

A Midsummer Night's Dream



Image Courtesy of Blue & White Staff

by Jessica Leiva

A Midsummer Night's Dream is a comedic play by William Shakespeare containing multiple twisting subplots. The play's main subplot involves the four lovers; Helena, Demetrius, Hermia, and Lysander. The characters run away into the woods and encounter a few mischievous fairies.

This year, Stage Door 22 decided Shakespeare was the way to go with Methuen High School's 2022 fall play. The show times were Thursday December 1st at 7:00PM, Friday December 2 at 7:00PM, and Saturday December 3 at 2:00PM and 7:00PM. All shows were held in the auditorium at Methuen High School.

A Midsummer Night's Dream is the first Shakespeare play Ms. Walsh, Ms. Varasconi, and Stage Door staff have put on. Credit for the lead roles Hermia, Helena, Demetrius, and Lysander, go to: (in order) Seniors Ella MacLaren, Jenevieve Young, Brandon Bui, and Junior Riley Lyons.

Though the plot and language may be confusing for those not familiar with Shakespeare, the story is very investing. What makes this especially the case is set crew's amazing job recreating Athens and the forest. The lowering vine-and-flower-covered swing and a hand made paper mache tree add to the charm of the stage.

Students and locals that saw the production provided overwhelmingly positive feedback.

"I thought it was really good!" said MHS student, Olivia Clark. "It was really funny. It was also very accurate to the [play]." Olivia attended the December 2nd show, and really enjoyed the production.

With the fall production successfully wrapped up, Stage Door 22 looks toward their spring production of the Disney classic, *The Little Mermaid*.

Photos of the performance can be found on page 2.

The Shutdown of Z-Library

By Olivia Clark



Any book lover knows just how much of a dent book prices can leave on your bank account. Enter Z-Library. Before it was taken down, Z-Library was known as one of the internet's largest "shadow libraries". According to *Fast Company*, more than "10 million books" and "86 million articles" were accessible free of charge for the public to read.

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This website started in 2009 and was run by Anton Napolsky and Valeria Ermakova. Napolsky (33) and Ermakova (27) are from Russia, but were found in Argentina when the FBI tracked down their location. Many people who used this site were teenagers and students. As expected, when young teens found out about this hidden gold mine, they went to TikTok to rave about their findings. This, inevitably, backfired. On November 3rd, 2022 the FBI discovered this pirated ebook database and then proceeded to charge both founders with copyright infringement, wire fraud, and money laundering on November 16th. Napolsky and Ermakova could be in prison for over a decade for the crimes they allegedly committed. According to the *Washington Post*, readers were mourning their ability to download free reading materials on this "shadow library." Many created an attachment with this website considering the fact that it had been around for nearly 13 years. This site, although legally wrong, helped thousands of readers access novels and textbooks that they could not afford otherwise. Some of the most popular books read on Z-Library were the *Heartstopper* series by Alice Oseman, and *The Love Hypothesis* by Ali Hazelwood.



A Midsummer Night's Dream

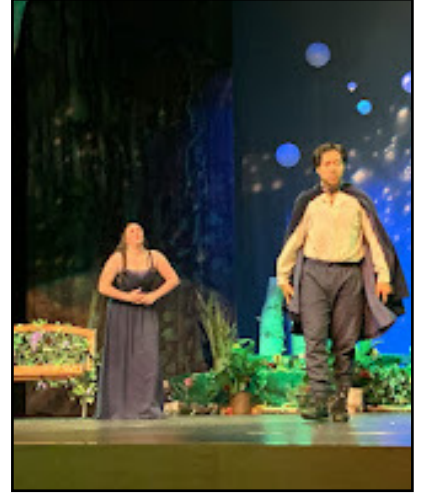
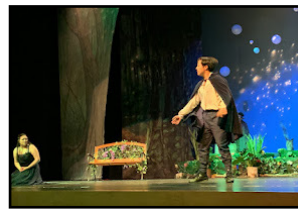


AP or Honors?

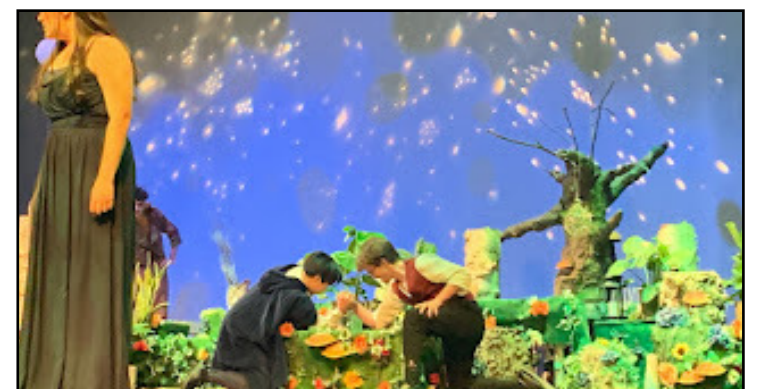
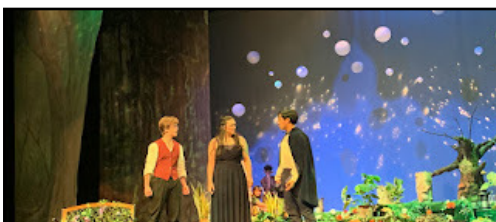


Wakanda Forever Review

Feature



A Midsummer Night's Dream



Methuen High’s 37th Annual Science Fair

by Crystal Castro

Methuen High School hosted its 37th annual Science Fair on February 6, 2023. The Science Fair is required for anyone enrolled in an AP science class, but any student enrolled in a science course, including Biology, Chemistry, Anatomy, Environmental Science, Physics, and Biotechnology, has the opportunity to showcase their knowledge. Through studying under their current branch of scientific study, students are able to formulate their choice of a Lab Experiment, Engineering Project, Demonstration, Date-Based Learning Project, or Service-Based Learning Project through the College Board for the Science Fair.

We asked both science fair participants and attendees their thoughts on the science fair. Here’s what they had to say:

What was the highlight of the science fair to you?

Sophomore Livia Lawrence, Participant (Bacteria in Space): “It was really cool to see all the different branches of science!”

Sophomores Claire Makena and Esmeralda Rojas, Participants (Comparing the Ripeness In Apples by Conducting a Starch Iodine Test): “The highlight of science fair for me was explaining to the people our project and I loved being able to share the data from the experiment to students and staff.”

What does the Science Fair mean to you?

Sophomore Elias Castillo, Participant and Award Winner (Accessible Water Filtration System): “The science fair is a really good way to demonstrate to fellow students our project and what we have accomplished. It was really fun seeing everyone look at, laugh about, and admire our project and hard work.”

Junior Alina Tran, Participant (Neurological Impact of Recreational Drugs): I think the science fair is an eye-opening learning experience in the way that it exposes you to different branches of science!”



Image Courtesy of Blue & White Staff

What did you think of your visit today?

Sophomore Domenic Lawrence, Attendee: “Very smart people, very scary. There are a lot of smart minds in here and it’s very nice to see them being creative.”

Sophomore Ella Hayes, Attendee: “I think the science fair was very fun and it was nice that our teachers had us asking questions to get us more involved. I do wish, though, that the questions asked weren’t mandatory classwork grades because it made things feel more forced and less authentic.”

Sophomore Emi Grondine, Attendee: “I feel like the cafeteria was a little tight so it was hard to get through but I like the way the projects are set up. Overall, I think the people did great with their projects!”

Is there anything you would change about the Science Fair?

Sophomore Kiera Fitzpatrick, Participant (How Ocean Pollution Affects Marine and Terrestrial Life): “It wasn’t that bad but I don’t like sitting here. It’s really hot and I have no water. I’d change the location.”

Sophomore Natasha Vuong, Participant (How Ocean Pollution Affects Marine and Terrestrial Life): “I wouldn’t change anything other than the location.

Sophomore Elias Castillo, Participant and Award Winner (Accessible Water Filtration System): “I would change the location. It’s really crowded in here.”

Any final comments?

Sophomore Milo Isaacs, Participant and Award Winner (Accessible Water Filtration System): “It [the accessible water filtration system] kind of worked, woohoo!”

Sophomore Ella Hayes, Attendee: “I appreciate the work and dedication these bright and gifted students put into their projects!”

With the science fair comes a selection of winners! Congratulations to the students recognized in the 2022-23 MHS Science Fair:

First Place Individual Science Fair Project: Rory Smith, “Success Rates of Different Grafting Methods on Pepper Plants”

First Place Team Science Fair Project: Yasmine Bridaa and Divier Ramos Delgado, “Cellfie Time: A Comparison Between a Commercial Microscope and Handmade Microscopes”

Outstanding Biology Award: Crystal Castro, “The Effect of Sleep Deprivation on the Immune System”

Outstanding Environmental Science Award: Taylor McDermott, “Can We Prevent a Mass Extinction?”

Outstanding Chemistry Award: James Lug, “Distillation and Filtration of Seawater”

Research Based Chemistry Award: Lyndi Cloutier and Issaiah Perreira, “Therapeutic Effects of Cancer Vaccines”

Outstanding Physics Award: Idenisse Vega and Daniel Loan, “Zoom Zoom Zoom, Man That’s Close!”

Outstanding Biotechnology Award: Ava Klemm and Francesca Reitano, “Treating Autism and

Hemophilia Using Gene Therapy”

Outstanding Research Project (Anatomy/Physics): Joey Casarano, Anesti Touma, Drew Eason, “Turf Fields Knee-d Change”

Outstanding Laboratory Project: Henry and Joseph Becuti Ortiz, “Compound X vs Root Growth”

Outstanding Engineering/Demonstration Project: Milo Isaacs and Elias Castillo, “Accessible Water Filtration System”

Outstanding Engineering/Demonstration Project: Ibrahim Afzal, “Manipulating Sound Frequencies to Achieve Levitation”

Outstanding Engineering/Demonstration Project: Amanda Cameron, “Crystal Growth in Various Solutions”

The students listed below are regional and state science fair qualifiers. Regionals will be held at Tufts University, while States will be held at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology!

Rory Smith, “Success Rates of Different Grafting Methods on Pepper Plants” (Regionals & States)

Yasmine Bridaa and Divier Ramos Delgado, “Cellfie Time: A Comparison Between a Commercial Microscope and Handmade Microscopes” (Regionals & States)

Milo Isaacs and Elias Castillo, “Accessible Water filtration System” (Regionals)

Ibrahim Afzal, “Manipulating Sound Frequencies to Achieve Levitation” (Regionals)

Amanda Cameron, “Crystal Growth in Various Solutions” (Regionals)

Shoutout to every MHS science fair participant for the time and dedication they invested into putting their project together. All projects made for an incredible science fair; your hard work does not go unnoticed! Here’s to many more years to come!



Lanyards and IDs

by Caitlyn McGhee

At Methuen High School, as of the 22-23 school year, school IDs are making a comeback.

At the beginning of the school year, MHS administration announced that school IDs would need to be carried with students during school hours. This was also a rule in the 19-20 school year, but when COVID-19 hit, lanyards and IDs were kind of forgotten about as masks were the most important rule being enforced by schools.

Personally, I think that IDs can be a good and a bad thing. I think a form of identification is always good in case of emergencies, because it is easier to identify a person with a picture and name on their ID card instead of just a number. They are also good because the scanner bar makes the late student check in process much easier. On the other hand, if you forget your ID at home that could cause issues if you end up being late or you have to show it for some reason. I keep my ID and lanyard attached to my car keys so I don't forget, but I could see it causing an issue if it got misplaced.

I also believe being able to choose your own lanyards would be a perk to the ID system. It's good to be able to express yourself, your interests, and who you are in school, and being able to have the creative freedom to do so through the lanyards.

Overall, the lanyard and ID policy definitely has its pros and cons in terms of convenience, but it's made for identification so it's a generally smart idea and could definitely make things run smoother in case of emergency, and it's hard to disagree with that.

Honors Vs. AP: What's Best for You?

by Madison Chin

Here at Methuen High School, we are offered three different course levels, College prep (CP), Honors, and Advanced Placements (AP). Each of these course levels have different requirements which are expected from the enrolled students.

Honors and Ap courses are classified as more advanced, meaning they are more rigorous and weighted heavier on your GPA. The difference between the two courses is not drastic, but the decision between the two can really influence your school year and your overall transcript.

AP is the highest-ranking course level offered here at Methuen High School. Unlike honors classes, there is a final exam during the month of May that decides whether or not you get college credit for the class. In order to take this final exam you need to pay a fee which is \$97.

For those in the lower income bracket the fee could vary. In order to be considered for eligibility of fee reductions students are encouraged to contact the school's AP coordinator. You are expected to pay this fee in November unless you have decided to opt out (which erases the multiplier added onto your GPA at the end of the year.)

The exam is timed for around 2-3 hours and has multiple sections to work through. The kinds of questions and sections that are on the test are based on what AP class you took. These AP exams are scored on a scale from 1-5. Anything under a 3 is failing, meaning you do not receive college credit. However, if you have a good grade at the end of the year, your GPA will be weighted heavier due to the weight of the course.

When enrolled in an AP course you have an immense amount of responsibility expected from you. You are expected to stay up to date with the difficult assignments which are posted at a fast pace. If you fall behind in the class it can be very difficult to catch up, since the class moves through material so quickly.

Honors courses are similar to AP classes in regards to the expectations you are held to. However, I believe that the coursework is a lot less intense than that of an AP class. Honors classes are very good for students who are too advanced for CP classes and need a faster-paced environment to work in.

I believe that if you are a good test taker who is also good at keeping up with fast-paced assignments that are more difficult to complete, an AP class would suit you. If



Image Courtesy of Google Search

you are not confident in your test taking abilities but can handle somewhat challenging assignments you should take an honors course.

If you are hoping to go to a more competitive college, AP classes are definitely a good way to show admissions that you are capable of advanced-level education. They are also a great way to boost your GPA and improve your work ethic and time management. Many students such as myself take both AP and honors classes. Personally, I think that this is a great way to help improve your transcript and to prepare you for future education.

College Expenses

by Lea Saab

In my opinion, for a high school senior, there is nothing more anxiety-driven than the thought of what colleges to apply to and what major you'd like to study.

There's always been a stressful feeling around the subject but I'd argue that the anxiety surrounding college is at its highest peak due to the extreme expense that comes along with the studies.

According to research from Melanie Hanson, from the Education Data Initiative, the balance for overall federal loans is \$1.617 trillion, with 92.7% being college students/debt. The biggest question everyone asks themselves is, why? If there are so many young adults entering college, why must we pay so much?

For a while, I thought it was due to the selfishness of colleges, but after researching more about it, I've come to the conclusion that it's more the government's fault rather than the colleges themselves.

According to the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, "Overall state funding for public two- and four-year colleges in the school year ending in 2018 was more than \$6.6 billion below what it was in 2008 just before the Great Recession fully took hold, after adjusting for inflation."

This restriction of funding has caused expensive tuition and less academic opportunities. In conclusion, the government is giving young adult shovels to dig themselves a hole in student debt so they could spend the rest of their lives trying to pay it off.

Black Panther: Wakanda Forever Review

by Lisandra Mejia
Warning: Spoilers Ahead!

Black Panther: Wakanda Forever, opens up with a solemn prayer that is heard before an image appears of Shuri (Letitia Wright), sister of T'Challa, also known as Black Panther. Shuri is seen scurrying through her lab, trying desperately to find a solution to an unsolvable problem; saving her brother's life. Despite all her efforts, her attempts end when her mother (Angela Bassett) enters the lab and declares that her brother is at peace with the ancestors.

Chadwick Boseman, the actor who played T'Challa, died in August of 2020. Marvel made the decision to not recast the protagonist, and had the first 10 minutes of the film paying homage to him. The Black Panther is given an all-white funeral and a homegoing march through Wakanda. The viewer feels the absence of not only a hero but of Boseman himself- who battled cancer throughout his role in Black Panther.

The decision to not recast the protagonist was essential to the plot as Wakanda is a civilization that is trying to handle business but also grieve through such a great loss.

Throughout the movie, we see Shuri struggling to overcome her grief while also being introduced to new responsibilities. One of the most pressing of those responsibilities is dealing with the new underground civilization called Talokan, made up of a tribe of mysterious fishlike creatures who have eccentric powers and fierce fighting abilities.

Eventually we're introduced to the leader, Namor (Tenoch Huerta Mejía) who approaches Shuri and Ramona, with a deal to join forces against outside invaders who desire the fictional super-metal, Vibranium.

Wakanda and Talokan are the only civilizations with that pot of gold available to them.

The Wakandan leaders reject this allegiance and are met with a Talokan-led massacre that results in the death of Queen Ramona. Consequently, Shuri becomes the Black Panther as a means to avenge her mother and people, but when met with the decision to kill Namor she spares him, and decides to be better and be allies with the Talokan people.

Although a good film, *Wakanda Forever* falls short of its prequel and becomes an eulogy struggling to grasp the same content quality as the first *Black Panther*. The movie is 2 ½ hours long, with over-busy storytelling and coping with sadness and loss.

The introduction of the new kingdom feels like an arbitrary choice, and it's very telling that this is a filler movie, preparing us for the 3rd movie in the series.

The loss of Boseman truly impacted the movie, as he was the protagonist and that kind of talent could not be found again. The female roles, though, played by Lupita Nyong'o, Letitia Wright,

Michaela Coel, and Dominique Thorne, were stellar and truly helped bring the movie together.

At the end of the film we see Nakia (T'Challa's love interest) reveal to Shuri her and T'Challa's six year secret, their son. A tear-jerking moment for the viewers and yet another tribute to the late actor, but it leaves the viewers questioning, "What's next?" Whether that was done accidentally or purposely is something that I haven't yet been able to decide.

Rating: 3.5/5



Courtesy of Bing Images

Best Winter Coffee Flavors

by Jelissa Hanley



Courtesy of Bing Images

With winter in full swing, it's time to find out which winter coffee flavor is favored throughout Methuen. The flavor options this time around were: **Peppermint Mocha**, **Chestnut Praline**, **Caramel Brûlée Latte**, **Sugar Cookie Almond Milk Latte**, **Iced Sugar Cookie Milk Almond Latte**, and **Toasted White Chocolate Mocha**. I interviewed 111 of the citizens and students of Methuen.

Let's dive into some opinions on the winter coffee flavors. I asked a few people two questions about the coffee flavors and their opinions on them. The questions were: "Which flavor sounds the most delicious?" and "Which flavor sounds the worst?"

Freshman Student Alexys Feugill said for the most delicious, "The Sugar Cookie Almond Latte, because the sugar cookie just sounds really good." For the worst drink she said, "The Peppermint Mocha Latte sounds the worst, something about mint and chocolate doesn't work for me in my head."

Freshman student Kathryn, in regards to the most delicious drink, said, "I feel like Chestnut Praline looks the best, it just kind of grabs my attention." For the worst drink she said, "Honestly none of them, they all sound like they're really good."

Finally, I asked Journalism Teacher, Mr. McKenna, for the most delicious winter drink. He said, "I'll have to go with peppermint mocha for my favorite. That is such a classic flavor, it sums up 'winter' really well." For the worst one he said, "worst is a tough one. Either the caramel brûlée or the toasted white chocolate sound the least appetizing. The brûlée sounds

overly sweet, and I'm just not a fan of white chocolate in general."

Of all the options the winner, with 23 total votes, was Toasted White Chocolate Mocha. Toasted White Chocolate Mocha is an, "espresso paired with caramelized white chocolate combined with steamed milk and topped with whipped cream and festive holiday sprinkles and crispy white pearls" (Starbucks). Even though this drink happens to be my favorite, I was surprised to find out that this was the most favored drink.

It is so interesting to see all of the responses to the different types of drinks. The top three drinks that people liked were Toasted White Chocolate Mocha (23 votes), Caramel Brûlée Latte (22 votes), and Peppermint Mocha (20 votes). It was a pretty close call and I personally agree with the order of the flavors. What's your favorite winter coffee flavor?





Winter Word Search

W	S	H	B	K	L	Q	Y	W	Z	H	J	M	W	D	I	C	S
N	C	A	O	Z	S	Z	S	I	P	O	C	C	C	E	O	E	N
E	A	A	J	T	R	B	P	N	J	T	V	H	G	C	R	F	O
W	N	N	A	P	C	M	J	T	Q	C	C	R	J	E	N	E	W
Y	D	C	N	R	S	H	U	E	Z	H	T	I	A	M	A	B	M
E	Y	O	U	E	S	N	O	R	H	O	E	S	C	B	M	R	A
A	C	L	A	S	C	X	O	C	O	C	T	T	K	E	E	U	N
R	A	D	R	E	A	I	N	W	O	O	S	M	E	R	N	A	S
S	N	W	Y	N	R	S	C	E	A	L	F	A	T	P	T	R	C
Z	E	J	P	T	F	R	J	E	G	A	A	S	X	D	S	Y	G
Y	X	Q	E	S	H	K	T	C	T	T	D	T	T	P	B	Y	I
M	I	T	T	E	N	S	S	W	V	E	M	N	E	I	J	K	N

Find the following words in the puzzle.
Words are hidden ➡ ⬇ and ↘ .

CANDY CANE
CHRISTMAS
COLD
DECEMBER
FEBRUARY
HOT CHOCOLATE
ICE



JACKET
JANUARY
MITTENS
NEW YEARS
ORNAMENT
PRESENTS
SCARF



SNOW
SNOWMAN
WINTER

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(left to right) 2022/23 Blue & White Staff Virginie Assaf, Emma Lam, Digital Editor Crystal Castro, and Livia Lawrence