



Northern Light



Newsies the Musical

By Noah Nerayoff

Questions about the actual event:

Newsies the Musical was performed by the students of North Middle school on March 22nd and 23rd in the Daniel J. Tomaselli auditorium.

Q: **Is it based on a true story?**

A: Yes! *Newsies* is based off of The Newsboys strike of 1899. During this strike, the newsboys who sold newspapers were undercompensated for their work. If you’ve watched *Newsies*, you’ll know that every part of the show is based on true events. Some include: one of the characters has polio, their accents match up with the time and area they were in, and the names of the “villains” (Joseph Pulitzer and William Randolph Hearst) were real people. Additionally, the price of the papers was accurate for the time period. The musical and movie shine a light on what was going on with the lower class citizens while the rich were living comfortably. It also includes details about the time period that are very informative.

Q: **Are there any villains/what’s their deal?**

A: The villains' names are Joseph Pulitzer and William Randolph Hearst. They owned the newspaper company that the newsboys sold papers for. They upped their price from 50¢ to 60¢ per 100 papers. It may not be a lot now, but those 10¢ are the modern equivalent of about \$5-\$7. Again, you might say “it’s not that big of a deal,” but these newspaper boys are orphans. They’re depending on those 10¢ for a day or two of food.

Q: **What's the visual theme/aesthetic?**

A: The visual theme/aesthetic is poor New-Yorkian/paper boys. The paperboys wear newsboy caps, button down shirts with vests, suspenders, and some slacks. The setting is 1899, New York.

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Q: What is an average day for them?

A: The time period was 1899, so things were very different. There weren't cell phones or internet, so newspapers were the best form of information. Their days started in the orphanage, on the rooftop of buildings or on the streets. There were many orphans in orphanages like them everywhere. They were children, but they had no parents so they had to act like adults. They had to manage their money, get themselves food, etc. They had to get up early and buy newspapers to sell. They immediately got to work, selling newspapers. They sold until the sun went down, then went to sleep, woke up and did it all over again.

Questions about rehearsals/the play:

Q: Why did you choose *Newsies* as the production for this year?

A: The students didn't get a say in what the production was. That was chosen by Mrs. Murdoco (The Director) , Mrs. Coutieri (The Dance Teacher), Mr. Trinkwald, Ms. Andreacci (Stage Director, Stage Director works with Stage crew behind the scenes), and Mr. Swerdlin (Vocal Teacher). Mrs. Murdocco says that the reason she wanted *Newsies* as the show is because she likes the show, she needed the right number of capable dancers, and wanted a show with more male roles. This year was perfect because there were a number of capable dancers, and a large amount of male actors.

Q: How long did it take to learn everything for the production?

A: Auditions were from November 28-November 30. The rehearsals were from January 3rd to March 20th. There were a total of 66 after school rehearsal days, and around 200 after school hours. In addition, there was work put in memorizing lines and dances at home and during lunch. But something to remember if you're considering trying out next year is that you don't have rehearsal every day. Even the main characters aren't at every rehearsal.

Q: What are tech weeks?

A: Tech weeks are the final 3 weeks of rehearsal. Tech weeks are mandatory for the full cast. For the first two tech weeks, (March 5th to March 16th this year), there is rehearsal from 3:20-6:00pm Monday through Thursday, and rehearsal on Sunday from 10:00am-5:00pm. In the final tech week, there are late days. On these days, rehearsals are after school until 8:00pm, Monday through Thursday, and there is a very long rehearsal from 10:00-8:00pm on Sunday. We have dinner during rehearsal on these days. Late days happen when the play is almost done being put together, so we usually go through the whole production at once. There is time for snacks and food and having fun, so they're enjoyable to go to. Rehearsals overall are a lot of fun and the time passes very quickly.

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School News

Q: **What and when is the in-school trailer?**

A: The in-school trailer is a shortened version of the play that was performed for the students and staff at Great Neck North Middle School. The cast and crew performed it live and it was projected onto smart boards in all the classrooms throughout the school. For this year, there was an in-school trailer on March 21st. The cast and crew did not attend classes on that day as they will be busy rehearsing and performing for the students. There was breaks for food and fun, and A LOT got done.

Q: **How long is it to watch the play?**

A: The play was about 2 hours and 30 minutes including a 15 minute intermission.

Q: **How much does it cost to produce?**

A: The musical productions at North Middle school cost (on average) \$10,000. The production of *Newsies* costs \$11,100. Prop rental is \$1,300, licensing (licensing is what allows you to do the show and not be sued for copyright infringement) is about \$2,000, backdrops are \$3,200, and sound (music, microphones, etc.) is \$4,600.

Q: **How does the actual show work?**

A: The actual show was performed two nights and each took about 2 hours and 30 minutes. Some years, there are two different casts on the two nights. This is called double casting. Our production of *Newsies* only had one cast.

Q: **Which night is the most fun?**

A: There is no real answer to which night is the most fun. Ms. Larson says, “The first night usually has the most energy, but the second night is more fun.”



Newsies: Behind the Scenes

By Liel Kafaierad

There is a lot that goes on in a musical. But have you ever thought about what happens backstage? In this article you will get an inside view on the behind the scenes of this year's school production *Newsies*.

There were many moving parts in the show this year. Some parts that were constantly moving were the backdrops. If you don't know what backdrops are, they are the screens or boards that rise or fall from the ceiling and help create different settings for the show. This year, two students named Liel Kafaierad and Josue Rodríguez were doing it. This job is really important for the show because without it there would be confusion on the set and with the audience.

In addition to the backdrops there were many props. Props are managed by Keira Leifert, Lily Silberstein, and Michael Polanco. They all worked so hard to make the newspaper bundles that were used during the show, they also got all of the items that the cast needed for the show. Another part of backstage is the set changing. Set changing is all other the furniture and decor that move on and off the stage. This was managed by Mia Li, Emma Ku, Monica Chen, Jolene Fu, Chloe Chan, Gabriela Grande, Kaitlyn Feng, Melody Xiao, Ruth Herrera, etc. Last but not least we had our amazing junior stage manager this year his name is Noah Hourizadeh.

Another part of the stage crew is the part in the back on the balcony. There, the lights and sound are managed. Mrs. Brendall is the teacher in charge at the top, she manages the light board, which controls all the lights in the auditorium. Vanessa Chen controls the sound board, which controls all the microphones and sound effects. Jocelyn Morley and Ethan Pschenica manage the spotlights.

There you have it, a full understanding of the stage crew during *Newsies*! We hope you join us next year.

NMS Six Graders Visit Frost Valley

By Hannah Hyman

On Wednesday, February 8th 2023, 179 6th-grade students and 22 teachers went on a trip to Frost Valley YMCA in Claryville, New York. It was a cold, chilly morning at the Parkwood Pool parking lot. Students, teachers, and administrators were split among 4 coach buses. As the students waved good-bye to parents, they were off on the three-day, two-night adventure.

Once at Frost Valley, students were placed into small groups and participated in activity after activity. There was candle making, hiking, rock climbing, team building, and more. One 6th grader, Janelle Zeng commented, “My favorite part about Frost Valley was the activities. I loved hiking because we got to see many different spots such as a frozen waterfall!” A 6th grade boy remarked how much he enjoyed the bird show at the end of the first night. “I’ve never seen an owl up close before. That was cool,” he said.

Teachers thought the Frost Valley trip was a positive experience. Sixth-grade reading teacher, Ms. Murray responded, “I enjoyed being able to spend time in the bunks with all the girls, especially being able to be with the kids who aren’t in my class because they are not my students.” Mrs. Rice, 6th grade English teacher and Discovery Team Leader mentioned the trip was a way to explore new things outside of the day-to-day routine. She said, “I thought it was a lot of fun and a good opportunity to make new friends and learn outside the school building.”

While there were a number of advantages of going on the trip, some 6th graders felt Frost Valley lacked in some areas. Multiple students didn’t enjoy the food Frost Valley served. One girl responded, “I didn’t like the Kosher meal. The regular meals had more to offer.” While a boy replied, “I wish we had gone to our bunks more often instead of standing outside in the cold all day.”

Most students interviewed said they learned at least one new thing by the end of the trip. An anonymous 6th grader remarked, “We learned more about responsibility. I cleaned the table and set up the plates as kitchen duty. This is helpful because it’s good to do stuff on your own without any help.” Another student, Molly Forst commented, “I learned that team building can come in different ways, shapes, or forms because you can be verbally doing something or physically doing something.”

After lunch on Friday, students, teachers, and administrators boarded the buses back to Great Neck. As Mrs. Rice put it, “If I had to change anything, it would be nice to go in different seasons. It would be cool to see what other activities are offered in different weather.” While some made new friends, others created stronger bonds and many were exhausted and dirty, there was one thing they all had in common - an eventful trip.



Valentines for Vets

By Madisyn Chan

Veterans are really important in our lives. From the slide presentation during the Advisory in homeroom, students learned that veterans are men and women who served in the armed forces for our country. Since they are so important, NMS students made cards for them!

These are the steps to making a card for a veteran:

The materials that you will need will be a piece of paper and coloring materials.

Step #1: Get out your piece of paper.

Step #2: Now, get out a black pen/pencil/or marker.

Step #3: Wherever you want, draw an American flag 🇺🇸 (Don't forget to draw it BIG). (The suggested place would be right in the middle 😊.)

Step #4: After you have done that, write a thoughtful message on top of it. An example of this would be *THANK YOU for all that you do!* OR *I'M GRATEFUL for your service and sacrifices!*

Step #5: Once you have done that, in **every other white line**, write a thoughtful message. *We love you and our country! You are brave and strong! We appreciate all of your sacrifices!*

Step #6: Furthermore, add your **first name only** to your card.

Step #7: Finally, color it all in!



Here is a picture of the final product.

Thank you so much for supporting veterans!

The Harlem Wizards

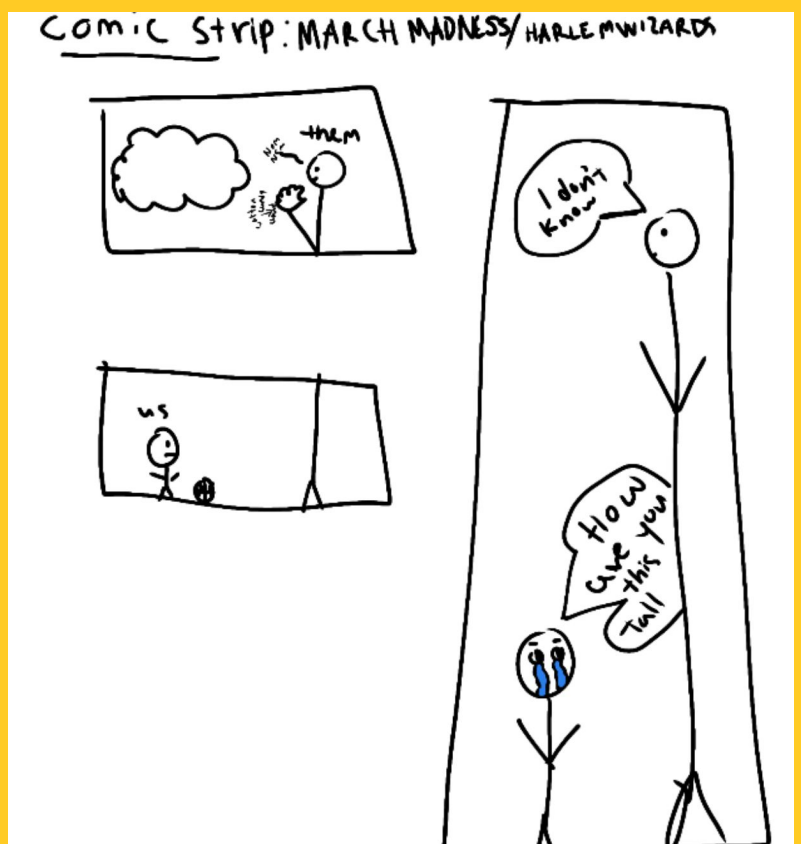
By Harrison Albin

On March 13, for the first time in years, the Harlem Wizards finally returned to Great Neck North Middle School, and they put on a show. Threes were flying up, dunks being thrown down, and teachers being given the chance to score.

The night began with an introduction of the players, where they each had a chance to showcase their skills. The first dunks of the night were thrown down, and possibly the first dunks some of those in the audience had ever seen.

Then began the game, in which the teachers were given a chance, and Dr. Boyt showed off his skills. Dunks were most of the points scored by the Harlem Wizards, with a few drilled threes sprinkled in. Over the course of the game, the score stayed relatively close due to the mercy of the Wizards and some sprinkled in moments where teachers shine. One amazing bucket was scored through an in between the legs shot by the teachers.

Overall, the night was an amazing and high energy spectacle to witness. The players were amazing, and we got to see our favorite teachers get dunked on and destroyed. It was a great experience, one I would recommend for anyone.



By Victoria Xu-Ferguson

North Middle MATHCOUNTS State Competition

By Brian Liu and Aaron Xu

Have you ever wondered how it feels to be able to go to a state-wide, middle school math competition? Well that's exactly what the five members of the North Middle MATHCOUNTS team were wondering until March 4. On the evening of March 3, the five members set off on the four-hour drive to Saratoga Springs, New York. Upon arrival, they settled in at the hotel there, excitedly awaiting the big day.

MATHCOUNTS is a nationwide math competition for kids in grades 6, 7, and 8. At each competition, it is split into 3 rounds. First, the sprint round. This consists of 30 problems in 40 minutes of work time, with the problems increasing in difficulty. The target round proceeded the sprint round, and was noticeably more challenging. However, competitors were allowed to use calculators. Two problems were presented at a time, with six minutes to solve each. There were four sets of two problems (totaling eight). After that came the team round. In this round, the entire team would work together to solve 10 challenging problems in 20 minutes. Again, calculators were allowed.

On February 4th, 2023, 12 members of the North Middle School math team would compete in the regional MATHCOUNTS competition for Long Island. Of these 12, one student, a 6th grader Aaron Xu, would win the top 7th individual score on Long Island, and five members would win the 3rd overall team score in the competition. This would officially allow them to have the opportunity to compete in the state-wide New York MATHCOUNTS competition, up in Saratoga Springs. These five members were 6th grader Aaron Xu, 6th grader Brian Liu, 8th grader Ethan Yu, 8th grader YuXuan Han, and 8th grader ZhaoXi Chen. Of course, we cannot forget North Middle's very own math team leader, Dr. Zachary Boyt, known to the team as Dr. Bagelman. At this competition, the team would get 11th place out of 60 teams in the state.

After the competitors pulled into the Holiday Inn's parking lot, they unpacked into the hotel rooms. In the morning, the competitors went to the lobby for the competition. The rounds were placed in the hotel's double ballroom. "The first 15-some problems in the sprint round were quite easy. However, the difficulty quickly escalated." Says Aaron Xu, a 6th grader at the competition. According to Brian Liu, the other 6th grader at the competition, "The first few target round questions were not that hard, but like the sprint round, the last few were quite challenging." The use of calculators were quite useful in the target and team round, as many of them required complex calculations to be done. According to Dr. Boyt (or Bagelman), the team being "11th place in the state is the 3rd best finish in NMS history!"

Overall, the state MATHCOUNTS competition was an exciting and thrilling experience for the five members and Dr. Boyt. Next year, the math team hopes to do just as well and hopefully enter the competition again!



Science Olympiad

By Nathan Zhong

Science is an important subject that is exhibited in our everyday lives. Science Olympiad is a fun competition that allows students to show their knowledge about science in fun and creative ways. There are a multitude of different events, each one a unique and enriching experience.

There are two categories of events: build events, and test events. Build events require you to build something before-hand, such as a model airplane or a roller coaster model. Test events are usually pretty straightforward, but there are also some events where you go to different stations and perform experiments, such as bio-process lab. There are events about aerodynamics, biology, astronomy, geology, and in the highschool competitions, even more modern and relevant events, such as creating your own WiFi router. You score points based on the place you get in the event.

Every year, our school has a team of around 15 students that go to the Eastern Long Island Regional Science Olympiad competition. On March 11, the day of the competition, all the students pile onto a bus, ready to compete. The competition is very early, and we all have to wake up before 6 AM. When we arrive at the location of the competition, which is usually a high school, we all feel very energetic and ready to go. The whole atmosphere of the competition was very electrifying. We had a schedule of all the events we were attending throughout the day, and in the downtime between events, we were free to walk the halls of school, and visit other teams. There were over 40 teams there, with around 30 different schools. Each student took part in 3-4 events, and there were 7 different time slots for events.

After we finished all the events, we received medals if you placed in the top 8. This year, we received 7 medals, which was a big jump from last year, where we only received 2 medals. We placed second place in two different events, namely codebusters, which was an event in which you had to crack different codes using various cyphers, and green generation, which focused on terrestrial issues and climate change. Our group of sixth graders got third place in the roller coaster build event. We got fifth in road scholar. We got seventh place in both anatomy and physiology, and meteorology. Finally, we got eight places in flight, a fun competition where you needed to create a model airplane that had the longest flight time.

Overall, we placed 18 out of 40 schools, which is pretty good. Science Olympiad is an incredibly enriching experience, and we hope to have more members next year and continue to improve.

Read Across America Day

By Abigail Bernstein

March 2nd is known across the USA as Read Across America Day. It was placed on beloved children's author Dr. Seuss's birthday, and is also known by some as Dr. Seuss Day.

North Middle School participated in an activity to explore our favorite books, and the impact they had on our lives. We created banners talking about our favorite book, what you learned from it, and some quotes/pictures/other things from said book that we specifically liked. They have been hung all around the school. The activity was met with unanimous positivity from the English department. When asked about what they would do for the activity, many talked about books from their childhoods, and books they've read recently and really enjoyed, and how it spoke to them. Ms. Wang talked about how *The Blue Sword* by Robert McKinley was the first to show her the real power of writing. Ms. Raffo shared about how *Grimm's Fairy Tales* helped her connect with her mom.

The English teachers may not have made the book banners, but they celebrated the holiday a little differently. If you walked into room 175 on March 2nd, 2023, you'd either find Ms. Rice wearing a sweatshirt promoting reading, or Samwise Gamgee from *Lord of the Rings*. Many teachers in the English department came into school wearing costumes of beloved characters from their favorite books, and other attire promoting reading. Some of the costumes include Ms. Wang as Samwise Gamgee (*Lord of the Rings*), Ms. Raffo as Katniss Everdeen (*The Hunger Games*), and Ms. Rice, Ms. Linehan and Ms. Andreacchi sporting a reading sweatshirt.

Not every English class did this activity. In Ms. Rice's English classes, she did an activity about comparing books to movies. The class read the first chapter of *Harry Potter*, and watched the very same scene as it is in the movie. It was almost unanimous, the book is better than the movie.

Read Across America Day was a great day that allowed NMS students to celebrate their appreciation of literature.

Advice from Miss Know-It-All

Dear Miss Know-It-All,

I have a toxic friend, and I've tried giving her hints, but I don't think that's enough to stop them. This has been going along for quite some time, and I don't know what to do next! One minute she's nice, and the next she completely ignores me! Then, she'll make insults towards me! It's like she's playing a game with me. What should I do?

From, Confused Girl

Dear Confused Girl,

Thank you for reaching out. Firstly, if you have determined who this toxic friend is, you are already halfway there! I know this might be hard to hear, but it's best if you take distance. Maybe stop sitting with her/him at lunch (if you do) or don't talk to her/him as much as you did before. I know from experience. The best choice is to tell her/him how you feel. This is also especially difficult. Perhaps, once you've told this person, they might try and change for you!

I wish you the best of luck!

From, Miss Know-It-All

Dear Miss Know-It-All,

During class and in the hallway, I'm getting bullied, people are name calling me, and occasionally back locking me. I'm thinking of going to the counseling center, but I'm too embarrassed! I'm fearful that the bullies will find out and target me. I would appreciate advice!

From, Student Getting Bullied

Dear Student Getting Bullied,

Unfortunately, bullying is a big problem these days. First of all, do not be embarrassed to go to guidance! They will only help you overcome this. Furthermore, guidance finds ways to help you without the bullied finding out. If you are getting back locked, then keep the lock of your locker LOCKED! This will definitely help prevent this from happening.

Lastly, I think the best way to deal with this is talking about it with a trusted adult, and getting advice from really good friends.

I hope this helps, and stay positive!

From, Miss Know-It-All

Dear Miss Know-It-All,

I have a crush on this boy...and I don't know what to do. Should I tell him that I like him? Or should I keep it a secret? What should I do?

Love, Ms. Lovesick

Dear Ms. Lovesick,

Well ... since you are in middle school and aren't ready to date, I suggest that you do whatever feels comfortable. (While keeping in mind your parents.) Also I can warn you that they might not like you back, if you decide to tell him/her. I really don't think that you need to be in a relationship in middle school. And don't be embarrassed, because it's as common as acne in middle school. It's just a normal life thing. I think that MOST of this decision is on you.

From, Miss Know-It-All

Dear Miss Know-It-All

I have a big friend issue. My friend is the person that everyone talks to, but I always feel left out. Should I tell her? Or should I try to adjust to being ignored?

Signed, The Lonely Girl

Dear The Lonely Girl,

I think that you should try and tell her. If you feel that way, then you should make it clear how you feel. If you feel like you are secluded, then you can bring it up and tell her. Or, you can go to an advisor. If you aren't comfortable with telling people how you feel then you can jot it down in a notebook. But (after building up the courage) you should definitely tell the person. And if you are not all that confident, then you can just try and take a break from them. Go try to make new friends, or even catch up on some homework. (JK, I know no one would really want to do this, unless you're crazy!)

From, Miss Know-It-All

Global Warming

By Abigail Bernstein

As winter transitions into spring, the snow on the ground melts and the temperatures get warmer. Except, there is no snow to melt, and the temperatures are already warm. What happened to our winter? And why is it only starting to snow in March?

While there is not one singular reason for this year's exceedingly warm temperatures, there is one reason that trumps them all: The Greenhouse Effect. It starts when carbon emissions from things like oil pumping, gas burning cars, gasoline generators, etc. go up into the atmosphere. When they're up in the atmosphere, they develop into clusters. These clusters work as one way mirrors, allowing heat and radiation from the sun to enter Earth's atmosphere, but reflecting it back down when it tries to leave. Because of the excess heat bouncing around Earth, the whole planet is warming. Because of this, all precipitation in our area will most likely be in the form of rain, because it is too warm for the water particles to freeze. However, our precipitation isn't the only untimely thing melting.

In the Arctic and Antarctic, glaciers are melting. In the past 6 years, a hole the size of Maine appeared in Antarctica, an iceberg the size of Rhode Island fell off of Antarctica, The Conger Ice Shelf in Antarctica collapsed entirely, among many others. These shelves are almost uninhabitable, so some people ask why they should care at all. While yes, they are almost uninhabitable, they do still have some residents, and an entire endangered ecosystem. The most endangered animals there are the polar bears. These bears live in the northernmost region of Earth, and migrate slightly South during the fall. With all of the ice melting, polar bears are finding themselves trapped in areas like Canada and Greenland during the summer, when they're supposed to be in the Arctic. The summer weather there is warmer than what they are used to, and they are dying from it. Not only that, the melting ice threatens their main prey: seals. Without seals, polar bears would starve, and wouldn't be able to raise any young. However, this melting is not going to let up soon.

As of March 13, 2023, President Biden has approved the Willow Project. The Willow Project is a program in which oil rigs are put on Alaska's North Slopes in order to drill more oil. It is estimated that we will be getting over 600 million barrels of oil. That's about enough to power New York City for a little over six years! While there are a lot of positive effects of the Willow Project, there are also a lot of negatives. While it does make 600 million barrels of oil available, it will also lose about \$10 billion dollars over about 10 years. It will also release 9.2 million metric tons of pollutants, which is equal to adding about 2 million gas powered cars to the world.

The Earth may seem hopeless, like we have dug ourselves into an impossibly deep hole, and can't get out. However, that is not the case. There are actions that you can take in order to lower your carbon footprint. These actions may seem insignificant, but are actually very helpful. You can carpool instead of multiple people taking individual cars, take the bus to school, or walk or bike if it's safe. Use reusable water bottles instead of multiple plastic ones, which aren't always recycled. Producing fruit and vegetable foods emit less carbon dioxide than meat and dairy products, so try to eat more greens. Also, don't throw away food because when it rots in a landfill, it produces methane. So, find a local compost bin, or start one of your own. Turn off your lights and other electronics when you're not using them. And, last but certainly not least, recycle!

For more information, visit <https://www.un.org/actnow>

World News (cont'd)

Traditional Spring Festivals Around the World

By Lila P Halpert

While winter is often regarded as the holiday season, the next season, spring, also has a multitude of joyous celebrations. The holidays of spring often focus on the rebirth, return, and beauty of the natural world, leading to many wonderful festivals.

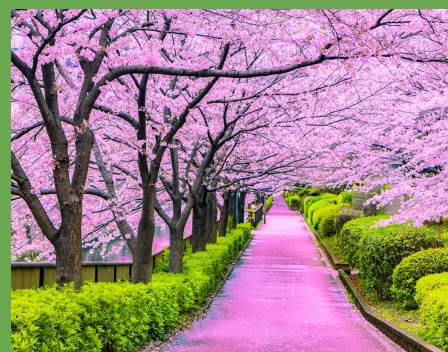
Songkran Water Festival: Celebrated in Thailand as New Year's Day, the Songkran Water Festival occurs a short time after the Spring Equinox. While it was once a much more spiritual holiday, religion is still involved. Many Thai people spend a part of the festival in Buddhist monasteries, where they ask for forgiveness, wonder what the coming year will bring, and make resolutions for the new year. Of course, one of the most important traditions is about water. Chiang Mai, Thailand's northern capital, hosts one of the largest celebrations. People of all ages run through the streets armed with water guns, hoses, and buckets, prepared to soak anyone and everyone.

Holi: Recognizing the change from one season (winter) to another (spring), Holi is easily one of the most vibrant festivals in the world. It is largely celebrated by North Indian Hindus, and can last a full day and full night. A colorful, positive, and joyous holiday, Holi begins with the lighting of a bonfire a day before, which illustrates good triumphing over evil. The next day, the most well-known tradition of Holi occurs: throwing colored powder at others. This symbolizes the many colors and hues of the spring season, as well as certain events from Hindu folklore.

Nowruz: Similar to Songkran Water Festival, the Thai New Year, Nowruz is known as the Persian New Year. A combination of "no" ("new") and "rouz" ("day"), this festival has been celebrated for more than 3,000 years. It symbolizes new beginnings, such as the reemergence of nature after winter. Nowruz's exact traditions and customs vary from country to country, but the festival, spanning multiple days, often begins with the lighting of bonfires (which represents burning bad things that happened in the previous year). Nowruz celebrations also usually include music, costumes, remembrance, and more.

Cherry Blossom Festival: The famous cherry blossom trees of Japan begin to bloom around late March, and the festival lasts for approximately two weeks afterwards. (However, depending on how far north you are, the small pink flowers, known as *sakura*, may remain through May.) Popular viewing spots include Maruyama Park, Himeji Castle, Mount Yoshino, among many other locations. The tradition of viewing the sakura is known as *hanami*, and people have been participating in this festival for centuries, writing poems and painting pictures of the blossoms' beauty. In modern times, visitors from around the world come to Japan to see the sakura before they fall to the ground.

These four festivals are just a few of the many, many holidays, traditions, and celebrations spanning cultures from around the world. If you liked this article, you can take it further and do your own research! You may just stumble upon an extraordinary celebration.



Entertainment Pages

Book, Movie, & Game Reviews

Video Game Review: Roblox - HOURS

By Luke Zhong

“Roblox is a global platform where millions of people gather together every day to imagine, create, and share experiences with each other in immersive, user-generated 3D worlds.” - Roblox.com. This description is very befitting of Roblox. True to its words, Roblox is indeed a game played worldwide, with thousands of experiences(games) created by the roblox player base. Recently, I have been getting reacquainted with one of my favorite games on Roblox: HOURS.

HOURS is a single player roguelite game where you take control of a character, called a host, who all have different attacks, and use a time related special ability called a tempo. When you start the game, you start off with a host called “Invader”, and a tempo called halt, which stops time for everyone but yourself for five seconds. Something that makes the game simple to learn is that the player can choose what difficulty they wish to play the game at. The main goal of the game is to unlock every single host and tempo. To accomplish this task, the player must complete challenges for their respective hosts. When in the main game, the player has to battle through four different stages, each with their respective enemies and bosses. Each time the player successfully completes a stage, they can choose one out of three random upgrades depending on the host they use. Every host has their own upgrades. Upgrades include new abilities and stat boosts. On the subject of characters, there are currently fifteen different hosts and thirty two different tempos. The fifteen hosts include eight regular hosts that tell you their quests outright and seven secret hosts that have cryptic hints when you click on them. For example, the secret host drifter leaves the hint: “Strike the wind.” In order to get this host, you must beat the game in any difficulty other than weeks, which is the easiest one, without taking any damage from enemies.

With its great combination of challenge, trial and error, and its rogue-like elements, HOURS is a great game to try if you are looking for a fun, new game to play.



Movie Review: *Shazam!* *Fury of the Gods*

By Julia Reed

Movie: *SHAZAM! FURY OF THE GODS*

Ratings: 8/10

Reasoning:

I rated this a 8/10 because it was a really good movie and very interesting! The only thing that was annoying/bad about the movie is there's a few boring parts that lasted about 1 minute long.

Synopsis:

Amazed with the powers of the gods, Billy Batson and his fellow foster kids are still learning how to live their teenage life and be a superhero. When an unforgiving trio of ancient gods arrives on Earth in search of the magic taken away from the gods a long time ago, Shazam and his allies get thrown into a battle for their superpowers, their lives, and the world.

Starring:

Grace Caroline, Zachary Levi, Rachel Ziegler, Asher Angel, and Jack Dylan Grazer.

Budget: \$110-125 million

Produced by: Peter Safran

Music by: Christophe Beck

Video Game Review: NBA 2k23

By Richard Yi

Before we start, if you buy the game, I recommend playing it on a Xbox or a PlayStation. NBA 2k23 is like a NBA basketball simulator. If you choose MyCareer, then you are just a normal person with a low overall rating at first but if you play more, you would get a better rating. You can go to the park to hoop and you can simulate a game against the computer. Or you can actually play against other players online.

If you choose the mode Myteam(my personal favorite mode), you can play using NBA stars like Steph Curry or Luka. They have different overall ratings based on how good their actual gameplay is(for example they could have a 84 driving dunk rating). You can also create your own teams and use players from every decade like Michael Jordan, Damian Lillard, and Bill Russell.

I like to create overpowered, or OP teams consisting of these players: Center: Wilt Chamberlain starts and Shaq is benched. Point guard: Magic is starting and Steph Curry is benched. Shooting guard: MJ starts and Kobe is benched. Power forward: Tim Duncan starts and Giannis is benched. Power forward(many people would not agree): Kevin Durant would be starting and LeBron would be benched.

Let me explain why I chose this lineup. I would choose Wilt over Shaq because even though most people think Shaq would be very powerful, Wilt was actually stronger than Shaq even though he was lighter. Wilt has a 99 rebound and Shaq only had a 97 rebound. Wilt was also a better blocker(98 block rating compared to 96 block rating) and he was a better scorer, with a 99 offensive rating compared to Shaq's 98. I would choose Magic as starting point guard because we already have good defenders and scorers on the team. We need a good passer. I would bench Steph because in the second half Curry would be in the game and he would heat up the game with around 5 splashes from deep. Shooting guard, we don't need to explain. Tim Duncan would dominate in the post and hit bank shots again and again. Giannis could be a monster in the paint and dunk on everybody. Now let me explain why I would bench LeBron. Kevin Durant is a great outside shooting and is tall so he wouldn't get blocked. We already have Jordan's dominance so we don't need LeBron for his dominance. Also we really need a good 3 point shooter because Stephen Curry doesn't come on until the second half.

If you don't want to spend money on NBA 2k23(it costs \$19.99 on Amazon) you can play NBA 2k mobile on your phone for free. Just download it on Google Play and you're good. However you first start out with really bad players but if you play more you can unlock more players like Paul George or Kawhi Leonard. You can also unlock power ups to use in-game.

I would give NBA 2K23 a 9.2/10 because the game is kind of complicated but the graphics are nice. I also think it was really worth the price but I also wish it was easier to play on PC. In order to play NBA 2K23 on PC, you need a processor capable of supporting SSE 4.2 and AVX. You also need a really good internet connection to play it on PC. In conclusion, I think NBA 2K23 is pretty good and I definitely recommend it.

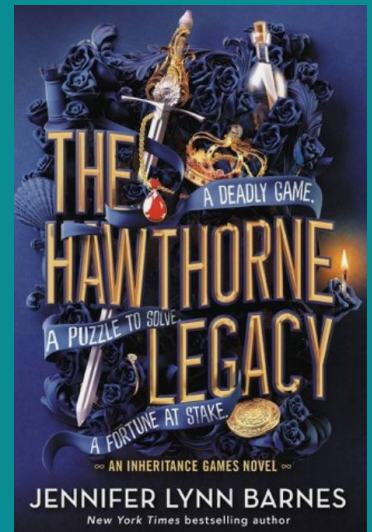


Entertainment Pages

Book, Movie, & Game Reviews (cont'd)

Book Review: *The Hawthorne Legacy* by Jennifer Lynn Barnes

By Catherine Wang



Protagonist/Narrator: Avery Grambs

Hawthorne Brothers: Grayson Hawthorne, Jameson Hawthorne, (Ale)Xander Hawthorne, Nash Hawthorne, Tobias Hawthorne II

Hawthorne Sisters: Skye Hawthorne, Zara Hawthorne-Calligaris

Fantasy, mystery, adventure: these are all genres of books that are easy to come by because of the mass amounts of them and the web. Variety on the other hand, differs from quantity as if you read a good handful of these types of books, you can basically predict what happens next in terms of the plot. (Until the author decides to bamboozle you...) This doesn't mean that books with a repetitive plot aren't good, the characters will always be unique, it just allows books with more unique plots in the same category to stand out.

A great book that “stands out” would be *The Hawthorne Legacy* by Jennifer Lynn Barnes along with the first and third books of this series. The plot is composed of a bizarre combination of the sons, daughters, deaths, and will of a billionaire. Yet even with the billionaire's children and grandchildren, Avery Grambs somehow finds herself inheriting the entirety of the Hawthorne fortune whilst previously having neither connections nor relationships with this family. Of course, this doesn't come without scrutiny from the public and a buildup of tension within the remnants of the Hawthorne family. Throughout this novel, something you should constantly expect is the comparison of life to a game. Since this book's storyline revolves around a mystery - specifically why Avery was the sole inheritor of the fortune - the game naturally correlates with it and develops the characters through competition. As they go down a spiral stairway trying to pinpoint the imperfections, you as the reader continue to be intrigued by the lure of wanting to solve the mystery yourself and by the relationships and friendships that are created as well as the ones that get demolished.

On a personal level, although you may never have this happen to you or anyone else you know, the endeavors the characters go through can be inspiring or at the very least captivating. This book's narrator is the protagonist, Avery, which naturally allows her to be the easiest one to understand, hate, and admire. Her character being able to gain all of this wealth and attention is a glorious advancement but sometimes, the pressure and expectations from similar situations can raise the question of whether or not something is actually worthwhile. Avery is constantly on the lookout for the prying eyes of society looking to create drama; this can turn into a mental health issue that you can't solve because every single action you take that is outside of your boundary line will be held against you at some point. Besides Avery's struggle to balance out her fame and wealth, the Hawthorne siblings also have their own “bonus” side conflicts. Relationship problems, trust issues, secrets, lies, all of this and more haunts you as the reader of the book seeing from an outside perspective what exactly all of these characters have to offer.

In conclusion, I would definitely recommend this book to just about anyone. The journey, climax, and cliffhanger at the end of each book in this series are all compelling enough to make you feel like reading around 300 pages in a single session. The only “fault” is that there are some descriptive parts of being hurt and wanting to escape which does add on to the overall development of the plot but may also trigger certain people. Additionally, the way the book is divided orients it in a way where a series is truly needed and not just a basic concept that has been overly stretched. Overall, my final take would be that this book is great for readers invested in these genres and a thriller of a book that you would want to read from top to bottom.

Entertainment Pages

Recipes, Trends, Fun Facts, and MORE!

Where Did the Snow Go?

By Sophia McLaughlin

This winter, New York has had a severe lack of snow. The most snow recorded this winter was an underwhelming 0.4 inches, compared to the annual New York state snowfall of 25 inches. This might not seem like such a big deal, but considering that dry, hot parts of the country like Texas and California got more snow than us, this is a big problem for New Yorkers, especially students in Great Neck schools. With the lack of snow, this means no snow days this year, which takes a toll on students. Student reporter Sophia McLaughlin created a simple five question form for students to fill out to voice their concerns about the lack of snow days.

The first question was very simple: **How upset were you that there were no snow days this winter?** Participants then had to pick a range from 1-10, with 1 being devastated, and 10 being joyful. Out of the 130 students who took the survey, 83 said they were devastated that there were no snow days this winter, making up 63.8% of the total participants. Others picked ranges in between, with the second most votes going to 3 out of 10, with 25 people choosing that option, or 19.2%. Only one person was joyful about the lack of snow days, making up 0.8% of the total participants.

The second question was about what fun activities students were planning on doing if there was a snow day. The six options were *sledding, skiing, snowboarding, skating, hanging out with friends, and sleeping in*. There were also other options where students could write their own answer. 37 people chose sledding, or 28.5%, 33 people chose sleeping in, or 25.4%, 27 chose hanging out with friends, or 20.8%, 6 chose snowboarding, or 4.6%, 3 chose skiing, or 2.3%, and one person chose skating, or 0.8%. Others chose the other option, and made choices like all of the above and playing with my cat.

The third question was: **Did you get to do these activities after school?** A whopping 96 people chose no, making up 73.8% of the total participants. 25 people said somewhat and 9 people said yes.

The fourth question was a short response, where people had to type their answers. The question was: **When was the last time you had a snow day?** Many people gave many different responses, but most answered last year or too long ago to remember, and some put two years ago. One person even said they had never had a snow day!

For the fifth and final question, the survey asked students how much they wanted a snow day. Similar to the first question, participants had to pick from a range of 1 to 10, 1 being they hated snow days, and 10 being they needed a snow day.. Also similarly to the first question, 95 people said they needed a snow day, making up 73.1% of participants. In second place, 15 people chose 8 out of 10, making up 11.5% of participants. Again, only one person said they hated snow days.

In conclusion, there has been a severe lack of snow days which the majority of students dislike. One student even said, “So having one day where we can relax at home and let that stress leave our bodies. That way we can come back to school, and pay better attention in class, and do better on tests.” Students need more snow days to relax and unwind so they can be more productive and prepared for school.

What Do Your Teachers Do on Snow Days?

By Molly Forst

On Tuesday, February 28, we almost had a snow day. That got people thinking, “what is it that *teachers* do on snow days?” Most kids sleep, bundle up in blankets, and relax. To prove this, student Victoria Xu-Ferguson said, “I usually just eat breakfast in bed, stay in my bed all day, and I usually go on my tablet.” Do teachers do the same?

To see what teachers mostly do on snow days, a few teachers were asked what they do. Sixth grade reading teacher Ms. Andreacchi said, “I put on clean pajamas and sit on my couch, and I probably would watch TV.” Seventh grade teacher Mrs. Wang said, “I like to make a hot cup of tea, and since I’m an English teacher, I get a good book and read.” So far, it seems as if both students and teachers like to have a relaxing day.

In conclusion, teachers seem somewhat similar to students. Could we be more alike than we thought?

Recipes, Trends, Fun Facts, and MORE! (cont'd)

Recipe

Submitted by Noah Nerayoff



Lamb's Head and Feet Soup

سوپ سر و پای بره

Makes 4 servings

Preparation time: 30 minutes

Cooking time: 4 hours

Total time: 4 hours and 30 minutes.



Ingredients

1 sheep or lamb's head with tongue	1 teaspoon turmeric
4 sheep or lamb's feet	2 tablespoons white vinegar
6 lamb tongues	2 teaspoons sea salt
6 cups (1.5l) water	1 teaspoon freshly ground pepper
2 large onions, peeled and quartered	1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
4 cloves garlic, peeled and crushed	Croutons of toasted sangak bread
2 bay leaves	

Instructions

1. Sear sheep head and between the feet (cloven hoofs) over an open flame to burn off hairs. Make a slit between the hoofs and remove a hairy gland that is there. Scrape and wash thoroughly. Remove the nose completely. Split the head in half vertically, with the tongue in one half, unless the butcher has already done so. Rinse with cold water.
2. Bring 6 cups/1.5l water to a boil and add the head, tongues, and feet. Skim froth as it forms: as soon as it stops forming add the onion, garlic, bay leaves, turmeric, and vinegar (to prevent discoloring, do not add salt until cooking is complete). Reduce heat to low, cover, and simmer for 3 to 4 hours until the meat separates easily from the bone. Add more warm water if necessary to keep the water level at a minimum of 3 cups. Remove bay leaves. Add salt, pepper, and cinnamon.
3. Remove the head from the soup, then peel the tongues and the skin off the bones. Separate the meat and brains from the skull. Return meat to broth and season to taste.
4. Pour soup into a tureen. Place croutons in each soup bowl before ladling out the soup. Serve with lots of Persian pickles (torshi), fresh herb platter (sabzi-khordan), and sangak bread. Nush-e Jan! (Fun Fact: Nush-e Jan is directly translated to “may it nourish your soul”, but is the equivalent of “bon appétit”.)

Other Information about the food:

Kaleh pacheh

کله پاچه

This is a favorite street food, often eaten in the early morning or before going hiking. Traditionally it is made with the head (including the tongue) and the feet of a sheep or lamb. Shanks may be substituted for the feet, which are not available everywhere. The head, feet, and tripe can be ordered from butcher shops with halal or Middle Eastern clientele.

Entertainment Pages

Recipes, Trends, Fun Facts, and MORE! (cont'd)

Recipe

Submitted by Sophia McLaughlin

Lasagna

About:

Lasagna is a dish composed of many layers of pasta, cheese, and meat sauce. It is very simple to cook and is a popular dish in both America and Italy. Lasagna has its roots in Southern Italy, with the oldest documentation around the time of Marco Polo's travels. This makes Lasagna one of Italy's oldest dishes. This specific recipe was adapted by my Grandfather when he first came to America. He loved to cook and try new things and experiment with different flavors. He passed down this recipe to my mother, and now she has passed it down to me to share with you.

Step 1:

Preheat the oven to 375 degrees fahrenheit. Then, get a medium sized pot and boil 6-8 cups of water. Place the pasta in and cook for 8 minutes. Stir occasionally. When finished, pour the pasta into a colander and let it cool.

Step 2:

Get a medium sized pan and cook the ground beef until brown. Stir occasionally. When the meat is done, turn off the heat and mix the sauce in with the meat.

Step 3:

In the baking pan, spread a thin layer of the sauce. Then, add a layer of pasta topped with sauce, then shredded and ricotta cheese. Add three more layers of pasta, sauce, and cheese. Finally, for the top layer, add sauce, then parmesan cheese, and a little drizzle of Ketchup.

Step 4:

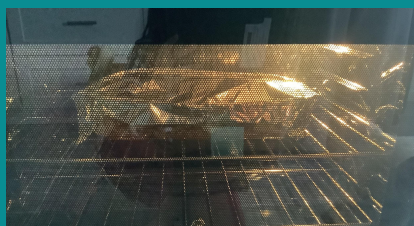
Place foil over the lasagna and bake for 30 minutes. After the 30 minutes are over, take the foil off and bake it for an additional 10 minutes.

Let it cool for 5-10 minutes before serving and enjoy!



Ingredients:

- 1 pound of ground beef
- Barilla lasagna pasta
- Marinara or tomato sauce (your choice)
- One tub of ricotta cheese
- Shredded cheese
- Parmesan cheese
- Ketchup
- 9x13 standard baking pan



False Snow in a False Spring

By Catherine Wang

Rumor says it's spring now but I disagree,
There has yet to be a snow day,
Yet to be real white disguising all the other colors.
Yet to be a true foot.

Today
Is today the day?
As large clumps of white drift from the clouds above,
A blizzard of a sight it seems.
Blown by the wind in spiraling directions, yet
None of it ever sticks.

The ground,
Is as colorful but colorless as it always is.
Where we put our two feet unless it's one or none,
Is as dirty as it always is.
The only change is some wet slop.

An entire school day it has been now,
The clumps as white and as large as they have been all day.
2...
4...
6...
6 hours, 30 minutes
The number of hours a school day lasts.

The flakes melt into the ground,
Do they melt?
Do they dissolve?
The flakes start melting at your touch,
But your hand is warm,
And the ground is cold.
So why don't they stay?
What a waste of snow;
A waste of a snow day;
All the while,
False hope still lingers in the air,
All of this in a year's false spring.

Spring Craft

By Genevieve Ferguson-Xu

Paper Flowers

SUPPLIES NEEDED:

Website: [first pallet](#)

- Paper
- Scissors
- Glue
- Straws
- Buttons, plastic gems, brads, or other embellishments (optional)



Steps:

1. Prepare 3 or 4 squares of any-color paper (same size)
2. Stack your paper and fold. Make a ½ inch fold on one side. Then you can separate the sheets.
3. Take one square. Using the fold width created in the previous step, fold each paper square like an accordion (back-and-forth folding).
4. Trim the excess paper after folding
5. Fold in half
6. Apply glue to the folded piece and stick them together
7. Do steps 3 to 7 on all squares
8. Round-out the edges
9. Glue the squares together
10. Add the straws and you're done!

Springing Into Spring

By Lila P Halpert

The days become longer
Spending more time with the brilliant sun than the mysterious moon
The plants become greener
Bidding *adieu* to the wilted flowers and bare trees of winter
The skies become lighter
Filled with all the levity and joy of a new season
The weather becomes warmer
Sending the coats and boots away for the year
The ambience becomes happier
As the world springs into spring

Giants Off-Season

By Noah Hourizadeh



3/14/23:

The New York Giants staff and General Manager Joe Schoen have upgraded the Giants team majorly so far. Most Giants fans are happy with the new and improved roster. The Giants have also extended and tagged players this off-season which is also a major improvement, but is also a loss. Extending and tagging players can be a loss because teams can overpay players or make players lose interest in their organization and team. For example, Daniel Jones was paid 160 million dollars for 4 years. This made fans very mad and made the Quarterback Market more pricey. Saquon Barkley was tagged which means that he has to stay with the Giants but only for one year.

The Giants have also traded for players and signed players such as Bobby Okereke and Darren Waller. Bobby Okereke is a middle linebacker who used to play for the Colts. He has underrated talents and will most likely shine bright this year. He was signed for 4 years with 40 million dollars. This is a great sign and great use of pay/money. Darren Waller is a tight end who is always a star except for this past season. Giants fans hope that he bounces back and hope that his bad performance was just because of his injury this past season. Darren Waller is a major help and could possibly bring the Giants an actually good tight end since Jeremy Shockey.

3/21/23:

Rakeem Nunez-Roches was also signed, which is a big sign as a defensive lineman. Parris Campbell from the Indianapolis Colts is a wide receiver who is underratedly fast but dealt with many injuries. He is a big hit or miss but Giants fans are hoping for him to stay healthy. Jeff Smith is a wide receiver from the New York Jets and is not known that widely. He has a big chance to shine this season but fans are undecided. The Giants have also re-signed many players including Darius Slayton who is looking to prove that he is still the wide receiver one.

All of these transactions for the Giants are all a big uncovering of what is really going on and what is going to happen in the near future. They are unfolding the New York Giants road to the Super Bowl.

NBA Updates: Victor Wembayama

By Jayden Wen

Victor Wembanyama - Part 2: Tanking

The NBA is in a frenzy. Hear me out. As expectations for French player Victor Wembanyama skyrocket, teams are doing anything to get a hold of him. Interestingly enough, a strange technique called “tanking” has emerged. What’s tanking? The purpose of tanking is to do worse in games to acquire a higher pick in the draft. Teams usually sit out their stars and put lower-ranked players. As Victor is expected to be the number one pick, teams are willing to tank.

Tanking - Good or bad?

Teams are sacrificing their present games for a good future. However, fans are affected. Many are enraged as fans do not want to pay to watch a game when they know both teams are not trying to win. Now, many look at tanking as a disgraceful act.

Victor - Bust?

This leads many to question: is Wembanyama worth it? Some question whether these drastic measures are worth it. People doubt if he will last long in the NBA because of his tall but skinny frame. Legends such as Yao Ming were excellent players but had short careers due to their tall, stalky frames that caused injuries. In addition, people question whether this European player could handle the tough league. Many European league first round picks failed to keep up with the NBA.

Sports Pages (cont'd)

March Madness

By Derek Gao

March Madness: the top of the sports world and the most shocking tournament in sports. It is a single-elimination tournament played by college-level men's basketball teams. You can probably say that the madness was "overdone" this year, but it was a blast.

In the round of 64, we saw insanely shocking upsets. 13 seed Furman upset 4 seed Virginia 68-67 after a horrible pass, to a steal, to a transition three, then to absolute chaos. 2 seed Arizona lost 59-55 to people who study the periodic table for fun (no offense Princeton you guys are amazing), and for the second time in tournament history, a 16 seed beat a 1 seed with FDU upsetting Purdue who were 22 point favorites 63-58.

In the second round, we saw 1 seed Kansas go down to 8 seed Arkansas 72-71 and this round also saw 2 seeded Marquette go down to 7th seeded Michigan State. 15 seed Princeton also kept their Cinderella run going by upsetting 7th seed Missouri 78-63. In the sweet 16, there was history. For the first time in tournament history, no 1 seeds were moved on, with Alabama and Houston both falling: Alabama to SDSU and Houston to Miami. This also saw 2 heroic finishes in a March Madness in Kansas State vs Michigan State, and Gonzaga vs UCLA. The Elite 8 saw 2 seeded Texas fall to Miami and 9th seeded FAU beating 3 seeded Kansas State.

The Final Four saw a game winning buzzer beater from SDSU to move on to the Championship Game and UConn to steamroll past Miami. In the National Championship, it was a battle but the Huskie Express in UConn zoomed past SDSU 76-59, crowning them as National Champions. Overall, this tournament was very exciting, with crazy upsets all around, showing why it's called March Madness.

