

# PROS BEHIND THE SCENES

## THE EFFECTS

**WHAT PEOPLE DON'T SEE** can sometimes be the hardest job. Senior Mitchell Fellows helped control everything that went into making the show have an extra special effect. "Backstage we had to set up equipment," Mitchell said. "It was really stressful because we had to be really quiet setting up."

## THE THERAPIST

**UP IN THE TECH BOOTH,** senior TJ Higgins not only put in work for the special effects, but he was the Encore's back stage therapist. "The best I could do to help with the sanity of the cast and crew was to let them vent over Starbucks or a car ride," he said. "That's all I really could do."

## THE ENCOURAGER

**AS THE STUDENT DIRECTOR,** senior Son Nguyen made sure to pump up every performer before and after the shows. "I really made it my job to get everyone into the shows," he said. "It was a huge accomplishment getting the underclassmen excited about theatre."



# COUNTDOWN TO THE CURTAIN

WHEN THE TIMER STARTS, THE PRESSURE IS ON FOR A PERFECT SHOW

**F**inger on the light switch, senior light tech TJ Higgins watches the clock.

Thirty. Twenty.

The seconds count down as he waits for the signal from senior sound tech Mitchell Fellows to cut the show.

Only 10 seconds left on the clock. TJ dims the lights as Mitchell gives the signal: "kill it."

With just 40 minutes, timing was everything for the One Act Play, "Rivers and Ravine."

One of Mitchell's jobs was to end the show at 39 minutes and 50 seconds to guarantee the show was not disqualified.

"Forty minutes is plenty of time to tell a story. We just have to make sure we cut and add moments in the right places to stay within time," junior Libby Blair said.

Even in only 40 minutes, the actors provided the emotional impact of the story. "Rivers and Ravines" was a story of the farm crisis in the 1980s, a time when people bought into the idea of perpetual debt. People eventually lost their land, livelihood, and even their lives.

"This was probably the most raw show we've ever done. Most of the audience could relate to the time period," Libby said. "We really tried to relate to the audience in a way that they could understand and

remember what it was like for people to lose their homes." The emotion wasn't just acting. For some members of the cast, the scenes felt real.

"In a scene between Aaron (Pitman) and me, he started breaking down," Libby said. "We're so close in real life that when I saw him upset in the scene, it was hard to think it wasn't real."

At district competition, the pressure was on to give a perfect and emotional performance in the allotted 40 minutes. As the show came to a close TJ was on edge as the clock ran and the final scene approached.

The clock hit 39:50. Mitchell made the nerve racking decision to cut the show.

"Before the final scene, the two characters on stage shared a hug," TJ said. "It was the perfect time to dim the lights and kill the show. The audience and judges had no clue we had to cut it."

The show advanced to bi-district and then to area, but there was no cutting necessary either time.

"It's kind of a relief once you finish in the time limit. When you perform a good show from start to finish it's like putting a period on the end of a sentence," sophomore Eric Cox said. "You know you've told a good story."

Page by Kenzie Glover and Morgan Morris

Photo by [Name] - This is my first year being in [Name], so I am a little nervous, but since we have been studying in school for [Name] every night I have never felt more prepared for a performance.

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