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## Slaying beasts and finding yourself

### Next McNary play is an action-adventure

By **MATT RAWLINGS**  
*Of the Keizertimes*

Mythical creatures and action-adventure will be on display as the McNary High School theater department will be putting on their rendition on *She Kills Monsters* — a tribute to fans of the popular fantasy role-playing game, *Dungeons and Dragons* — for their first show of the 2019-20 season.

The show will play at Ken Collins Theatre with 7 p.m. showings from Nov. 6-9 — their will also be a matinee showing at 2 p.m. on Saturday, Nov. 9. Tickets can be purchased at the door for \$5.

McNary theater teacher Tom Cavanaugh got the idea to do this show after seeing the performance done at Dallas High School last year.

“I was blown away by the story and the action. There were awesome, high school relevant topics that the kids could explore,” he said.

The plot of *She Kills Monsters* revolves around the main character, Agnes, played by Elise Myers.

“It’s definitely a lot of pressure,” Myers said about being the lead of the play. “But it allows me to embrace my character more because I know I can’t let anyone down. This is something I can do and I am really appreciate that I got this opportunity.”

Agnes begins the show as a high schooler trying to deal with the sudden death of her teenage sister, Tilly. However, when Agnes stumbles upon her sister’s old *Dungeons and*

Dragons notebook, she gets thrust into a world of fantasy and adventure that was her sister’s safe-haven — featuring homicidal fairies, nasty ogres and 90s pop culture.

“It’s definitely different from past productions. There are a lot of mythical creatures and extra costumes,” Myers said.

Many of the masks, costumes and battle equipment for fight scenes were made by McNary students.

“We have a really good tech team here. It all looks pretty believable from sitting in the audience,” said Brayden Menan, who plays the role of Chuck.

While most productions by the McNary theatre department are family-friendly, does

have a PG-13 rating due to some language and mild adult themes.

“I would say that anything you see in this show is on par with what you would see in most primetime TV. I’m a little overcautious with my ratings, just because I want people to know what they are getting into when they come to a show,” Cavanaugh said. “There is definitely some language and some things that would be considered adult content. It’s not over the top bad at all.”

Despite the show featuring fantasy and comedy, much of the material also has a very dramatic and real-life feel to it.

“Even though it’s big and extravagant in terms of visuals, the source material and the problems that the characters deal with are very real, so it keeps it all very grounded,” Menan said.

Many of the actors play



KEIZERTIMES/Matt Rawlings

Dylan Lopez and Rowan Mahoney do battle in one of several fight scenes in the play.



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Elise Myers plays Agnes, the protagonist of *She Kills Monsters* in the McNary production debuting next week.

*Dungeons and Dragons* in their spare time, which adds to their excitement of doing a show like this.

“Being able to bring this to the stage and have people appreciate it is going to be really cool,” Myers said. “I think a lot of high schoolers, or anyone that has played the game in the past, will experience a lot of

nostalgia.”

Whether you’re passionate about *Dungeons and Dragons*, or even if you’ve never played the game at all, Cavanaugh believes that audience members will find something to connect with in the show.

“I think anyone who has any level of nerd or geek about them will have plenty of refer-

ences that only they will get,” Cavanaugh said. “I just think there is so much heart and humor in the show that if you have never played D&D, or if you were born after the 90s, you will still enjoy yourself. It’s got broad appeal, but it’s also got very specific appeal as well.”

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