

The Blue & White

MHS Renovations

by Callie DeLano



Image courtesy of B&W Staff

Brighter, more efficient lighting is one of the new additions to the school this year.

One example of a major change that came to MHS after the remodel was the addition of our cafeteria's patio, where many students enjoy lunch in the fresh air. This addition was a student-lead project began by a former Eagle Scout and students are happy to eat in the sunlight.

Many faculty members still stroll the hallways of Methuen High School reminiscing about the classrooms without walls, but it's already been ten years since the massive renovations.

Students have always adored the building's remodel. However, it's important to highlight the continued growth of the school that head principal, Mr. Barden, hopes to achieve every year.

Sitting down with Mr. Barden, he emphasized the need for student-led initiatives for change. MHS students are fortunate to have a head principal who makes listening to student voices a priority.

One example of a major change that

Mr. Barden has always prioritized making our school feel inviting. Hallways are lined with Ranger blue colors and bright TV's advertising upcoming school events. Barden wanted the school to feel more like student body energy and pushed for the environment to also "bleed blue" like MHS students do.

Main hallways include 'Ranger Blue' paint, alongside new paint jobs that include the beautiful murals created by students. Just last year, the BIPOC Club partnered with Elevated Thought and AnnaDidAThing to create the unity mural placed above the North House hallway. Students are reminded by electric colors and depictions of collaboration to continue to make MHS a welcoming environment for all people.

For our talented athletics, Barden pointed out the work of the Methuen Boosters Team. With the help of their fundraising efforts, MHS has been able to provide sports teams with new equipment in the Larry Klimas Field House, such as batting cages, basketball hoops, and a new indoor track. There have also been two new school issued vans which help transport athletes and club members to games, conferences, and meetings.

MHS continued its renovations within the academic portion of the school as well. The MILL was introduced to MHS in 2013 and has become a huge part of the science department and MHS Robotics Team. The MILL includes 3D printers and robotics equipment, which allow students to engineer different items for a hands-on learning approach in the STEM field.

In 2022, the English Department introduced its first student-led Writing Teaching Assistant Program. Starting this school year, students excelling in and passionate about writing could become a TA and help students in English classes with their works. This peer education program allows students to improve their own writing skills by working with other students.

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Image courtesy of B&W Staff

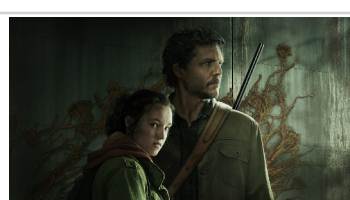
Improvements and additions to the front entrance include a fenced patio, electronic sign, sidewalk safety barriers, and 'main entrance' lettering.



The BARN at Mann Orchards



The Little Mermaid



The Last of Us Review

Special Feature

The 2023 Commencement: Congrats Grads!



2023 Election Results for Student Council

Class of 2024

President: Michelle Nguyen
Vice President: Lillian Byrne
Secretary: Arianna DeLeon
Treasurer: Kaylee Smith
Student Council Reps: Calysa Alba, Isabella Monsanta, Christina Nguyen and Alina Tran

Class of 2025

President: Desmond Csizmadia
Vice President: Benjamin Catarius
Secretary: Christian Belanger
Treasurer: Thomas Le
Student Council Reps: Brady Antaya

Class of 2026

President: Jane Lawley
Vice President: Brady Nguyen
Secretary: Jillian Tran
Treasurer: Mehak Kalia

Feature

The Inside Scoop: The BARN at Mann Orchards

by Karina Shah

Every spring, Mann Orchards opens their ice cream shop called The BARN outside of their main store. This is a place you must try, if you haven't already!

The BARN at Mann Orchards, located at 27 Pleasant Valley Street in Methuen, offers over 40 different ice cream flavors. They scoop and sell Gifford's Ice Cream, made with fresh, local ingredients in Skowhegan, Maine.

Although this reporter has yet to taste all of the many ice cream flavors available, some of my personal favorites are **Moose Tracks**, **Campfire S'Mores** and **German Chocolate Cake**. The flavor **Moose Tracks** is vanilla-based with

chocolate brownie chunks and chocolate chips. I love how this flavor has a few different aspects to it. As another alternative for chocolate lovers, **German Chocolate Cake** is a delicious chocolate-based ice cream with a German chocolate layer cake made into it. **Campfire S'Mores** tastes like camping on a warm summer night. is a graham cracker-based ice cream with gooey marshmallows and rich chocolate chips.

Another aspect of the BARN that I appreciate is that they offer seasonal flavors such as **Apple Pie** in the month of August and **Pumpkin** in September. The BARN also offers sugar-free options and if you're someone who prefers no-sugar desserts. I recommend **Raspberry-Vanilla Swirl** as a great choice for you! For those who would rather eat soft-serve ice cream, The BARN offers **Vanilla**, **Chocolate**, and **Vanilla-Chocolate Twist**. Any ice cream can be made as a milkshake as well.

The BARN doesn't just serve ice cream, they also offer frozen yogurt flavors such as **Purple Cow** and **Blueberry Oat Crumble**, along with sherbet flavors such

as orange or rainbow, and sorbet flavors like **Strawberry-Lemonade** and **Red Raspberry**. But be warned--their sizes run big. I usually order my ice cream in a baby cup because it's still a lot!

Another popular item at The BARN is their sundaes. It wouldn't be an ice cream stand without one! When ordering a sundae, you will receive your flavor of ice cream with standard items like toppings of your choice, whipped cream, walnuts, and a cherry to top it all off. Banana splits are also available. My sundae order is usually **Mint Chocolate Chip** with caramel sauce, marshmallow sauce, whipped cream, walnuts, and a cherry. Be sure to try these delicious ice cream scoops before September when they close.

A local Methuen citizen, Kristen Marino, said **Chocolate Peanut Butter** is her personal favorite. She enjoys both peanut butter and chocolate, so the mix of items is perfect in her ice cream. She also likes to add chocolate chip sprinkles on top to complete her dessert.



MHS Renovations

continued from front page...

by Callie DeLano

Though not as visible as other updates, MHS students utilize the school's new expanded parking lot daily. When construction started in 2018, the parking lot could only accommodate for half the cars it can today. Now, all MHS students can use the student lot for parking with a parking pass.

Alongside the parking lot is the new MHS digital sign, which is set in front of the main entryway. This sign scrolls through announcements about any upcoming events for MHS, and was pushed by Bill Bryant with the Boosters. Students can see what's going on at MHS from the cafeteria and parking lot any time now!

To build a greener (and brighter) path of education, the school has installed new energy efficient light bulbs in the front entryway. These light bulbs produce more light and are safer for the environment. Mr. Barden plans to have these installed within all hallways and hopefully classrooms.

Students may have also noticed the new water bottle filling stations along the hallways. These water fountains promote the



Image Courtesy of B&W Staff

The outdoor cafeteria seating had a new fence and banner installed in spring of 2023.

use of reusable water bottles instead of single-use plastics to make sure the school is staying green.

As an administrator prioritizing student leadership, Mr. Barden has pushed for creating positive change within our diverse community. If students have ideas of change for the school: start the conversation! Many projects are funded through grants so the school can afford to keep up with the future.

Feature

Stage Door 22's Annual Cast Party & "The JOANY'S"

by Crystal Castro

Stage Door 22, Methuen High School's theater guild, finished off the year strong with their performance of *The Little Mermaid*, just in time for the live action movie's release Friday, May 27th.



To celebrate their success, the cast and crew threw their annual cast party and 'JOANY' awards. The purposes of the Cast Party and "The JOANY'S" (not to be confused with the Tony's) are to both celebrate the hard work of every cast and crew member that made the production possible, while also honoring the seniors for all of their dedication throughout their time in theater.



The Cast Party is held at a cast member's house and is a potluck style occasion, in which each member brings in something, whether that be chips, soda, sandwiches, pasta, fruit, cake, or anything in between, for everyone to enjoy. Throughout the home, different members of SD22 partook in different activities depending on where they were.



Overall, the Cast Party achieves its purpose by providing a designated time outside of school for all members of SD22 to hang out and create long lasting memories with one another.

The "Joany's" originated years ago, and was inspired by the annual Band Award Banquet hosted at DoubleTree by Hilton in Andover. According to Director Joane Walsh, members of SD22 asked if they were going to celebrate the end of the year with an awards banquet like the MHS Band had at the end of the year, to which she replied, "No—we are going to have an ice cream social!" This was not only because holding an awards banquet takes a lot of planning, but also because SD22 didn't have any funding to pay for a venue, DJ, or awards.

Therefore, the Joany Awards, inspired by the Tony Awards, was born and has been held at the end of the school year ever since. At the Joany's, seniors are recognized for their time in SD22 and receive senior posters and Joany Awards. What makes these awards unique is that they are meant to lightheartedly dig at each graduating member.



Here are the awards for the 2022-23 year:

"Where Have You Been?" Award: Elijah Hashem, because no one ever knows where Elijah is, whether that be with the Costume Crew, Props Crew, Set Crew, JROTC room, on stage with the cast, or wherever else...it's Elijah.

"Athlete of The Year" Award: Brandon Bui, because Brandon is always running around to be as efficient as he can, while doing flips and tricks of all sorts, like a true athlete.

"The Zen" Award: Issaiah Pereira, because Issaiah's comforting presence never fails to make anyone feel calm.

"Ugly Duckling" Award: Nero Marcazzolo, because Nero grew out of his shell throughout his years in SD22, and bloomed into the thoughtful and outgoing person he is today.

"Newcomer" Award: Allison Castiello, because Allison just joined SD22 this year and was incredible as one of the Mersisters in *The Little Mermaid*.

"MVP" Award: Dyana Bell, because whenever Walsh needed something, whether that be a prop or a helping hand, Dyana was always there to save the day.

"Beyond the Call of Duty" Award: Emily Lindtviet, because Emily managed to juggle multiple extracurriculars, including Band and Varsity Track, and still gave SD22 her all.

"Jack of All Trades" Award: Cameron Cagle, because Cam was placed in Walsh's Acting class when he transferred to MHS and graciously volunteered his time after school to both cast and crew throughout his years.

"Girlboss" Award: Rory Smith, because not only did Rory serve as Light Crew Chief this year, but she also managed to rank as Valedictorian in this year's graduating class (like a girlboss).

"Mama Bear" Award: Dhameliss Benitez, because Dhameliss never failed to offer a helping hand and comfort the underclassmen when they needed it.

"Right Hand Man" Award: Bryan Diep, because Bryan was never afraid to voice his opinion to Walsh and helped her make well-thought out decisions throughout his years in SD22.

"Philosophers" Award: Andrew Le, because Andrew constantly shared his wisdom and is going on to study Philosophy in college.

"Tried and True" Award: Ryan Naamani, because Ryan's relationship with Walsh began long before his time at MHS, in which he has proven to be a loyal, valued, and committed member of SD22.

"Independent Spirit" Award: Jenevieve Young, because Jenevieve's free spirited attitude set her apart from the rest in the beginning her freshman year, to which she now serves as SD22's Vice President and Front Office Manager.

"Standing Ovation" Award: Ella MacLaren, because Ella serves not only as President and Props Crew Chief, but also played lead roles throughout her time in SD22, and did so with professionalism, responsibility, and commitment.



All of Stage Door 22 is sad to see these seniors go, but at the same time, immensely excited to see what the future holds for these incredibly talented individuals.

The Ban On Drag Shows And Its Effect On The LGBTQ+ Community



Image Courtesy of Bing Images

States throughout the U.S. have been considering drag show bans.

by Olivia Ouellette

On March 2, 2023, a bill was passed in Tennessee that prohibits drag shows in public spaces or in the presence of children.

These shows are not allowed within a thousand feet of school grounds, places of worship, and public parks. Anyone found acting against this law will have to pay up to \$2,500 in fines and/or a year in jail.

At least 14 other GOP-led state legislatures have also been bringing forth similar anti-drag bills and laws. Following this bill, a separate legislation was created, “that bans transgender minors in Tennessee from receiving gender-affirming care like puberty blockers, hormones, and surgery” (Restrepo, NPR).

This ban has caused a lot of uproar within the LGBTQ+ community. Many see this as a part of a large-scale attack on the community, because this ban only adds to the ongoing restrictions on gender expression and transgender acceptance.

Drag shows have existed since the 1950’s and have been used to uplift many different groups of people who experience adversity and discrimination. It is a way for people to express themselves freely through songs, dances, and comedy.

With the restrictions on when and where drag queens are allowed to perform, the difficulty of being able to express oneself is growing. Alongside this, the negative views on transgender people are growing as well.

While there isn’t much that can be done about these legislations at the moment, we can still speak up about it. Stay informed about current actions that may be affecting your peers and the ones around you.

Drag is a form of self expression and should be seen as a way to uplift people positively, not restrict people in a negative way.

The Willow Project

by Liana Tarbox

The Willow Project has been confirmed. On March 13, the Biden Administration announced that the Willow Project will be moving forward, despite the protests and petitions.

The Willow Project has been in the works for quite some time now. It was originally given the go-ahead back in 2020, approved by the Trump Administration. It had been held up by court challenges since then.

For those who are unaware, the Willow Project is an oil drilling venture, set

to obtain around 600 million barrels of oil from Alaska’s north slope.

This project was proposed by ConocoPhillips, an energy company based out of Houston, who have been drilling in Alaska for a while. This project hasn’t been constructed yet, but now that it’s approved, it’s sure to start soon.

But why is more oil a bad thing? Why are people so against this? To put it simply, it’s estimated that the project could generate enough oil to release 9.2 million metric tons of planet-warming carbon pollution per year. This project can also be incredibly harmful to the natural habitats of the wildlife in Alaska, which has been a large part of the concern.

Due to this impact on the environment, many people have been speaking up against it, even starting a very successful petition on Change.org, which has received over 5 million signatures at

this time. However, this petition was not enough to stop the project from moving forward.

At this point in time, there’s not much we can do to stop the progression of this venture, which is unfortunate.



Image courtesy of Bing Images

The Willow Project is the largest oil drilling venture on U.S. soil.

The 2023 Poem Wall!



Building on an initiative started by English teacher, Mr. Jennings, in 2016, the Poem Wall asks students to write a single sentence about a struggle or challenge they are facing in their life. Check out the main hallway for the growing number of responses!



"When You're Lost in the Darkness, Look for the Light"

HBO's *The Last of Us* Review

by Makayla Mahoney

Spoilers ahead!

The long awaited TV adaptation of 2013's *The Last of Us* video game has come to a close with the striking first season, covering the franchise's first of two games.

Totaling nine episodes, the HBO series closely follows the plot of the game, uniting original fans and new watchers of main characters Joel and Ellie as they traverse across an infected United States.

It's not hard to understand how this show came to be the second largest debut on HBO, after *House of the Dragon*, as the story of a newfound family in dark, apocalyptic times touched the hearts of millions.

For those who don't know, *The Last of Us* starts in a world that looks like ours, then skips to 20 years into a fungal-infested society. We are introduced to Tommy, Joel, and his young daughter Sara as they fight to survive the chaos of outbreak day, facing infected neighbors and unhelpful soldiers.

After the loss of Sara on that very day, we skip 20 years into the future, with Joel, a hardened, traumatized survivor, living in Boston's military-run quarantine zone and smuggling with his partner Tess. We are then introduced to our other main protagonist, Ellie, a spunky 14-year-old girl who we find out is immune to the cordyceps infection.

Joel is tasked with smuggling her out of the city and to a rebellion group called the Fireflies, who hope to make a vaccine out of her immunity- thus our story begins!

The show's success is no surprise. The mixture of action and fighting against both 'clickers' (fungus-covered infected) and other survivors, world-building, and the development of Joel and Ellie's relationship from resentment to familial love is uniquely engaging. In nine episodes it was naturally easy to fall in love with the characters as they come and go, even as the show explores their actions as bad or good.

One thing I enjoyed was the discussion of Joel's morality. As our protagonist, we can't help but sympathize with and support him, but it is made clear

that Joel's actions early on in the apocalypse made him a 'bad man', which we see come to a shocking conclusion in the last episode.

Another great move on the writer's part was the parallels shown with the characters we meet and our main protagonists. Henry and Sam's story is more heartbreaking when compared to Joel and Ellie. Henry lived to keep Sam safe, and his life ended when he couldn't. Joel sees himself in Henry as he struggles to protect Ellie, reminded of the loss of his daughter Sara. Even though we shared only two hours with Henry and Sam, their loss left me and many others in tears.

We are also made to sympathize with antagonists until they cross dangerous paths with Joel and Ellie. This dynamic that is explored again and again throughout the series ends with us questioning if we should have even supported a protagonist like Joel- and my answer is yes! How can we not love any of Pedro Pascal's reluctant father characters?!

With millions of people tuning into the show at home, there must be quite a few fans of the show here at MHS. Let's see what they think!

If you were Joel, would you sacrifice Ellie or the possibility of a vaccine?

If I was Joel I don't think I would sacrifice Ellie because in the video game, at least, the fireflies are kinda made out to be idiots and they never explicitly explain the cure and how it would work. Joel didn't do what he did because he didn't think the cure would work, he did what he did to save Ellie and if I was in his position, and had lost the person I had cared for the most and someone came in and started to be that person again, I would never give that up personally. - Senior, Jenevieve Young

Kiss, marry, kill: infected old lady in episode one, bloater (large infected), or Abby (TLOU 2)?

*Kiss the old lady on the head, marry Abby to be safe because I haven't seen *The Last of Us 2*, and kill the bloater cause he'd rip me in half.* - Senior, Emily Lindtveit

Of any fictional character, who would you want to carry you throughout *The Last of Us* apocalypse?

*Steve Rogers (aka Captain America) or Sam and Dean from *Supernatural** - Senior, Matthew Torres



Bella Ramsey and Pedro Pascal Portray Ellie and Joel, respectively.

Courtesy of Google Images

The show has been praised as well for diving deep into the stories of queer characters, while the game gives the needed representation but most of the time leaves out the details. In a show like this where action takes a back seat to human relationships, queerness was represented in a way many shows haven't done, making something special and essential to a change in normalization of including these characters in our entertainment.

All of episode three is dedicated to telling the story of survivors Bill and Frank, and their love and marriage and ultimate death side by side. It was a beautiful story and received a lot of praise. Similar to that episode was the seventh where we get a look into Ellie's backstory and the night she was bit with her best friend Riley. Ellie's romantic relationship with her was revealed in the game's DLC, *Left Behind*, and the show's adaptation to that was perfect and bittersweet. The greatest part about the LGBTQ+ representation that *The Last of Us* includes is that it is done so seamlessly and not just included for audience satisfaction but it's essentiality to the story.

As someone who enjoyed playing *The Last of Us* myself, watching the characters and story be portrayed professionally on the big screen was thrilling as it was to many others. Seeing Joel and Ellie be perfected by Pedro Pascal and Bella Ramsey was a relief, and the shot by shot similarities from gameplay to show and apocalyptic cities were mesmerizing. If I could suggest one thing it would be to add more infected (runners, clickers, stalkers, and bloaters) vs. survivor action. Episode five's showcase of a hoard against the Philadelphia group was insane and added a lot more excitement to the adaptation. Overall, *The Last of Us* is a must watch, and with the second season underway there is much to be excited about with the continuation of the series.

Rating: 9/10

Arts and Entertainment

Movie Review: Everything, Everywhere, All at Once (2022)

by Ileanna Genao

Cast: Jamie Lee, Michelle Yeoh, Ke Huy Quan, Stephanie Hsu, and James Hong

Directors: Daniel Kwan, and Daniel Scheinert

Spoilers Ahead!

Synopsis: This film takes place in multiple universes where an experimental malfunction causes chaos. The fate of everything falls on one woman using her powers to save the multiverse.

The film, *Everything, Everywhere, All at Once*, is an amazing depiction of what a disconnected relationship between a mother and a daughter looks like.

The film takes place in multiple universes, or versions of their lives. In one of the universes, the daughter Joy (a.k.a Jobu Tupaki), suffers an experimental malfunction which gives her the ability to jump through the multiverse. Acquiring all the knowledge of the endless versions of herself, Joy manifests into an evil villain who feels as if there is nothing to live for.

While developing the mindset of 'nothing matters', she ends up creating the "everything bagel", an object that contains literally every thing, and could threaten to consume all existence.

Her mother, Evelyn, grows up with traditional values which causes their relationship to have conflicts because of how Joy

grows up with modern values. It turns out the only consistency that occurred within each and every universe between Joy and her mother was her mother's resentment towards her.

The 'main' Evelyn is unaware of what she has put Joy through all these years. In the film, Evelyn's desire in life is to fight for what's right to save the universe. In one of the universes, she aspires to be a singer and as she travels there, she forgets what is most important; to save the universe. As Evelyn gradually starts to push forward and continues to become just as powerful as her daughter, she discovers the "everything bagel." After discovering the bagel, Evelyn nearly loses all hope after it shows her the amount of failures she's had in her multiple lives. The bagel convinces Evelyn that life is pointless. She takes this to heart by letting everything in her life fall apart.

Yet, with the help of her husband, Waymond, daughter and mother end up rekindling their relationship when Evelyn finally comes to terms with and finally accepts her daughter. Not only does she obtain a healthy relationship with her daughter, but she also regains a healthy relationship with her significant others in every universe.

The significance of this film is its message. The message of this film is the importance of enjoying your life along with accepting what you have.

This movie is definitely worth watching because not only does it show wonderful morals, but it also shows fantastic science fiction concepts and a great sense of humor. However, I would not advise any adult to watch this with their kids who are under the age of thirteen because of the amount of adult humor.

Sprummer Word Search

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

Find the following words in the puzzle.
Words are hidden → ↓ and ↘ .

ALLERGIES
BEACH
CAMPFIRE
FINALS
FLOWERS
FUN
HOT



ICE CREAM
MARSHMALLOWS
POOL
POPSICLE
RAIN
S'MORES
SPRING



SUMMER
SUN
SWIMMING
VACATION
WARM



The Blue & White

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2022-23

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