 5 boss, Clownpiece. This stage is taken to the extreme. This stage earns a perfect 10/10 on difficulty. The stage theme to me sounds Lunarian to me, with the stage being on the moon. It's calm in a good way. Clownpiece's theme fills me with dread

and anxiety, and in my opinion can only truly be appreciated after beating Clownpiece's boss fight. This stage gets an 8/10 on music with four points from both the boss and stage themes. The danmaku is very fast but not too complex in pattern, so this stage scores low in stage danmaku complexity with a 6/10. Clownpiece uses American Flagged shaped patterns, using stars, lasers, and in one attack three moons. Her other attacks aren't that complex either, but are a step up from the stage enemy's danmaku. This stage gets a 7/10 on boss danmaku complexity. Clownpiece gets this stage a 3/10 on spell card beauty. Her patterns aren't much to look at, they're all really simple. Extraordinarily difficult, but simple. With an overall score of 68/100, I moved on to the last 'standard' stage.

People in the Touhou community sometimes joke about being able to dodge the rain, and this section feels like that. This is so incredibly hard for me it scores higher than a 10, with a score of 12/10 on difficulty. The stage's theme fits perfectly with the location and is excellent for calming you down after Clownpiece and for the upcoming fight ahead of you. I give this stage a score of 9/10 on music, five points from the stage theme, and four points from the boss theme. The enemies use some complex danmaku, with that rain dodging section being incredibly complex in my opinion. This stage gets a score of 8/10 on stage danmaku complexity. The boss, Junko's, non-spells and spells are beautifully simple and deadly. This stage scores a 0/10 on boss danmaku complexity and it isn't a bad thing. I wouldn't want it any other way. Her spell cards may be pure, but there is great beauty in simplicity, so I score this stage an 8/10 on spell card beauty. With an overall score of 74/100 the only challenge left in my way is the extra stage.

The extra stages in other Touhou games are meant to be difficult. This is far harder than any other extra stage in my opinion. This stage is so unbelievably difficult for me it earns a 20/10. The final boss, Hecatia, isn't called the strongest for nothing. Hecatia's theme is one of my favorites from the entire series, it really hammers down the fact that Hecatia is the strongest and not to be messed with. Pandemonic Planet also sounds otherworldly to me which really fits with Hecatia's character. I give the extra stage an 8/10 on music, three points from the stage theme and 5 from the boss theme.

The regular enemies use some decently complex danmaku that can very easily kill you, so I score the extra stage a 7/10 on stage danmaku complexity. Hecatia's danmaku is really complex and is varied, leaving little room for mistakes. With 3 bodies to use, this provides an excellent variety of danmaku complexity. However, the extra stage still scores an 8/10 on boss danmaku complexity. Junko's attacks still maintain their simple beauty, and Hecatia's Hell form non-spells have a beautiful pattern and spread. Hecatia's Moon form non-spells are fast and don't hold too much beauty for me. Hecatia's Earth form non-spells have a nice pattern in my opinion. Hecatia and Junko both complement each other perfectly in First and Last Nameless Danmaku, a beautiful sight. The extra stage earns a 9/10 on spell card beauty. With an overall score of 104/100 the extra stage ends and this challenge is over. The overall average score of the stages is 69/100.

Legacy of Lunatic Kingdom is in my opinion much harder than what I've heard before playing. This game is perfect for people looking for an incredibly difficult challenge. Despite being generous with lives, it's still a very difficult game. *Legacy of Lunatic Kingdom* isn't friendly to people new to Touhou, so I would recommend starting off with *Perfect Cherry Blossom* or *Mountain of Faith* instead for a good entry point into the series. After all was done I can still hear the death sound effect echoing in my mind.

Remote Learning

by Keith Korir

In 2020, students across the country were introduced for the first time to remote learning. Some liked it, while many others did not. However people felt, it was an unexpected and incredibly big change for everyone.

This year, we've managed to stay in the classroom

and haven't had to go back yet. Here's my opinion on the experience so far.

Personally, I didn't have that big of a problem with remote learning overall. I know it really separates you socially and physically from the real experience of school, which isn't good at all. But I thought about it more on the positive side. I considered the fact that we got to stay home and be free to do anything while learning, especially during lunch time.

All that considered, my opinion of going back to

remote learning if we had another COVID-19 outbreak is more neutral. For me, I wouldn't feel good or bad about going back to remote learning.

For other students, it would probably depend on one's social life, situation at home, and other factors. Based on what I hear from a lot of people, including my friends, most of them (maybe 80%) didn't like remote learning. I doubt many people will like the idea of going back to remote learning after being in 'normal' conditions in school for the past year.

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