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GREAT NECK NORTH MIDDLE SCHOOL

SPRING 2022

Author Nic Stone Virtually Visits NMS

By Abigail Bernstein



This year, every student at NMS read a book by Nic Stone. The books were *Clean Getaway* for the sixth and seventh graders, and *Dear Martin* for the eighth graders.

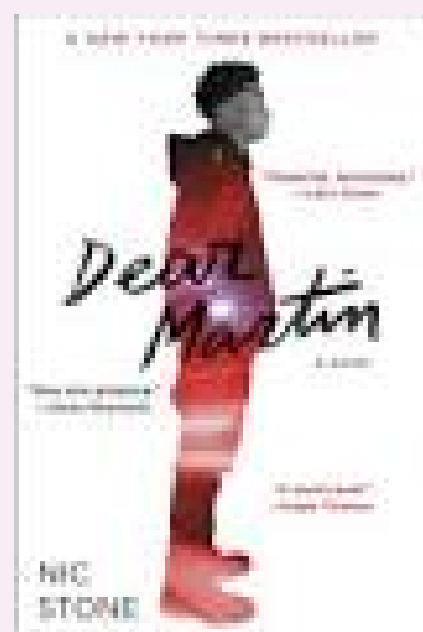
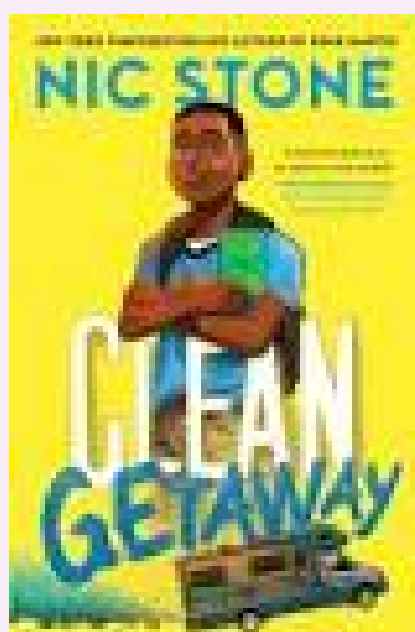
On Thursday April 7, Nic Stone herself “came” for an author “visit”. Although Coronavirus cases are declining, the author visit was still virtual. She spoke about her English class experiences in middle school, and how she hated reading because she could never see herself in any of the books she read. In fact, it took her until she was 27 to actually find a character that she thought of like a version of herself.

She also talked about the inspiration for some of the characters in her book. For example, G’ma from *Clean Getaway* was based on an old woman (grandma, as Stone called it) named Doris Payne who actually stole jewelry. She had been doing it since she was in her 20’s, so she could get her mom out of an abusive relationship. Since it was before the civil rights movement, an African American would get no help, even if she was being physically and mentally abused. So, her daughter turned to other ways to get money. After reading this in the news, Stone thought it was very interesting seeing this person her grandmother’s age stealing jewelry. However, that’s not the only person G’ma is inspired by. Her partner’s father is Nigerian, and his mother is a Russian Jew, which also inspired the relationship between G’ma and G’pop.

Additionally, Scoob is inspired by her favorite cousin, also named William. In fact, she said everything she ever writes has some sort of first hand experience behind it. For instance, when she was in high school, a lot of people wouldn’t believe that she got a higher ACT score than they did. This also happens to the characters in *Dear Martin*. Throughout the book, the main character, Justyce McAllister, was underestimated because of his race. Stone takes her real-life experiences and puts them into her books to make them seem more real and true to the characters’ experiences.

In addition, she also educated us on the POWER we all hold. Both as a noun, and a mnemonic: **P**ersonal agency **O**penness **W**onder **E**lasticity **R**ebellion. Personal agency is the ability to make good decisions for yourself. Openness is the ability to be open to differing opinions, people, cultures, etc. Wonder is the ability to be amazed, and to see the world in an expansive way. Elasticity is the ability to have flexibility whether it be on opinions, schedules, work, etc. Rebellion is the ability to rebel against the norm, specifically if it’s not right. The example she used were pop up ads; the one that advertised acne medicines, weight loss diets, and height increase diets. These are all meant to contain us within the norm, that you want clear skin and you want to be skinny and you want to be tall. Rebellion is like installing an ad blocker, and being able to ignore the social norm. These are the traits we need to find and remember if we are to hold onto power in this fast-paced, chaotic world.

Aside from the ad blocker she installed on her computer, Stone has had to do a lot of rebelling lately. School districts all over the country have been pulling her books. She has visited many districts to discuss the honesty of her books. She is educating people about what has happened, and what is happening right now throughout the world. This links readers back to POWER, as the people banning Stone’s books aren’t giving it a chance. POWER can be applied all over the world; from a world conflict, to just walking down the street. If there is one thing Stone really wanted to get out there, it is to never forget POWER and all of its sections.



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**READ BOOK
REVIEWS FOR
NIC STONE'S
CLEAN
GETAWAY AND
DEAR MARTIN**

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Science Research Symposium

By Noya Zarnighian

On March 14, 2022, 8th graders in the Science Research elective took part in North Middle's Science Symposium. The students presented their projects that they have spent the last few months working on. The project topics spanned from biology, engineering, and human psychology. Students created slideshow presentations to show off their hypotheses, experiments, and final results. Many parents and faculty attended the Zoom webinar.

The students weren't supposed to have just a symposium, however. Earlier in the year, they planned on going to the Long Island Science & Engineering Fair at the Crest Hollow Country Club in Woodbury. Due to Covid restrictions, the fair was completely canceled. Many expected for it to have a digital fair like last year, but that was not the case. Still, the science researchers were determined to make the symposium a success.

"I think that the science symposium went wonderfully and was a great opportunity for all of the 8th grade science researchers to display their projects and show off all of their amazing hard work," said the Science Research teacher, Ms. Leone. Many other people thought this, too. Throughout the next day, science research students reported getting compliments from North Middle teachers on their presentations. Although some nitpicking students have complained about the outcome of their presentations, many are proud of their work and enjoyed presenting. One student, Ethan Lam, said, "As a class, I think we did better than expected. First of all, I think most of [us] had good public speaking skills and the presentations were easy to understand."

From Friday, March 25 to Wednesday, March 30, Science Research students had their own mini science fair for their classmates and teachers. Although it was on a much smaller scale than the canceled science fair would have been, students were still excited to present their projects in person. The week before in class, they turned their slide show presentations from the symposium into poster boards. Adding colored paper, pom poms, and props from their experiments, the students really made their boards fabulous. In the cafeteria, they set up their trifold boards and other students poured in.

Celebrating World Language Month: The Pulsera Project

By Abigail Bernstein

To recognize World Language Month, the World Language Department teamed up with the Multicultural Club to sell bracelets. There are a variety of different colors, patterns and widths, all handwoven by artisans from Central America. In Spanish, these stylish bracelets are called "Pulseras". The bracelets are supplied by the Pulsera Organization, whose main purpose was to spread awareness about Central American culture. They are a non-profit organization who send these bracelets to people for fundraisers like the one at our school, use the money earned and send it back to the artisans who made the bracelets. That money goes into things like housing, food and educating middle schoolers about what these artisans do and why they make things like the bracelets.

These \$5 bracelets (and the addition of ten \$10 bags) managed to raise about \$2,160. Out of the 600 bracelets sent, roughly 420 of them were sold, which means over 69% of the bracelets could be on someone's wrist as you're reading this right now. They were sold at the main staircase (on the first floor) and right outside the auditorium entrance, before and after school. Sales started March ninth and ended March eighteenth. That means approximately 52.5 bracelets were sold each day. They were very popular among students, and "Selling like Hotcakes" as Mrs. Walsh, head of the language department, and the person who organized the sale of these bracelets, stated.



Relay for Life: Pie Day!

By Elaine Xing

The main topic of March 2022 has been regarding the Pie Contest in which selected teachers with the most student decided votes will be caked with whipped cream in the face on March 25th. This relay began on the 21st, and after an entire week of voting, four teachers/administrators were chosen from each grade.

The "big" winners from each grade were: 6th grade English teacher, Mrs. Rice, 7th grade math teacher, Mr. Friedman and 8th grade English teacher, Mr. Parker. This means that they finished with a stuffed envelope of votes. Although the exact number of votes is unconfirmed, the envelopes were considerably larger than others, and after interviewing many students, one can say no effort was wasted in voting. Some students even bought hundreds of votes, and as the price for every 5 tickets is US \$1, these individuals likely spent over \$30.

Just like the last event, this Relay for Life event is funding the American Cancer Society, and all profits made will be sent accordingly. All together \$480 was raised and donated to the American Cancer Society.

Turn to page 6 to see pictures from this exciting event!



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Descendants: My Experience

By: Mia Malhotra

Sometimes, you don't know what you need, until you get it. Joining the musical was the best decision I have made. Yet, six months ago if you would have told me about the friendships, memories, and skills that I would have made, just from the musical, I wouldn't believe you.

Let's start from the beginning. I have been in many musicals and shows before. My first musical was in fifth grade where I starred as Belle in Beauty and the Beast. After that musical was over, I was sad because I missed the show, and the role, but I was excited for new shows. Throughout middle school, I was in chorus, theater, show choir, and more. I was in You're a Good Man Charlie Brown and Freaky Friday. Out of all of these amazing shows, I never felt the same way that I have this year. I knew that eighth graders usually have a slightly different experience than past years, but I wasn't prepared for this. We started auditions in November, where I was casted as Maleficent. She was the villain that everyone feared. I was in shock when I got the role, because I didn't know how to be evil! That's what I thought at least. Rehearsals started every school day for me except Fridays. Rehearsals were a mix of choreography lessons, vocal lessons, and blocking rehearsals. They lasted from 5:00 to 5:30 PM. During those rehearsals, we complained about our long days and hard work. I wish I had never complained. Then, we started getting into tech weeks. Tech week consists of three weeks. Every night you rehearse till 6:00 PM, up until show week. Additionally, you had Sunday rehearsals lasting from around 11:00 AM to 5:00 PM. During these three weeks I bonded with so many people and made memories I will never forget. People I never talked to before had suddenly become so close with me in just a few days. Suddenly it was 11:00 PM and I was on FaceTime with friends I hadn't just seen in school but never knew who they were, but it felt like we had been friends for so long. I remember having bad days, but pushing through them because I knew that in just a few hours I had rehearsal and I was going to be with some of my best friends.

It hit the last week of tech week. This week consists of a Monday rehearsal lasting until 8:00 PM, all day rehearsal for the teaser on Tuesday, with the show on Wednesday and Thursday. I have never been more stressed, but happy in my entire life. Monday was a long day, but rehearsal felt so fast. We ran through the show multiple times, had dinner together, and worked hard. Tuesday was the day of the teaser, our first show. Tuesday was an in school rehearsal. This meant we missed school, but still had to make up all of that work. Right before lunch, we had a tiny break to chill. Me, and three of my best friends started playing the game Quackadilioso. In the time frame of two minutes, the whole cast and crew were playing with us and the circle filled the entire room. I remember thinking "Wow. This is a family." We had lunch, then we played a massive game of duck, duck goose, and then just like that, it was showtime. Before the show, everyone has nerves. Most times, you just have to suck it up and deal with them. Our cast wasn't like that. If we were stressed or scared, we talked about it. Every time.

I stepped out onto the stage and saw an auditorium full of people for the first time at North Middle School. I felt at home, and I felt safe. I remember seeing some grumpy faces. They looked like they didn't want to be there, but that was ok. It was ok because we all wanted to be there and that was what mattered. The show finishes, and we are all so happy for each other, and then it's the real deal. Wednesday goes by so fast. For my role and a few others, there are two people who play the character. One on Wednesday and one on Thursday. I played Maleficent on Thursday. So on Wednesday I played in the ensemble. I watched some of my best friends perform in front of the people who loved them and we were all so proud. Then came Thursday. The one day that I could be evil as I played Maleficent. It was absolutely amazing. Performing in front of the people I loved the most is the best feeling. We sing the last song, and the show has ended. The second the show ends, we all start crying hysterically. We gave our speeches to the amazing people who made this happen. We signed our bricks, cried, gave flowers, cried, said our goodbyes, cried, gave hugs, smiled.

We were so proud of our show. We hit so many obstacles, but we did it. We had the honor of being the first (semi) normal show since 2019. You're probably still wondering why this was the best decision I ever made, and I'll finally tell you why. We became a family. A family with different ages, cultures, talents, preferences, and opinions. The one thing we all had in common, was our love for each other that can't be broken. You don't realize how important something is until it's not there anymore. The thing is, I finally now realize the importance of *Descendants*, but it won't ever be gone. Our musical wasn't only the music and the dancing. It was the pure friendship that made our show so special. Our musical, *Descendants*, has taught me a few things in layers. I learned how to time manage everything, I learned how to stay focused and I learned the value of true friendship. Lastly, I learned to never give up, always be there for one another, and most importantly - we are better together. Thank you Mrs. Murdocco and our school for giving us your time, patience, and knowledge, while providing us with this unforgettable experience. My last year at North Middle School was magical. Our musical, *Descendants*, has shown me who true friends are, how to use my imagination, who I want to be, and where I want to be. If you surround yourself with great people, amazing things will happen. And I promise you, something truly amazing happened. Something special. Beautiful. Magical. And that special something is what we call, *Descendants*.

NMS Virtual Career Day

By Liel Kafaierad

On February 16, 7th graders at NMS took part in the annual Career Day; however, this year was different. Instead of the speakers coming in they joined us virtually via zoom. Some of the careers that were shared with the grade included: occupational therapy, finance, marketing, advertising, etc. The speakers explained why they chose their career and what career they had prior to that.

The career that a lot of people found interesting was occupational therapy. Occupational therapy is when a person works to get back an ability such as; handwriting, cooking, putting on clothes, etc. basically any ability that has to do with your hands. An occupational therapist works with the person to help them get the ability that is the most important to them back. The occupational therapist that visited the school this year via zoom was Susanne Corrales.

Another career that some people found interesting was business management. The session I had attended was with Rich Murdocco (the husband of the wonderful Mrs Murdocco). He explained to us that when you want to make an ad of some sort you need to have something that catches the audience's eyes. And that they should not have a lot of words but still get the point across. He also said that he is a professor at a university as well.

The last person that I would be speaking about is Weihua Yan. He is the chief technology officer at Wonder Food Delivery. When he was speaking to the session he was talking about how he goes with his truck and cooks in front of the customers house and serves them freshly cooked foods.

Valentines for Vets

By Eva Halimi

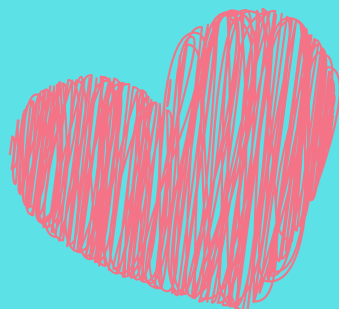
On Friday, February 4th, our school's, Great Neck North Middle School, SEO helped organize a fun activity for students to make valentine cards for our veterans in the US. According to New Oxford American Dictionary, a veteran is someone that has or is serving in the military. Veterans work long and hard hours to help protect America and the least we could do is give back with valentine cards. Valentine's Day is a day where people express their love for one another but also gratitude. Showing gratitude could just be writing a card to someone or saying thank you. Check out the information below that might shock you:

Our school made over 800 valentine cards for the veterans and they have received them. The veterans loved getting cards from the students at NMS. The cards were given all over the country to long term care facilities. I think everyone deserves a huge pat on the back for adding up to more than 800 cards. Remember, "No act of kindness, no matter how small, is wasted." -Aesop. What does this mean? This means that just by making a small card for a veteran with just a 'thank you' or 'Happy Valentine's Day' will brighten their day.

NMS has been participating in Valentines for Vets for more than ten years. What is Valentines for Vets? Valentines for Vets is a district wide initiative that even has its own website! According to that website, "Valentines for Vets began in 1989 when the late newspaper columnist, Ann Landers, encouraged her readers to create special valentines for Veterans in care facilities throughout Canada and the United States." By participating in Valentines for Vets, our school is giving back to the veterans that sacrificed themselves to help make our nation what it is today.

Something that I'd like to see would be other countries and continents to participate too. It would be great for all of the world's heroes to know that their hard work is paying off.

Hopefully this article gave you more background knowledge about why we made valentine cards for veterans even though it was really fun.



RECIPE: Challah

By Avital Shakiban

Challah is a traditional Jewish food primarily eaten on Shabbat and holidays. It is a delicious bread that anyone can make or enjoy. There are several methods as to how to bake challah, but the one below is my favorite recipe. In this recipe, there is no egg in the actual bread, therefore it's called water challah. Water challah is a very different recipe because the bread depends on the water for moisture. Challah is also very experimental so you can add many extra ingredients to customize it. This would include honey, chocolate chips, or raisins! Without further ado, the recipe!

- 4 Tablespoons active dry yeast
- 1 1/2 cups sugar
- 3 1/2 cups water
- 5 pound bag of flour
- 1 1/3 cup oil
- pinch of salt
- 1 cup raisins or chocolate
- 2 tablespoons chia and/or sesame seeds
- 1 egg

Directions:

- In a small bowl add yeast, 4 tablespoons of the sugar, and 1 cup of water (half warm, half cold) cover and let sit until it bubbles. Set aside.
- Sift the flour into a large bowl
- Add the rest (1 1/4 cup) of the sugar and add the oil slowly until finished
- Now add the yeast mixture that was previously set aside
- Add the rest of the water (2 1/2), add more water as needed
- Mix with a spoon and once hard enough, start kneading (if too sticky, add flour to your hands or to the dough)
- Once everything is evenly mixed, cover and let rise for about 2-4 hours, knead after about an hour
- Preheat oven to 350°F
- Now you can braid and shape the dough anyway you want (add flour to your hands or to the dough if sticky)
- You can add chocolate chips or raisins between or on top of the bread
- Egg wash using only the yolk for best results (you can use the whites but it doesn't come out as shiny or dark)
- Add the chia/sesame seeds on top
- Put in the oven for about 30 minutes or until golden brown
- Take out and enjoy!



The Stock Market Stumble

By Gavin Zhao

In 1792 the first recorded appearance of the NYSE (New York Stock Exchange) was logged. Since then many ups and downs have happened. The main purpose of the stock market is to provide a marketplace where buyers and sellers can exchange securities. In simpler terms, people who believe in a company's value can fund that idea to greater heights. But many factors can go into a company's success or downfall; recently many implications have caused most of the market to drop. In this article we will go over the main reasons for the stock market's drop and why.

-Today's Stock Price XOM: 81.99-

[March, 9] Gas prices rise quickly as a dart. The highest price before this was a mere \$3.70. A full gallon of gas previously went for around \$50 depending on how much gas your car is able to carry. Oil prices will always rise during crises and unstable situations. The American economy currently is not able to keep up with the sudden demand of oil even after the grace period when top analysts predicted high prices. Many gas prices around the country are going up live on the charts as many gas companies tumble. Since the first sign of the conflict between the Russian Federation and (The) Ukraine the gas prices on SHEL-Shell plc and XOM-ExxonMobil have tumbled. From previous highs of SHEL: 54.62-49.39 | XOM: 87.78-82.79. Since the start of the crisis the American reserve has lost 3 million barrels worth of oil. The American reliance on Russian oil makes up 10% of the American market each year. This number has now fallen and as a result there are higher gas prices. But today was just a spike as many American and NATO counterparts are fearful of all out war. (SHEL is publicly traded and marketed in the United Kingdom.)

-Today's Stock Price XOM: 82.79-

[March, 15] Today in light of the Kremlin announcements of peace and diplomatic treaties, gas prices have declined below the \$100 dollar mark in some areas around America. Though the majority of gas prices still remain four dollars and above. Many news outlets have announced positive news in light of the recent climax. The oil industry has started to keep up as oil demand has started to slump. Many well known gas companies have had a sudden rise from a steep slope downwards. These companies include: SHEL, EQNR, BP, ENB, TRP, and DVN. Though these 6 stocks are a small portion of the other 24 monitored by Apollo Global Management (APO). These other 24 stocks are still losing percentage everyday including March 15 but are losing less than previous closings.

-Today's Stock Prices XOM: 77. 22-

[March, 16] The Federal Interest Rate is a system where Federal Reserve Banks increase the interest rate of distributed money from those exact banks when returned. As mentioned above the CPI percentage increase was 7.9% while the target for the percentage increase per month was 2%. Due to this a unanimous decision was made except for St. Louis Fed President James Bullard. The increase rate was from 0.25-0.50. The previous rate hike was in December of 2018 when the rate went from 0.00-0.25. Though later in July 2019 those rates were cut down. More of these rate increases are expected to crack down on the inflation rate. At least 6 are expected in 2022-2023. None so in 2024. The Dow Jones Industrial Average from 33,859.00-33,522.00. But past this dip the market did still rally the rate increase. So in the end the market just has to wait and watch to see what happens.

-March 16-17 Stock Price INR: 99.75- 97.95-

Apple Inc (AAPL): 162.15-152.02

Covid-19 infections picked up in China where Apple holds many of its main product manufacturing. Due to this many restrictions have been put in place therefore slowing down the production of Apple products. Furthermore like other tech companies, Apple has faced challenges in acquiring supplies for their products during the pandemic. Chip shortages and other product materials have driven up costs for the same product(s). This results in lost sales and finally a driven down stock price. During the Ukraine-Russia conflict it has been more challenging to find Apple device materials and the stock price has been slowly dwindling. 1% of Iphone production every week is predicted by many analysts. Though others expect this short period of time to not affect the continuation of Apple Inc. But in the end these few weeks will tarnish some part of Apples soon coming quarterly results. But in the end Apple is still putting full effort into production of their products and will continue to be a steady company.

McDonald's Corp (MCD): 248.35-232.37

Mcdonalds has a simple business model. Sell land to franchinese while also taking cuts of profits made. Then do this thousands more times and you've got yourself a McDonalds franchise. McDonalds recently suspended all business activity in Russia due to the Russia-Ukraine situation. As a result McDonalds is losing 50 million dollars a month due to lost franchise stores in Russia. Ridiculous prices for Mcdonald foods and packaging have gone on the internet. Allegedly a McDonalds paper bag is selling for over \$350 on a Russian online website. McDonalds is hoping to regain control of the Russian market as soon as possible. The results of this waiting period are some of the worst McDonalds has seen in its stock price history except for the record breaking Covid-19 pandemic. But in the end it's a simple idea to comprehend. If Russian Mcdonald's stores don't open again, McDonald's stock price will continue to plummet.

To summarize this article, if you have read it or not, our opinion will be shown in this last paragraph. We believe that the market has had a tough time and will struggle on with economic issues for a few more weeks or months. As we researched through these past two weeks we've had a first glimpse of what can happen with just the right amount of negativity in the world. Thousands have died and others have received lasting scars. Everyone has been hurt by inflation, gas prices, and more. But in the end the market is always moving, never resting. The possibilities of the stock market will always surpass what was thought a dream. The stock market is a wondrous place that will always achieve what was thought to be impossible.

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Poetry Corner

Spring

By Elizabeth Sheydina

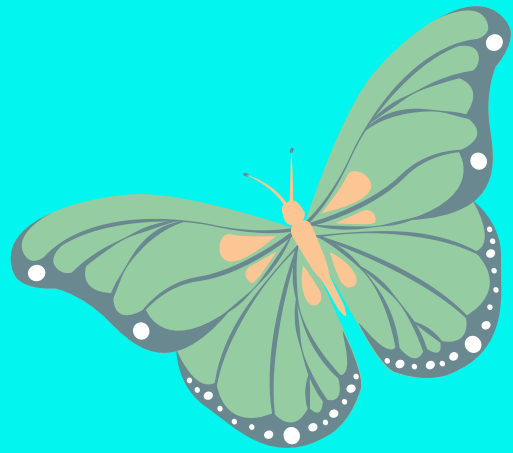
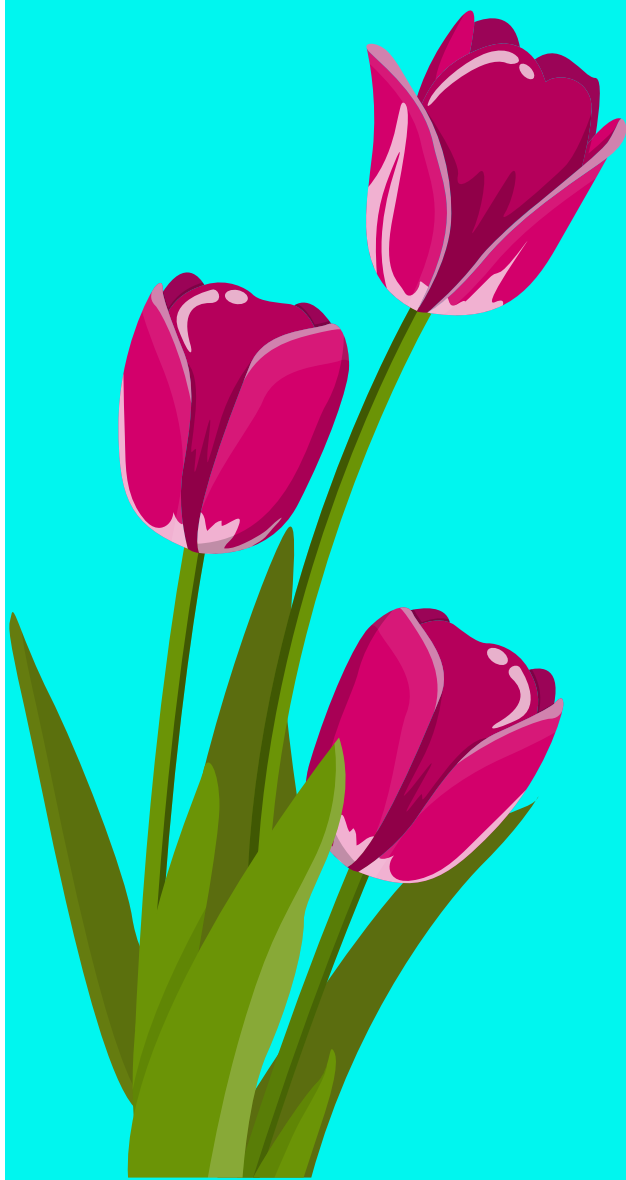
This wonderful season comes after it's cold
It's elegant
Lively
Colorfully bold

It is beautiful like dawn
With baby birds, bunnies and fawns

Springs' gentle rains
Never drain a mood
Those days aren't dreary
They're just misunderstood

A warm spring breeze
Brings allergies
people sniffle complain
itch and sneeze

Flowers blossom
Trees grow leaves
As summer sneaks in like a possum
And we can freely breathe



Climate Change Changes History

By Elizabeth Guan

Ice caps melting. Habitat loss. Health risks growing. Damaged environment. Considerable amount of shifts in temperatures and weather. In other words, climate change. An overlooked, yet deadly concept. Right here. Right now.

Climate change is the change in weather or climate patterns. Climate change has been proven by experts and scientists that it was caused by humans. We have been polluting the environment for the past couple decades more than ever. Climate change started from around the 1950 precisely. In fact, the last decade was the hottest in 125,000 years and carbon dioxide is at its highest in 2 million years. Global warming is when the Earth heats up and the temperature rises due to the greenhouse effect. The greenhouse effect is the process in which the Sun's rays shine down on the Earth, through the atmosphere. Because of all the carbon released from Earth a "layer" of carbon forms, the sunlight can't get back out of the carbon infested atmosphere, thus causing the Earth's temperature to rise.

Climate change can have some jaw-dropping effects such as health risks, food insecurities, and even home insurance becoming more expensive. Let's look at health risks. Climate change is making the air around us dirtier and much more unhealthy. Food insecurity and extreme weather events are also threats from climate change. In the article, "Climate Action Fast Facts" the text states, "Every year, environmental factors take the lives of around 13 million people." It also says, "Over 90 percent of people breathe unhealthy levels of air pollution, largely resulting from burning fossil fuels driving climate change. In 2018, air pollution from fossil fuels caused \$2.9 trillion in health and economic costs, about \$8 billion a day." This proves how deadly climate change is for the whole world. Additionally, the ocean has taken in around 90 percent of the excess heat produced by climate change. Therefore, the ocean is becoming more acidic and the animals that thrive in the ocean, less productive. This is harmful to billions of people who feed on marine animals. Believe it or not, more insurance is becoming more expensive. Other effects of climate change are animal habitat destruction, deforestation, and higher electric bills. The article, "10 Climate Change Impacts That Will Affect Us All" says, "As insurance companies pay out huge amounts to homeowners whose houses have been damaged by climate change impacts, many are raising premiums to offset their costs. Home insurance rates increased more than 50 percent between 2005 and 2015." Even home insurances are costing more and that proves how climate change makes everything worse and drives many people into troubled situations.

All in all, climate change may be the deadliest downfall of our community if we don't stop it now.



Sites:

1. <https://climatekids.nasa.gov/greenhouse-effect/>
2. <https://climate.nasa.gov/resources/global-warming-vs-climate-change/>
3. <https://www.carbonbrief.org/scientists-clarify-starting-point-for-human-caused-climate-change>
4. <https://news.climate.columbia.edu/2019/12/27/climate-change-impacts-everyone/>
5. <https://www.un.org/en/climatechange/science/key-findings#physical-science>
6. <https://news.climate.columbia.edu/2019/12/27/climate-change-impacts-everyone/>
7. <https://futureoflife.org/2019/04/30/fli-podcast-the-unexpected-side-effects-of-climate-change-with-fran-moore-and-nick-obradovich/#:~:text=Rapidly%20declining%20remarkability%20of%20temperature,alter%20human%20physical%20activity%20patterns>
8. https://earth.org/data_visualization/11-interesting-facts-about-climate-change/

Miss Know-It-All

Hi Miss Know it All,

I recently missed a large amount of school, and I am really behind. I keep finding homework and tests that I forgot about. What should I do?

-Emma

Hi Emma!

Don't worry, this happens to all of us! First, you should email your teachers and tell them your situation. Ask them if there is anything you need to know and what approach you can take towards assignments. Then, go to extra help and try and catch up on all the work you missed. Lastly, if you need any last notes, you can always ask your classmates to send them to you, and I am sure they will be happy to help! As you do these things, make a to-do list that has everything you need to do on it so that you don't forget. Go through the to do list and make sure you check everything off when it's done! After missing school, there will be a lot to catch up on, so make sure you time manage yourself, and never give up!

-Miss Know it All

Hi Miss Know it All,

I am having a hard time making friends. I feel lonely and disconnected from many. What should I do?

-Willy

Hi Willy!

This is a common struggle with many, don't worry! You can start by talking to more people and starting conversations. Sometimes you will find a connection with people once you do that, and sometimes you won't! You have to be open to talking to new people. You never know when someone could be a great person. Next, find some clubs and after school activities that interest you. Most likely, you will be in a welcoming community that welcomes you! You will have fun doing what you love, with fun people, and that may result in new friendships! Just remember, it's so much better to have a few really good friends, than a lot of okay friends. Make sure to be kind, and most importantly be yourself!

Movie Review: Spider-Man: No Way Home

By Naomi Zarnighian

As the sixth highest grossing movie of all time, you would expect this Jon Watts film to be beyond expectations. As an avid watcher of Marvel's films, I can assure you that Tom Holland's third Spider-Man is among some of the best films of the decade and is worth your watch. Rotten Tomatoes seems to agree with me, giving the movie a 93% rating on the Tomatometer and the audience giving it a 98%. The film runs 2 hours and 28 minutes and stars Tom Holland, Zendaya, Benedict Cumberbatch, Jacob Batalon, and more.

In the previous Spider-Man movie, Spider-Man: Far From Home, Peter Parker's (Tom Holland) Spider-Man persona was revealed by Mysterio (Jake Gyllenhaal). In this new movie, Peter learns that "With great power comes great responsibility". Peter, and his two best friends, Ned (Jacob Batalon) and MJ (Zendaya), need to deal with the consequences of what happened. While seeking help from Dr. Strange (Benedict Cumberbatch), Peter and Strange accidentally open the Multiverse. This causes villains from different Spider-Man franchises to come battle Peter Parker.

Since the film was put out in December of 2021, it is no longer in theaters. Let's hope that at some point in time, it will be on Disney Plus with its other MCU counterparts. But for now, you can watch it on STARZ, or purchase it on Amazon Prime Video, Vudu, Google Play, Apple iTunes, Microsoft, and YouTube. It will also be available on Blu Ray, coming out April 12, 2022.

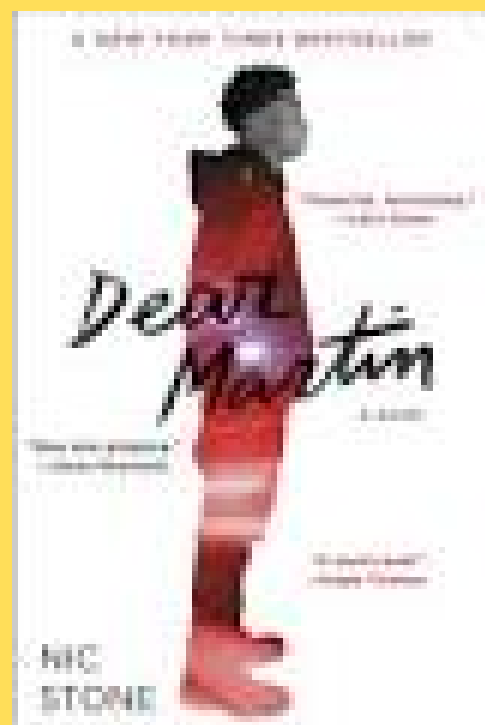
Book Review: *Dear Martin* by Nic Stone

By Noya Zarnighian

Justyce McAllister has always been a very bright student with a great future ahead of him. After growing up in a rough neighborhood, Justyce attends a preparatory school on a scholarship. At this school, Justyce is at the top of his class and is bound for an Ivy League college. None of this matters when a police officer throws him to the ground and arrests Justyce.

After this incident, Justyce starts writing journals to Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., a civil rights activist who inspires him. Justyce asks himself, "What would Martin do?" He uses this logic when dealing with racial discrimination from his peers. Justyce struggles to keep his cool and must face the consequences. When something terrible happens, Justyce questions if doing what Martin did is right for him.

Dear Martin is a raw and real epistolary young adult novel. Nic Stone's brilliantly crafted story brings to light the injustices many people face from the racial prejudices of people around them. It can be found on Sora as an audiobook from Nassau Digital Doorways and an ebook on Overdrive. The Great Neck Public Library has it at its Main and Parkville branches. A sequel, *Dear Justyce*, was published in 2020. *Dear Martin* has 4.4 out of 5 stars on Goodreads, a 4.8 out of 5 on Barnes and Nobles, and a 5 out of 5 on Common Sense Media. It has 224 pages and was published in October, 2017.

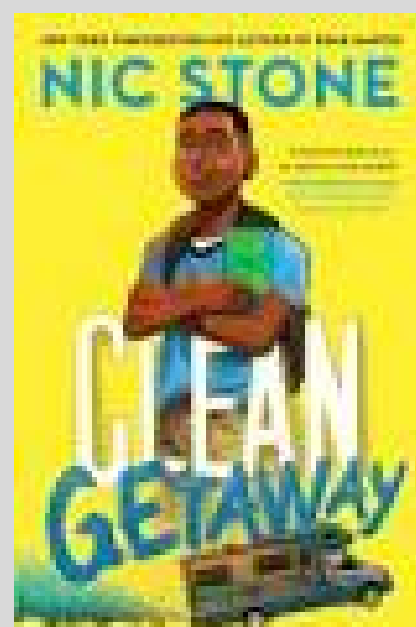


Book Review: *Clean Getaway* by Nic Stone

Reviewed by Darren Chen

Clean Getaway, by Nic Stone, is a novel written for young readers, but can still be read and loved by people of all ages. *Clean Getaway* is about a young African American boy nicknamed Scoob who goes on an unexpected adventure with his grandmother across the country. Throughout the book, Scoob learns about the world G'ma lived in when she was young, including segregation, the Jim Crow laws, and the 1984 Green book. You will also learn about many historical place and their importances during the civil rights movement.

If you're wondering where you can find a copy of this amazing book, you won't have to look far! Copies of *Clean Getaway* can be found at many places and sites, including every branch of the Great Neck library, and on digital platforms like Sora and Epic. So what are you waiting for! Go grab a snack, find a comfy couch, and get ready for an amazing experience through time.



Continued from page 2.....

Photos from Relay for Life's Pie Day



How To Plant Your Own Garden

By Sarah Zheng

Spring is the best time to start your own garden—and in this article, we will explore the basics of gardening and which plants are considered easy to grow for beginners. But before you plant your garden, you've gotta plan it first. Go get a device with some sort of drawing app on it (like Notability). If you like paper better, go and grab a sheet of paper. And a writing utensil (pen/pencil), preferably with some coloring utensils as well. Annnd if you're like this professional gardener that somehow winded up reading this article, go read some other article. 'Cause this one probably won't help you very much. It might not even be that accurate. Okay, so you've got your sheet of paper. Now, take your pen or pencil or whatever you have and draw a quick sketch of your garden—whether it's going to be in your backyard or if it's going to be in a container. From here, the article splits into two sections—one for planting a garden in your backyard (front or back, whatever) and the other for growing a few plants in a container.

If you're planning on gardening in your backyard and you've got a decent sketch of your front or back yard, take out your coloring thingies. Or if you've been doing all of this on a drawing app or Notability, make sure you've got a wide variety of colors. Now take a look at the list of plants and flowers at the end of the article for some ideas and MAKE SURE THEY WILL NOT HARM YOUR PET! All of the plants on the list are non-toxic to cats, and dogs, but if you have any other pet that roams around, make sure to check if it could potentially harm your pet. Some pet-unfriendly plants/flowers are begonia, chives, hyacinth, jade (obviously not the stone, the plant), tulips, geraniums, daffodils, pansies, morning glories, blanket flowers (a.k.a. gaillardia), daylilies (okay for dogs but extremely dangerous for cats), calendula (mildly harmful for some cats), coneflowers (too much of it can cause painful digestion for dogs), yarrow, dianthus, and sago palm. Now, take your plants and write them down.

Some easy-to-grow plants and flowers that are not harmful towards cats and dogs are:

- Sunflowers
 - You probably know what sunflowers are. Fun Fact: did you know that they're called sunflowers because they always face the sun? Okay, you probably knew that. But you probably didn't know that sunflowers can hold 1,000 to 2,000 seeds. They're also non-toxic for cats, dogs, and horses (though there's a 98.3% chance that you don't have a horse).
- Zinnia
 - Zinnias are extremely colorful—they come in nearly every color except blue. According to Lynn Coulter, “20 Can't-Kill Flowers for Beginners,” “Plant them in the sun and space them as directed on the seed packet or label; good air circulation helps prevent disease.” So, you, er, give them sunlight, space, and air. Precisely what the quote said.
- Marigolds
 - If you put a marigold in a sunny space, it'll typically grow 3-5 feet tall, but smaller versions of them do exist. They are, in reference to the name mariGOLD, yellow, orange, and red.
- Impatiens
 - When planting these flowers that sound like they're impatient, put them in a shady place, give them enough water, and you should be good. Remember to plant these when the weather starts to get warmer—late spring should work.
- Snapdragons
 - Snapdragons are pretty durable when facing harsh weather. They also have a name that makes it sound like they're mythical creatures.
- Cosmos
 - Oooh, space time! Like the Earth, cosmos need the Sun to survive. So...put it where there's a lot of sun!
- Salvia
 - It's okay if you forget to water your salvia (sounds like saliva!) because they can survive without much water.
- Columbine
 - Columbines are mostly warm-colored and can survive a bit of drought.
- Phlox
 - These fragrant flowers come in pastel colors and only dry out in late summer after being planted in spring.

Got them all written? Make a quick sketch of the flowers according to where you want to plant them, drawing a box that says the name of the flower or drawing actual flowers. Then, color whatever you have in and see if the colors have enough contrast but don't clash—you don't want your garden to be a mess of rainbow bright colors that you'll probably be constantly scolded about (if you do want your garden to look like a unicorn stomped around there the previous night, however, be my guest.) Buy some seeds or sprouts but don't open them yet. Before you open the packages, you have to get rid of weeds and add fertilizer to your soil (which is also a thing you should get). Oh, yeah, and did you know you also need plant food? Yup, flowers eat food too. Go ahead and search it up if you want to learn more about it. Go on. Search “plant food.” And no, fertilizer and plant food are two different things, though they do have a similar purpose.

You're ready to plant your flowers but don't know how to plant them. Don't just sit there and hope that it'll do okay, look online to see detailed, specific directions for planting them! This article would be too long if it included all that. It's already long enough. After planting the flowers, you've gotta figure out how much water you're going to give them. Generally speaking, soaking your plants weekly is better than giving them sips of water daily, and you also have to feed your plants plant food every two weeks during spring and summer. Remember—pouring water on the leaves of a plant does NOT help. Pour the water directly on the roots. And if you are reading this out of curiosity and planning to plant something in a container, heads up that you'll have to feed slightly more plant food for your flowers. Now, go outside and make sure there are no weeds. Pull them all out.

Once you've planted your garden, keep an eye on pests like aphids, slugs, and snails. Mostly the aphids. If you like ladybugs, it may be a good idea to introduce some to your garden to gobble up some aphids. The larvae eat the most. Larvae are the babies if you don't know. If you don't (like ladybugs), then pour soapy water on the spots where there are the most aphids and they'll go away. Or spray them really really hard with a hose. Or put on some gloves and use your hands and put them in the soapy bucket. Before you release the ladybugs, spray some mist on your plants so they can have some water. They probably are thirsty. Oh, and you might need a bit more ladybugs than you think. Most will fly away after a few days. Which is why you also should have some green lacewings. Those look nice, and they also prey on some other pests that could be annoying.

But not all insects are pests. Bees are extremely important to flowers, as most people know, so be careful what you try to eliminate. (There's also more dangerous insects like wasps. Specifically yellow jackets. And paper wasps. And...okay, you get the point.) So be careful.

Now you have your garden. Hooray! But what if you had wanted to just plant one in a container? First thing you do is get the container. It's commonly a pot, but you can also use a terrarium. If you plan on putting water in your terrarium, it might be better to get a decent aquarium or paludarium. Aquariums are able to withstand the pressure of water inside of them, unlike a normal terrarium, which is not as tightly sealed. Paludariums are designed to hold both land and water life (you can put animals in there too.) But those three options are probably going a little too far (they're all quite large), because you can simply use any glass container in general, a mason jar, or even one of those classic glass round goldfish bowls. If you're planning on putting water in your (mini?) terrarium and want something furry to fill up some of the space, you can throw in a Marimo moss ball. If you want to learn more about them, you can go to <https://mossballpets.com/>, a decent source for information on Marimo moss balls. You can also go to <https://ballsofmoss.com>.

Any water put in a terrarium should be distilled water or tap water left for 24 hours (so the chlorine evaporates). You should also put in some sand. Then get pebbles, gravel, stones, rocks. Choose one or two of the categories that were just listed. (ex.: pebbles, pebbles + gravel, stones + rocks, stones, etc.) Layer the sand on the bottom, then layer some of the one or two categories you chose over it. As for water plants, anubias should be good. For more, go to <https://happydiyhome.com/water-garden-plants/>. Insert the plant a few centimeters in the gravel or whatever you used, then carefully pour water into the terrarium to the height you want it to be. That'll make some of the sand float around a bit, but it should be fine and settle back down. That's pretty much it.

If you want to plant something in a pot, do the same thing for your plant as the outdoor gardens. Just put it near a window that faces preferably the east or west that receives enough sunlight. And if you use plant food or fertilizer you have to use a little more.

Generally, if you want to transplant something, you first have to prepare your hole. Second, carefully use your hands to remove the plant from its container. Then, you gently loosen any roots that are stuck together and place it in the hole. Make sure the plant itself stays at soil level, and pressure the soil firmly so the plant won't accidentally topple. Watering it a tad more can also help by encouraging the roots to grow into the soil.

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March Madness 2022

By Noah Hourizadeh

Section 1: 3/9/22

It is a rainy Wednesday and people are thinking about which teams will be playing in March Madness. The official names of the teams have not come out yet, but most people don't think about the teams that are fighting to make March Madness as much as they think about the top ten teams in the NCAA. People think about the big names such as Gonzaga and Arizona but not a lot about the other teams such as Iowa.

Teams like Duke who made a major fall down this year in their rankings are still thought about because of their victories in the past years. Some people think about the year before and they think about big names because they don't care that much to look up the standings. Although some people actually care about the rankings and they get curious about Duke and how they're ranked seventh, most people just think about big names and past years because they don't watch college basketball.

Section 2: 3/23/22

People are confused by how quickly their brackets said "bye, bye" to them and went on to the upsets. There was a percentage of how many brackets got destroyed after the Kentucky game and the percentage was 98% of brackets being destroyed. In addition, lower ranked teams have been playing better such as Saint Peter's and North Carolina. Some lower ranked teams such as Creighton that lost still got places and played like nobody would expect them to.

March Madness is a type of tournament for all people, including people who don't know anything about college basketball. A lot of people do not care about the normal season of college basketball but when March Madness comes around the corner, they are ready to jump right in for the fun. It is a type of tournament where you can try to predict the whole tournament and you can play on sports apps with your friends. Many people use Yahoo Fantasy Sports and ESPN Fantasy Sports to make leagues with friends and family too.

Section 3: 3/29/22

It is the day after the Final Four teams were announced. The four final teams are the Duke Blue Devils, Kansas Jayhawks, North Carolina Tar Heels, and the Villanova Wildcats. However, people are mainly thinking about the huge rivalry between North Carolina and Duke. They really have a strong hate toward each other and games can get kind of messy. This rivalry started in the early 1960s when Art Heyman made his decision to play for Duke instead of North Carolina after making a promise to play for North Carolina. This year, the two teams played against each other in the ACC Championship game and North Carolina came out with a huge win that disappointed Coach Krzyzewski (K) and Duke's fans. North Carolina fans were jumping up and down not only because their team won, but also because Coach K's final season as a coach didn't include an ACC Championship win.

Section 4: 4/5/22

Everyone is either crying of happiness or crying of sadness. Some North Carolina Tar Heel fans such as the author of this article were sad after the game and almost cried. Although, some Kansas Jayhawk fans were happy and they almost cried of happiness. People at school and in towns are talking about the crazy game that happened the night before. They are wondering how the Kansas Jayhawks who are the first seed almost lost to the North Carolina Tar Heels who are the eighth seed and how Kansas came home with the win after being down fifteen points at halftime. All I know is that the game that happened last night will go down in history for Kansas fans and especially North Carolina fans.

Major League Baseball Lockout is Over, Let the Free Agent Frenzy Begin

By: Liana Kase

I'm just going to start off saying that this is the third time I have had to rewrite this article. Once before the Wednesday, March ninth deadline, again around the March ninth deadline, and now this one. Finally, the lockout is over, and the craziest free agency is about to go down. At the same time, the winter meetings, and spring training will be happening all at the same time. It's time to fasten your seatbelts, because these last few weeks before the April seventh opening day are going to be crazy.

As stated in this article, the lockout has officially ended! The MLB and the MLBPA (Major League Baseball Players' Association) have come to terms on a new CBA, in which they'll revisit around 2024. In this new CBA, draft pick compensation is banned, there will be a draft lottery for the first six or so picks, and a cash pool for pre-arbitration eligible players to get a raise. The universal designated hitter, and nine inning double headers are coming back for good, while the runner on second to start extra innings rule is gone. The competitive balance tax (CBT), has been raised, along with the "Steve Cohen Rule", in which teams who spend big like the New York Mets and the Los Angeles Dodgers will have a bigger threshold, but will have to pay a bigger tax if they surpass that. In 2023, the shift will be banned, while bigger bases and a fourteen to sixteen second pitch clock will be implemented.

Draft pick compensation is when a player in his first round of free agency signs with another team. The team that let him walk would be rewarded with a free draft pick. One instance when this happened was when the New York Yankees let Nick Swisher sign with the Cleveland Indians, now known as the Guardians. With their draft pick, the Yankees got Aaron Judge. Even though Swisher is now retired, Judge already has and is on pace to continue having a far better career than Swisher. Getting rid of draft pick compensation will eliminate teams practicing the money saving tactic of tanking, in which a team will purposely not go out and spend money along with not calling up their top prospects in order to get more top prospects, so they can build a super team without spending money.

To keep players healthy, the MLB wanted bigger bases. The material they will be made from along with their design will help water get off the bases quicker, which will prevent injuries. In addition, it will be easier for players to steal bases, making the game more exciting.

Although it seemed highly unlikely, the MLB season will be starting on time, with players allowed to report to spring training on March eleventh, spring training games beginning on March seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth, with Opening Day on April seventh.

Now, with everything set up, it is time for free agents to start flying off the market and trades start to be made.



Reviewing the Mets Offseason Acquisitions

By: Liana Kase

Although when this article comes out, the season will be under way, there are still many big signings and moves that the Mets made. This article will take you through the signings that were made by the Mets both prior and after the lockout.

Eduardo Escobar signs with the Mets

- After letting Loup and Syndergaard go, Mets fans were starting to get restless. On Black Friday, the Mets signed three players, Escobar being the first, to a two year, twenty million dollar deal, with a team option for 2024. Escobar, who plays mainly third and second base, was selected to his first all star game this year.

Grade: A-

Mark Canha signs with Mets

- The second signing of the Mets' Black Friday shopping was signing outfielder Mark Canha to a two year, twenty six million, five hundred thousand dollar deal, with a team option for 2024. Although Canha hits for a low average, he draws walks and hits home runs. Add in his solid defense, and it is a good signing for the Mets.

Grade: A-

Starling Marte signs with Mets

- The final signing of the Mets' Black Friday barrage was getting veteran outfielder Starling Marte. The two time gold glove award winner and one time all star had a 132 OPS+ this last year, along with a 116 OPS+ throughout his career. A five tool player, Marte was a top outfielder on the market, and was definitely a good way to cap off the signings for that day.

Grade: A+

Max Scherzer signs with Mets

- The last signing the Mets made before the lockout was their biggest move all offseason, signing future hall of famer Max Scherzer to a three year, \$130 million deal. With five combined Cy Young Awards between him and Mets' ace Jacob deGrom, along with twelve combined all star appearances, this one-two punch is certainly the best in baseball.

Grade: A+

Mets trade for Chris Bassitt

- After a slow start to the post-lockout free agent and trade market for all of baseball, the Mets finally made their move. They traded pitcher J.T. Ginn, their number five prospect, and pitcher Adam Oller, for pitcher Chris Bassitt. The 2021 all-star posted a 3.15 ERA last year. He has number one starte stuff, yet he is our number three starter.

Grade: A

Adam Ottavino signs with Mets

- The New York native is coming to Queens on a one year, \$4 million deal, with \$1 million in incentives. After pitching for the New York Yankees, Ottavino spent last year with the Boston Red Sox. He put up a 113 ERA+ (League average is one hundred).

Grade: B+

As you can see, the Mets have made a handful of moves, both for their major league roster and for the minor leagues. With all aspects of their team being bolstered, they are set for success this season.

