

Did you know the “Ides of March” was a day in the Roman calendar equivalent to March 15th. It was considered a deadline for settling debts, and the day Julius Caesar was assassinated.

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Did you know that it is speculated the the custom of April Fools began in 16th century France, after the New year calendar was moved from April 1st to January 1st. Those who continued to celebrate in April were considered fools and were often the victim of practical jokes.

Practically Perfect

Written and Photographed by Rebecca Weisselberg



The Jag Stage Players showed how they can bring magic to musicals. JMHS presented Mary Poppins from March 8th to 10th.

Kids who arrive an hour early for the show were able to partake in Mary Poppins themed activities. This included games, meet and greets, crafts, and also face painting. Kids also had the opportunity to meet Mary Poppins herself.

Katie Volltrauer, who played Mary Poppins, expresses, “The little kids at the meet and greets reminded me why I love doing theater so much. It’s a magical feeling being able to bring a character to life and seeing the excitement it brings to the audience.”



All the sets that were seen during the play were made by our incredible stage crew. Rebecca Seeds, who was one of the crew managers commented, “It was a lot of fun getting close to people and making new friends and seeing people enjoy something that you also love. And seeing people continue and adding brand new traditions for the underclassmen to continue. Overall, it was great, we all had fun and made the long days feel short.”

There were many lead roles in the play. One of the lead roles, Mrs. Banks, played by Emily Stahlnecker, mentions “honestly, it has been a privilege. I always loved theater and I just recently went back this year, so being trusted with a large role meant a lot to me. I love playing Mrs. Banks and really making her my own.”

Volltrauer also mentions “obviously it’s always special to be a lead but being a lead in your senior year makes it feel even more special. I am so grateful that I got the opportunity to play Mary Poppins. The experience has taught me a lot.”

The show included some improv, where



the actors had the opportunity to place their own spin on their characters. Gianluca Fortunato, who played Bert, says “It was definitely scary having an important role. Especially since I have never sang or danced before, and the only time I acted was in the fall play Clue.” At the end of the show, Bert and Mary Poppins switched hats while doing the closing number. When asked about this, Fortunato responds “That hat switch was something that Katie (Mary Poppins) and I planned. She approached me about a month ago when we originally started working on our bow, and she asked if we should switch hats. I found the idea very funny, we only did it on closing night though. Since our Sunday show is the last one we normally like to change things. But it was 100% improv, but I feel like it made the show better in some way.”

Lana Dubrow, who played Jane, adds,



“It was nice to play a role I’ve already played before and put a new spin on it. Although there was a lot of pressure to play a lead role, it was extremely rewarding. It was cool to bounce off ideas and put our own twist on our character’s dynamics!”



When it came to the actor’s favorite scenes to perform in, it was Playing the Game. In this scene, Mary Poppins brings the kids’ toys to life to show them it’s not nice to just treat things badly. Joseline Felipe, who was a part of the ensemble, comments “Step in Time and Down the Chimney are my second favorite to sing, with the first being Playing the Game. That song, no matter what part you sing, was pure joy and such an iconic number for the musical.”

In addition to this, Beatrix Morrell, who played Valentine, the first doll to come to life, reflects on the scene, “The energy that everyone had in this scene was unmatched, and it really showed the ability of everyone as actors. This scene ended up becoming not only a fan favorite but also a cast favorite as well. It’s such a unique scene and everyone was able to put their own twist on their characters individually, which I think is really amazing!”

Volltrauer adds, “my favorite scenes were Supercal and Playing the Game. Both are very colorful and exciting to watch. They are also fun to sing.”

Our seniors graduating this year took



to the stage for this production for the very last time. Rachel Buchinsky, who played Katie Nanna and was a part of the ensemble, mentions, “It’s bittersweet. It has been a great 4 years when I’ve had the opportunity to meet and work with some talented and amazing people. Being a part of all the plays and musicals have brought me so much joy throughout my high school career. It is something that I will be able to look back on when I get older and be proud of. I’ll miss this, but I hope for the best for the program and everyone in it.”

Felipe says “Everyone expected me to



ball my eyes out as I took that senior bow and they were right. Everything just hit me and I realized that I’d never have rehearsal with these amazing people ever again. I formed a truly amazing connection with these people who became my second family. These opportunities and memories for me, are something that I will always keep close to my heart, forever.”

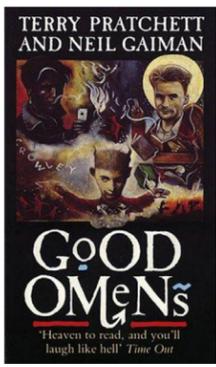
While many things can be taken away from the musical, the most important thing was its message. The theme of the play was that anything is possible if you believe in yourself. I mean, Mary Poppins did pull an entire hat rack out of her purse that seemed like an endless pit. She can also fly. The play inspires the young mind to believe in the impossible.

If there were two words only that could sum up the play, choosing the words of Mary Poppins, “practically perfect.”



Good Omens' Portrayal of Good and Evil

By Emery Oliver



Good Omens; The Nice and Accurate Prophecies of Agnes Nutter, Witch is an amazing fantasy comedy that tricks its readers into really thinking about the complex definitions of “good” and “evil”. Such a seemingly simple concept that can be boiled

down to nothing, can also be greatly expanded on. What better way to bring this to life than through charming characters and a high stakes plot?

Authors Terry Pratchett and Neil Gaiman decided to write Good Omens together after Gaiman sent the first bit of his draft “The Omen” to Pratchett and was later asked if he was willing to sell the plot to him. “I said we are going to write it together,” Gaiman responded, “because I am not stupid.” They would talk on the phone about the book and its characters as well as go to one another’s houses in order to sit down and write or chat. Writing the book as a team ended up being very beneficial to the both of them, as they would critique or add to anything the other had written, along with asking for additions and advice. As a result, the book came out better than anticipated.

Good Omens starts off with a flashback to the beginning. Biblically speaking, the beginning of everything. Our main characters, an angel and a demon, stand in the Garden of Eden and have a chat. The two discuss God’s “Great Plan” and what exactly its purpose is. The angel whom we’ve learned is named Aziraphale is de-

fensive on the subject, getting flustered over the questions that the demon asks him.

Flashforward to the 1990’s, and the demon who has named himself Crowley is tasked with delivering the Antichrist -the son of Satan- to his unsuspecting parents. Now despite the notable differences between them, Aziraphale and Crowley have grown to become friends over the last six thousand years. Having the privilege to call the Earth their home, neither of them are pleased to realize just how quickly the Rapture is approaching. Both of them agree that what is essentially the end of the world would be a waste of something so amazing.

The two culminate a plan to stop the Rapture, by making sure they’re both in the child’s life. Crowley disguises himself as a nanny who will naturally be around the child quite often. Aziraphale disguises himself as a gardener, knowing that every child is curious and he’ll eventually go outside and make conversation with the strange man always picking at the flowers and talking to the slugs. Doing this he won’t grow up good or bad, instead maturing as neutrally as possible, just like a human. Of course, this would be a perfect plan had Crowley not mixed the child up with another. As a result of his carelessness, the Rapture’s date closes in on them as they scramble to figure out a way to find the Antichrist, prevent the Rapture, and hide the fact that they’ve both been working with the enemy from their respective sides, Heaven and Hell.

This book is a fantastic conversation starter, both with the enticing plot and the questions that it provokes. What exactly makes a

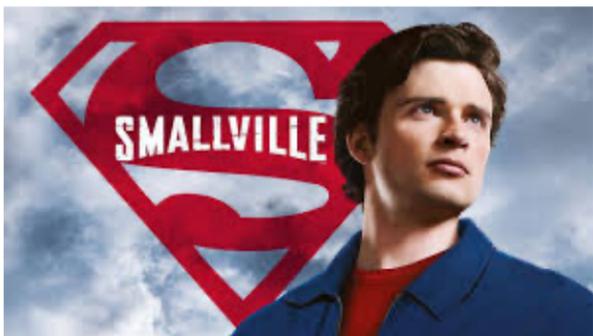
person good or bad? How can you tell, and who are you to decide that? The point of the conversation is that people as a whole have never been good and they’ve never been bad. They’ve always just been people. The ending of the book really does paint humanity in a beautiful light, even after the obstacles that the characters had faced throughout the story. It’s hopeful, light hearted, and human.

Good Omens was turned into an Amazon Prime show starring Michael Sheen as Aziraphale and David Tennant as Crowley. It premiered May 31st, 2019 with season two due to release this upcoming July.



Rewind Review: Smallville

By Mr. Apa



Look up in the sky! It’s a bird. It’s a plane. It’s... not Superman. Not yet at least.

The series Smallville premiered on October 16, 2001 with the strict rule of “No flights. No Tights.” But more on that later. Smallville ran for 10 seasons with the series wrapping up in its tenth season on May 13, 2011.

Smallville tells the story of Clark Kent growing up in his Kansas hometown as he tackles being a teenager and his budding superpowers. Throughout the series we see Clark growing into the Man of Tomorrow he is destined to become as well as his struggles as a teenager just trying to fit in.

While the series starts off with a “Freak of the Week” format, meaning a new villain each week with little to no connectivity between episodes, it does eventually evolve into a more serialized format. While a lot of these disconnected episodes are good, the show really hits its stride when the overall story arcs begin. The “villains” of these early episodes (and, to be honest, throughout most of the series) are all affected by what the show calls meteor rocks. These rocks, green glowing chunks of a meteor shower, will be familiar to Superman fans as Kryptonite. These meteor rocks give people

around Smallville some amazing and deadly abilities, and prove fatal to Clark Kent.

The show deals with these weekly villains, but the real crux of the show is the relationship between Clark and the other characters, especially Lex Luthor. In the show, Lex recently moves to Smallville and befriends the young Clark Kent. What begins as a friend/brother like relationship begins to transform into the protagonist/antagonist relationship that one would expect from Superman and his greatest foe.



Tom Welling, and Michael Rosenbaum take on the roles of Clark Kent (Welling) and Lex Luthor (Rosenbaum). And their performances always manage to make even the worst episodes better. The rest of the cast is excellent as well, with John Schnieder as Jonathan Kent, Annette O’Toole as Martha Kent, Sam Jones as Pete Ross, Kristin Kreuk as Lana Lang, Allison Mack as Chloe Sullivan, and rounding out the cast as a series regular Jon Glover as Lionel Luthor.

Throughout the series other DC heroes and plenty of villains make their appear-

ance. Villains such as Parasite, Mr. Mxyzptlk, Doomsday, Bizarro, Metallo, General Zod and many others show up to fight Clark. Most of the Justice League make an appearance as well. The series sees early versions of Aquaman, The Flash, Cyborg, Black Canary, Booster Gold and Green Arrow.

In fact, the popularity of Justin Hartley as Oliver Queen was the catalyst that set off the Arrowverse in 2012 with the CW’s Arrow, starring Stephen Amell as the Emerald Archer.

Smallville came out before the boom of superhero properties took over the world. It showed the origin and evolution of Clark Kent on his journey to become the world’s greatest superhero. When looking back, some of the special effects that were cutting edge for their time do not hold up, but a lot of these effects do.

If you are a fan of the Man of Tomorrow, watch the show of yesteryears and see this interpretation of Clark Kent’s journey to Superman.

*Sorry Bat fans out there, the Caped Crusader does not make an appearance until the comic book continuation called Smallville Season 11, but he is alluded to later seasons of the show.



The Shermanator: Legacy

By Rebecca Weisselberg

2024 is the year that our beloved security guard, Mrs. Sherman, is retiring.

Mrs. Sherman has been a security guard at Jackson Memorial for 25 years. And as a substitute security guard for 4 years. "I've been here since my kids were here," Mrs. Sherman says. "My son graduated in '94 and I started in December of '93 as a sub."

When asked what she will miss the most about working at the school she replies "I think the kids. I think everybody comes and talks to you to find out what's going on. Kids are very important and I think that if you can help them in any way and they can come to talk to you and just be their friends and talk with them, I think that is what I am going to miss. There are a lot of different classes that have graduated over the years that I still see the kids out of the school and it's just amazing that they still remember you and what you brought to their life. I think it is really important to stay connected with the kids."

"It means a lot and I know I yell, I yell a lot sometimes, you know? But it's not that I want to get you all in trouble, it's because I am here to help in any way that I can and so sometimes I yell because some of the students make you a little crazy sometimes, but it's not that I'm mad at you or I don't like you, I am just trying to help you."

Mrs. Sherman has plans for after she retires. She and her husband are planning to travel. "Of course, I have my grandchildren, but probably move out of New Jersey and move to South Carolina or something. But just live our life the best that we can for the time that we

have left."

When I brought up when Mrs. Sherman had a big part in last year's musical, *Spongebob*, a big grin appeared on her face. "That Was amazing and I am so happy that they asked me to do that." She showed me the article I wrote that was sitting on her wall on display. "That was a highlight of everything and it was just so amazing. I saved the article and I think about it all the time. Another thing, the Adventure Bound program, I went on so many trips, hiking trips, canoe trips, and overnight trips, and it was so amazing to see how everyone works together and clicks together. That's another highlight, being around these kids and being able to chaperone for them and have them for my partner in a canoe." I questioned if it was scary when trusting them and she chuckled. "No, one time they changed canoes in the middle of the Delaware with me sitting in one. And I was like if I fell over. There are just so many memories. Like I tell my family, this is my life."

I asked her if there was anything else she wanted to say to the readers of the paper. She replied "I think the way I feel about Jackson Memorial High School, is like my second home. All my peers that are here, we've been through so many different things together. For the most part, I am very happy about the life that I have here at Memorial. And the teachers and the administrators are my life. I knew some teachers when they went to school here and then they graduated. The people who I worked with in the security department who have left or retired or passed, were my mentors who I still keep in contact with. There are a lot of good memories.

The people currently in my security department, are the best and I would not trade them because they brought a lot of happiness to my life. It is bittersweet that I'm leaving and sometimes I think "Should I leave?" But it's time and I was going to leave in January but I figured let me finish my year with my seniors because you can't just leave something, you continue it, until the end. And this is my end at Jackson Memorial. But this is my home away from home.

It is safe to say that from the staff to the students, Mrs. Sherman was loved by all who knew her. Congrats on retiring Mrs. Sherman and from all of us at Jackson Memorial, thank you for keeping us safe and helping us no matter what the situation may have been.



Preventing Those Pesky Allergies

By Laura Rangel de Queiroz



Spring is officially here, but with new seasons come new challenges, and spring's biggest challenge is pollen!

Pollen is everywhere during the warmer months, even during summer, but during the spring pollen is at its worst, and people with allergies can't seem to escape it. Having allergies can be bad during the spring time because pollen is on the cars, on roofs, can come in through windows. Even ventilation systems can bring the pesky allergen into your home and life.

Most people with pollen allergies just succumb to their fate during the season. This prevents them from enjoying this beautiful season of floral rebirth.

So, what can you do to enjoy the spring season more if you're allergic to pollen? Well in this Article we're going to talk about symptoms and some preventive measures to make this season a bit more enjoyable.

Pollen like any other allergen causes everyone to react very differently, but it also has its most common symptoms that dictate whether or not you have allergies. What's the first step to preventing allergies? Finding out that you have them for sure. Whether getting tested at a doctor's office or paying close attention to your

symptoms, pollen is a pretty common allergy and you'll usually be able to tell if you're allergic. Here are some symptoms to keep an eye out for- runny or stuffy noses tend to be one that no matter how badly pollen affects you, you will have. According to the AAFA, some other side effects that aren't as common may be itchy nose, mouth, and eyes, red or watery eyes, and swelling around the eyes. Now you know how to identify if you are having an allergic reaction to pollen, how do you help prevent and alleviate it?

Preventive measures for pollen tend to be very easy to use and will show you amazing results. Simple and easy things can change how badly you react during this pollen season. Wearing sunglasses. Wearing sunglasses isn't just for the sun, Sunglasses are also a protective shield for your eyes. Allergens typically affect our eyes first, even if it isn't pollen you may notice that the first thing that starts to affect you when you are around something you are allergic to is usually your eyes. Wearing sunglasses can protect the eyes from pollen and help to prevent watery, red, or swollen eyes, some of the most common side effects of a pollen allergy.

Watch the plants around you. This one may sound a little silly but it's the most effective one. If you want to have fewer allergic reactions during this spring season one way is to try and limit the amount of pollen around you. When planting flowers around the outside of your home, especially near windows or airways, you should try and make sure that they are not plants that exert an extreme amount of pollen. This will help to limit the pollen around you to begin with.

Watering your plants may also help with pollen control, if your plants or any object in your area is covered in pollen just water it all away, using a spray bottle or hose to get rid of that pesky pollen.

According to an article by Better Health, one thing that many people don't do is avoid grass! When grass is being mowed stay inside and away from the lawn or outdoors, and if you need to mow the lawn try wearing a face mask to avoid getting pollen in your mouth or nose.

Lastly, and most obviously, keep windows closed! Whether it be in your house or your car you should keep the windows closed to avoid getting pollen in areas where you often are.

Pollen and allergies can be annoying but instead of focusing on how this season affects your allergies looking at the positives may do you some good! Spring is the season of rebirth, the dead leaves come to life, the cherry blossoms bloom and tulips are in every corner! Now that you know some ways to prevent and identify an allergic reaction to pollen go enjoy this beautiful season, while protecting yourself!



Girl's Wrestling: Celebrating Seniors

Written and Photographed by Rebecca Weisselberg



On January 24 the girls wrestling team of Jackson Memorial faced off against East Brunswick High School at 6:00 pm in the memorial gymnasium. Before the matches took place, the graduating seniors were celebrated.

The seniors this year have taken charge of the team, becoming leaders and mentors for the younger teammates. Alexa Meegan says "The group of seniors have become so close and important to me. They do try to make everyone as happy and comfortable as they can be." Following the question on how this year's team is different from years before, Meegan replies "My years before this one have always been good but there wasn't as much communication with the underclass as the way they do now."



While the competitive nature still lives on strong in the team, the bond is even stronger. Paloma Lipari exclaimed, "I love the bond that our team has, we all consider each other

family at the end of the day." Ava Bonilla comments "The team is my second family, they are all constantly supportive no matter the outcome of any match and even at practice. Every day we are motivated and we work hard every minute we spend on and off the mat. We always can rely on each other whether it is in life or in general. The atmosphere of the team is my safe space and always will be."

When it comes to the coaches, Lipari had only nice things to say about them. "My coaches are wonderful people and they push every individual on our team to do better. My coaches believed in me even when I doubted myself. They put so much effort into bettering us, not only as wrestlers but as people too." Like any sport, the team had to adjust to different situations that may appear. Bri Dugo mentions "We've had to rework our game plans and strategies going into the season. We as a team have had to trust the process and lean on each other from these small hiccups and become closer because of this."



Every year the goal of the team is the same. Show why the Jaguars are number one in New Jersey. But this year, Madison Rucci explains the most important one. "As a team, we really want to try our best to get another state champion win and become first in the state for six years in a row at Kingsway Duals."



Senior night ended with a win for Jackson Memorial. The ending score was 48 to 24.



Six Flags Plans Their 50th Anniversary

By Alison Lucas



Six Flags Great Adventure has wrapped up their 2023 season. During this year, they had events like Flavors of The World, Pride Nite, summer fireworks, and their famous Fright Fest event. But this year, they're doing more than just food festivals and halloween scares. Because in 2024, Six Flags Great Adventure will be celebrating their 50th anniversary!

To celebrate their being open since 1974, big changes will be made throughout the park. There have been rumors of a new ride for a while when construction markers were seen on the ground. Well, those rumors turned out to be true!

For the 2024 season, Six Flags announced it's new coaster called, The Flash: Vertical Velocity. This roller coaster is a first-of-its-kind boomerang coaster manufactured by Vekoma. Not only does it go 59 miles per hour, but it also has a 180-degree twisted drop and a Zero-G roll to the vertical tower. It will be located in the Movie Town area.



The safari is also facing new changes for the upcoming season. Guests will be able to stay overnight in a glamping experience in their new Savannah Sunset Resort and Spa. Guests will be able to sleep in a luxury tent surrounded by animals and the sunset and dine at the on-site restaurant. They are also able to visit the spa and be taken on a tour in the safari. And instead of a drive-thru experience this year, the off-road safari tour will be returning. Guests can enter the tour buses through Great Adventure or the Safari entrance and enjoy the animals as a tour guide teaches them about the different animals.



For the 50th anniversary of Great Adventure, guests can also purchase bricks for the Dream Street Anniversary Pathway. These bricks will be placed in one of the walkways of the amusement park. The guest can also customize their bricks to their liking and engrave their family name on them. And they are also given a replica of the brick to take home with them. It's a perfect keepsake for anyone who visits and loves the amusement park.

The park will be celebrating their 50th anniversary from June to August of 2024. Tickets and season passes will also be able to be purchased on their website. Being open since 1974, this iconic amusement park still is a Great Adventure!

Six Flags Great Adventure will open weekends beginning March 16, before opening daily for spring break from March 28-April 7.

