



The High School View

The High School View is staffed and prepared entirely by students from the Martha's Vineyard Regional High School, and published on their behalf by The Martha's Vineyard Times, with the generous assistance of the sponsors whose names appear below.

It's (still) 'A Wonderful Life'

BY JULIA SAYRE AND CLARE MONE

Theater students from the Martha's Vineyard Regional High School (MVRHS) have spent the fall preparing to record their performance of the radio play "It's A Wonderful Life." The holiday show will be filmed remotely over Zoom by the theater department and screened for the public at The Drive-In on Dec. 18, 19, and 20.

Theater department head Brooke Ditchfield is directing the play, as she has for the past seven years. She said a lot of thought went into determining this year's show. "In July, we started looking at titles that would be possible to do if we were still in a shut down area [during the holidays]. The reason why we went with this one is because we knew this story would time out really well



PHOTO COURTESY OF MADELEINE BENGSSON

Students rehearse "It's a Wonderful Life" over Zoom.

with the holidays and it's also written to be performed as a radio play," Brooke said.

A radio play relies on vocal components more than visuals, with sound effects, music, and vocals being the key elements. People who cannot attend in person will be able to tune into the play on WMVY on Dec. 20.

Minnesingers director Abigail

Chandler is the assistant director, and said that producing a radio play over Zoom came with some unexpected benefits. "One of the really fun bits has been that because it's a radio show, so much of the focus is on the quality of [students'] speaking," she said. "Hearing the kids explore and have fun with that is really nice."

Freshman Samantha Warren agreed with the importance of conveying characterization through voice. "You really have to get into character when you say your lines, because the camera doesn't show your body parts or gestures," she said.

Junior Emmett Favreau plays the lead male role of George Bailey and feels that despite the challenges he faced while producing the play remotely, it has overall been a learning experience.

"Even though the virus is not particularly working in the favor of the performing arts, it's taught me that even with all of those disadvantages, people are still able to take their passion and create something new out of it," he said.

Brooke and Ms. Chandler had to overcome lagging connections and remote auditions in order to produce the play over Zoom, but they both said it was worth it for one reason: the students.

"The students have worked so

hard and they deserve to create something," said Brooke, "so we were really committed to make sure that we could. I'm so glad that we did because I think what we're going to present is going to be very, very special."

Junior Ingrid Moore, who plays Joseph, the superintendent of angels, has found several positive aspects of remote rehearsal, such as creating her own festive set background for her Zoom box. "It was actually kind of fun because it's Christmas-themed. I got to take out all of my Christmas decorations and put them all up," she said.

However, performing her scenes in front of a computer doesn't compare to in person. "It's just weird," Ingrid said. "A lot of [performing] is being able to see how your performance is coming off to the audience and to ensemble members, and that's so much harder to do over Zoom."

Another difficulty with filming and acting over Zoom was the singing portion of the

musical production, which was impossible with lagging internet connections. So instead of producing their annual musical, the theater department decided for the production to be a play.

To add some kind of musical component, Brooke and Ms. Chandler decided to do a collaboration between the theater kids and the Minnesingers for the first time after the Minnesingers shows this year were cancelled.

Ms. Chandler spoke to what motivated her through these times: "I found in high school that music filled up voids and made high school something that I could get through. My motivation has been giving my students something to look forward to to fill that void."

Entry to the drive-in will be free, but viewers are encouraged to donate, with all proceeds benefiting the Minnesingers. Other performances by the theater department will be shown in the spring. **HSV**

Allure of hunting nabs next generation

BY HARDY EVILLE

It is a cold, windy day in early December. Shotgun season began a few days ago and school has just let out for the day. Martha's Vineyard Regional High School (MVRHS) Junior Barrett Oliver quickly puts on his camouflage and hunter orange vest and hat before squeezing into a truck with his father, Kevin Oliver, and their guns.

The Olivers are heading to a nearby property in Chilmark where the owner lets them hunt. Once there, Mr. Oliver stops the truck and puts his finger to his lips.

"When we get out of the car, we've got to be stealthy," Mr. Oliver says.

Barrett has been hunting with his father since he was nine years old. Although, at that age, he says all he did was sit and watch. He has been seriously hunting for three years, taking part in bow, shotgun, and

primitive weapons seasons.

Barrett leads the way down the trail to their deer stands. His gun is loaded and he occasionally stops to look for deer. Wet leaves line the path, muffling the sound of his footsteps.

The first stand is positioned facing east, where deer often pass through. Today, however, the wind is coming from the west, so that area is now downwind of the stand.

"They'll smell you before they even get close," Mr. Oliver says.

They continue to the next stand which is better positioned for the wind. Barrett unloads his gun and climbs the creaking metal ladder to the seat, 18 feet in the air. Mr. Oliver moves on down the path.

"Usually I'm in a stand, sometimes I'm in a blind though," Barrett says.

A deer blind, unlike a stand, is enclosed. It is camouflaged on the outside and there are windows for the hunters to shoot from. A stand, on the other

hand, is really just a chair positioned high in a tree.

The first half-hour passes with little excitement. Barrett explains that the deer are more active at dusk. At around two-thirty, a drizzle of freezing rain begins, lasts for a few minutes, then dissipates. Barrett shrugs it off.

"If it's a little drizzle then whatever, I'll go, but I'd rather not get soaking wet," he says. "Ideally it's cold, very cold. Not too much wind, and pretty sunny out."

The cold is important because it gets the deer moving around.

Mr. Oliver returns and whispers that he accidentally scared some deer away from his location and is going to use the first stand even though conditions are not ideal.

The sounds of the forest take center stage. Birds chirp, trees creak, occasionally a far off gunshot echoes through the trees.

Barrett looks through his scope, scanning the forest below.



PHOTO BY HARDY EVILLE

Barrett Oliver climbs the ladder to the top of his tree stand.

He says he prefers shotgun season because he missed two deer this bow season due to small branches knocking his arrow off target. Shotgun slugs go right through the tiny branches.

"Sundown is about 4:15 right now," Barrett says, explaining that the half-hour after sunset, when it is still legal to hunt, is the best time to spot a deer.

Suddenly, a loud bang is heard close by and the smell of gunsmoke filters through the air. Barrett takes out his phone and texts his dad,

checking in. Mr. Oliver responds that he thinks he got one and that more deer should be heading Barrett's way.

No deer appear. Barrett's tree sways in the wind and creaks loudly.

"Hear that? That's a woodchuck," Barrett says with a wry smile.

It's now almost four o'clock and the silence is even more prevalent. The whispered conversations have stopped. A cold breeze comes through and Barrett's bare hands, gripping

the metal of the gun, are starting to get cold. A slight drizzle begins again.

As the sun sets, another gunshot is heard. Mr. Oliver again. This time he texts over a picture of the deer he just killed.

Father: 1; Son: nothing.

Just before 4:45, Barrett climbs down from the stand after an unlucky day. He didn't even see a squirrel.

Back at the house, after some difficulty navigating Mr. Oliver's truck through the dark woods to pick up the deer, they field dress the deer behind their shed.

"It's boring every time I don't get a deer," Barrett says. "There are things I'd rather be doing than sitting out there, but getting a deer is a top three kind of feeling."

After hanging the dressed carcass in a tree for a day or so, the Olivers will make medallions out of the tenderloins and use the rest of the meat for burgers and sausage.

"It's like catching a fish, but the fish is a hundred pounds," Barrett says. **HSV**

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