

THE VOICE

The Official Student Newspaper of St. Stephen's & St. Agnes School

April 2015



You "Art" Going to Find a Better Evening Than This!

By Torrae Scott '15



Marine Le Coquet, a French student part of the Normandy exchange, performs a song in French while playing guitar at the closing of Evening of the Arts.

Evening of the Arts was the time and place where any type of artist can come and showcase their talent. With a stage set up in the lunchroom, this event occurs annually, drawing more and more performers to "show us what they got" each year. Whether you're an actor, a dancer, a comedian, a musician, or an overall entertainer, Evening of the Arts is the place to be. As the program proudly stated, "EoA will feature art installations, digital presentations, literary readings and musical performances." Before the acts and performances, there was an "Art Walk" where you could see all the portfolios of those in 2D and 3D AP Art. I interviewed a couple of the future virtuosos about their views on EoA:

Dr. Jacobs: "I'm singing a Burt Bacharach number. He was one of the major musical songwriters of the 1960's, and I'll be singing his song "I'll Never Fall in Love Again". Bacharach's songstress, Dionne Warwick, was the cousin of Whitney Houston. I really love this song, and I love to perform. This is my favorite genre of music, so it's easy to sing without accompaniment. I love to perform, and what I love about Evening of the Arts is it's like, 'Hey kids, let's put on a show! If you're trying something new, it's a secure place where no one expects you to be 100% perfect, and it's not exclusive to anyone, and it's a community event. I also like the informality of the lunchroom rather than the CPAC."

Raymond Martin '15, one of Ms. DeBardelaben's 3D AP students, said: "This is my first time participating in Evening of the Arts, but I'm already excited about it. The fact

that you can come out and see everyone's hard work on display is so satisfying. We have the action of a JV game plus the grace of a ping pong match, so you can hope to be amazed, especially by my portfolio. Speaking of those astounding masterpieces, you should definitely check that out."

Emily Baldridge '16, who performed the song "Vienna" accompanied by Nora Boles '15, added, "I can't wait till that fateful 'Evening'. Every year we hold this open presentation of everyone's unique talents, with a kind and generous audience. I know it's hard to get up on stage and show everyone your stuff, but it's great practice for overcoming stage fright. I won't lie, even I sometimes get some butterflies when I go up, but who doesn't? Overall it's a great place to see people you have already seen and maybe even someone new!"

Unfortunately, I wasn't able to see our surprise French student, Marine Le Coquet, perform, but Maddy Esworthy '15 had this to say about it: "She was amazing. It was really cool to have her participate spontaneously because it changed up the dynamic greatly. I still have no idea what she was saying, but it sounded absolutely beautiful. I think it also helped the French kids get into the night, since they didn't really understand the English music and poetry as well. I definitely applaud her for her courage and talent!"

That fact alone attributes to the allure of EoA. A foreign student felt comfortable enough in that setting to have the courage to play her guitar. To me, that's an impressive aura to give off from a lunchroom.

Nationals BAE-sball

By Katie Wood '16

For many people in this area, one of their favorite things to do starting in April is go to a Nationals baseball game in Washington D.C. While the Nationals were established in 1969, the team did not come to Washington until 2005. In the last few years the team has taken off, winning the division title in 2012

and 2014. This year they are poised to win the World Series with their incredible line up of players. Their stadium has also been a bonus as it houses one of the nicest fields, and offers gluten free and vegetarian food options along with traditional ballpark food.

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Body Positivity: Beyond Beauty

By Charlotte Kolb '15

Over the past few years, companies such as Dove have been launching "Real Beauty" campaigns in the hopes of improving and changing the beauty standards enforced by the fashion industry. What started as a small ad campaign has grown into a worldwide movement towards achieving body positivity, especially in young girls.

This year, SSSAS has forged its own path in encouraging positive self-image through the creation of a body positivity group by Upper School Counselor Mrs. Harrison.

"We decided to start this group because for years I have discussed with Stephanie Koroma the fact that we need to be looking for some kind of program to address these issues - but it is difficult to find a good one because research indicates that when you attempt to do a formal assembly or program on eating disorders (as an example) it often can backfire and actually increase incidents of the problem instead of decreasing them," Mrs. Harrison said.

However, this fall, Mrs. Harrison discovered a group known as "the Body Project," which held a training program that she, along with coach Koroma and Coach Stanton, attended earlier this year. The Body Project advertises itself as "a cognitive-dissonance-based body acceptance intervention that was designed to help adolescent girls and young women resist sociocultural pressures to conform to the thin-ideal and reduce their pursuit of thinness."

Following her attendance of the program, Mrs. Harrison sought to incorporate the teachings from the project into life at SSSAS starting with the students. Currently, Mrs. Harrison, Coach Stanton, and Coach Koroma advise a group that follows a six-session meeting program, working towards achieving body positivity.

"The group involves activities and homework that are completed at home

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To Love and Serve

By Katie Wood '16

As the Juniors have just received their Junior privileges, it seems appropriate that the sophomores should begin to get inspired so that they might be the first class to get their service contracts in on time. Below are some ideas on what the 2016 class has chosen as ways to complete their community service requirement.



Katherine Kiklis '16

"I'm working on the Tolerance Fair Leadership Academy. We're putting on a convention at another venue to discuss tolerance with other people. It has been a great experience but for anyone thinking of doing it, it does require a lot of time and in-school meetings."



Kelly Nirenberg '16

"I'll be working at the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA) this summer."



Cam Cohen '16

"I'm working at the Washington Tennis and Education Foundation helping underprivileged kids learn to play tennis."



Mattern Burnett '16

"I worked with the reading specialist at Hayfield Elementary school to help native Spanish speaking kids to read in English. It was fun, the kids were super cute."



Fionn Fortune '16

"I'm helping run free soccer clinics for kids in Alexandria."



Serena Gillian '16

"I went on the Romania trip sophomore year."

Draper Preview

By Lucy Verheggen '15

Springtime brings a whole new slew of sports, and with those sports come games, meets, matches, tournaments, and big events. For the track and field team, the largest and most anticipated meet of the season takes place right in the middle of the season, from May 1 to May 2, and is widely attended by schools all around DC, Maryland, and Virginia.

Lasting two days - longer than a normal meet - Draper is a time where many of the athletes on the team hope to get their best times and push themselves to compete against runners of a greater caliber. "I'm hoping to get my best time for the season this meet, especially since it's going to be my last Draper. We've been working really hard in practice so I'm excited to run and cheer on my teammates," notes Falen Mehari '15.

To prepare for such a meet, runners, jumpers, and throwers have been participating in rigorous practices and have worked hard each day to improve. Even meets athletes participate in before Draper prepare them. "Draper is the beginning of our championship season. All of our meets and training are geared to performing well at Draper, IAC/ISL and the VISA state championship which take place on three consecutive weekends," says Coach

McLeod of the preparations the team has been making.

Ms. Fusina recalls that during practice the team has been "working hard to gain strength and endurance so that we peak at the right time of the season."

Named after Major General Philip H. Draper, Jr., who donated money for SSSAS's six-lane, all-weather, 400-meter stratatrack in 1981, the meet has been held each year since 1982, the era when Albert L. "Sleepy" Thompson was athletic director.

This year is only slightly different from years past. "We are extremely grateful that our track was resurfaced last summer, so that is a big change. We now have two jumping pits, so the long jump and triple jump events will not take as long to complete."

What's more, there are more teams competing than ever before. "Last year we were down to 29 teams and 1,400 athletes. In 2012 and 2013 we hosted 32 and 31 teams respectively and averaged about 1,500 athletes during those years. With better advertising during this winter track season and this spring, we have 35 schools committed and we think we will get close to 2,000 athletes," states Coach McLeod, and with these numbers, runners like Paula Dammann '15 feel "[they] have more of an opportunity to compete against more tough competitors, which will challenge us as a team and help us to improve."

If you aren't a part of the track team, *The Voice* encourages you to come out on either day and support your fellow students! Both Coach McLeod and Coach Fusina recommend coming to see a relay, as the girls 4 by 100 is ranked 5th in the state, and the boys 4 by 100 is ranked 7th in the state. If you are looking to watch a longer, individual race, Audrey Androux '18 is competing in the freshman mile, the only event where only one student from each school, a freshman, is able to compete. And if you're interested in watching a field event, Jordan Walker '16 is competing in the High Jump or Nina Cotto '15 in the Long Jump. The events begin at 2 pm on May 1st and 1 pm on May 2nd, so feel free to come watch any of the events and cheer on the SSSAS athletes that compete!



Andrew Revers '18, Joshua Reed '15, Tucker Burnett '15, and John Sweeney '16
pose together after running.

How to Prompose

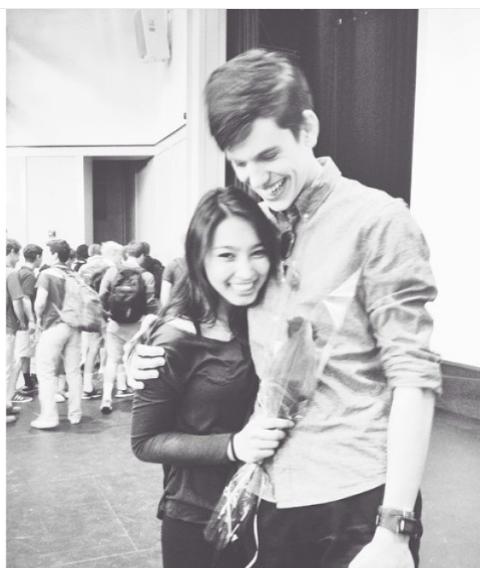
By Matt Weisenfluh '16

Sugar Shack Donuts, flowers, punny signs, and so much more. What goes into a prom proposal? It takes hard work to be creative and plan ahead. Many students had elaborate promposals this year, with videos, surprises, and heart-warming proposals. There have been loud, extravagant proposals in front of many people, and also smaller, more personal ones where only two people share the moment together. The idea of the proposal is one that is debated amongst faculty and students alike as the social norm of asking someone to prom has been questioned as "the only way to go." Others feel that it is a tradition and honor to ask or be asked, especially in creative and thoughtful ways. The Voice went out and asked students and faculty about their opinions on prom proposals.

Some faculty felt that the proposals involved too much stress. Mrs. Myhre commented "There is a lot of pressure on a girl being asked. She can't say no because it is such a public, open forum." Mrs. Myhre also added that "there is also pressure on guys to become creative on top of putting themselves out there with the proposal. There is pressure on both parties to go with a date, but its fine to go without one. I like prom, but not the idea of the promposal."

Mr. Yee, another vocal faculty member, commented "There is just a lot of pressure on students to plan these big, elaborate proposals. There is also a lot of pressure to say yes in these big, public events, and so people sometimes can retract their acceptance in private. The pressure on both students involved is very much."

Ellen Stevens '15 said "I think it's positive if both the boys and girls don't put too much stress on themselves. It's not a competition; you don't need to top the next guy."



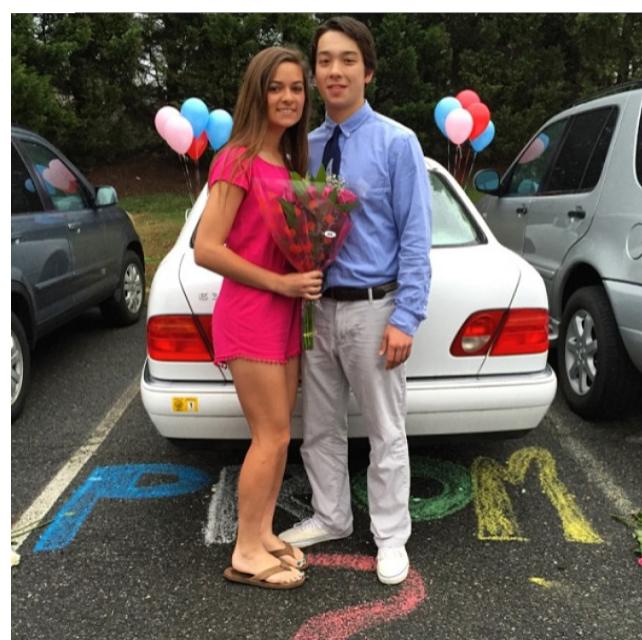
Alexander Collins '15 and Tara Laughlin '15 after Alex's surprise announcement

Halos & Horns



- In
Normandy students
Senioritis
Converse
College-decision anxiety
Jill Duggar's baby
Game of Thrones
Oxfords
Masonic Temple
Nationals

- Out
Madrid students
Work ethic
Boots
College-acceptance anxiety
Carrie Underwood's baby
Empire
Wallabies
Alexandria Hilton
Wizards



Mollie Miller '17 and Zach Phan '15's prom proposal

Torry Gourdin '15 added "It's one night, and you'll be with the rest of your classmates, I think it's mean to say no to a person, especially if they put in the effort."

Sam Burke '16 compared the proposal to a normal relationship, saying "The proposal is what it's like for relationships in general, like if you're asking somebody out on a date. It's going to be nerve wracking for both people." Others added their thoughts on the creativity of proposals. Haley Mullen '15 said "It's cool if it's personal. Like, if they play tennis, write it on a tennis ball. That's cute. It shows some real intention that you actually care and you put in the effort."

Daniel Marshall '15 added "I was asked to winter formal with rice krispie treats. I'm allergic to a lot of things, but not rice krispie treats, so it was really nice to know that she put in a lot of effort."

One of the more courageous proposals was when Alex Collins '15 asked Tara Laughlin '15 to prom in front of the entire school at morning meeting. "I'm an actor, so I'm used

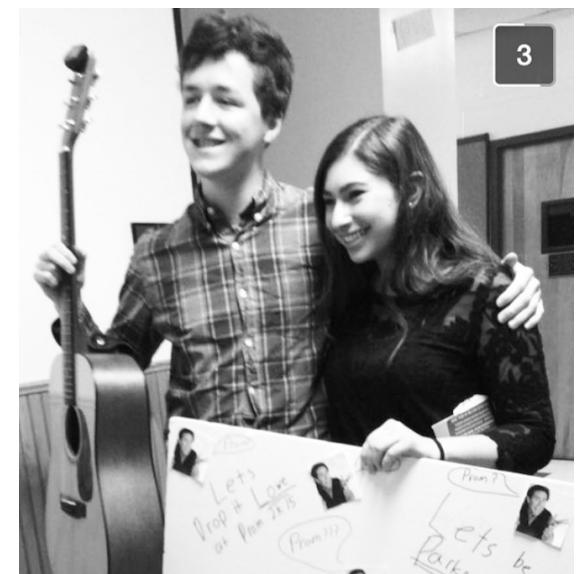


JaVon Price '16 and Abby Miller '17



to being up in front of people, but even with that experience, I was shaking inside. It was so terrifying, because I just expected Mr. Mills or Mr. Garikes to come up and tackle me at some point and grab the mic from me, but they didn't, so it went about as well as it could." Collins also commented on the idea of the prom proposal, saying "I think it forces guys to be creative and think outside the box."

For most students, experiencing the prom and everything that comes with it is a memory that they will hold onto forever. Some think that the prom proposal induces too much stress on students or are too elaborate; Mr Yee commented that "some of these prom proposals are more elaborate than some of the faculty's wedding proposals!" Others think that the prom proposal is a time honored tradition not to be altered. Whatever the case may be, hopefully everyone had a fantastic time enjoying a night they will remember forever.



Jack Brown '16 and Sarah Lowe '16



Malcolm Reynolds '17 and Molly Brenner '16



Saints' Spring Break Trips

L'arte d'Italia

By Bayley Garland '15

Under the guidance of Ms. D. and Dr. Sidle and in the company of Mrs. Vascott, we arrived at Dulles, fully prepared to embark on a twelve-hour venture across the pond to Florence, Italy. However, our plans got turned upside down when the airline told us our flight to Florence would not be taking place due to an airline pilot strike in Italy. After over an hour of weighing our options, we decided to take our first leg flight to Amsterdam.

Despite losing two days in Florence to travel, we enjoyed the opportunity to explore Amsterdam, spending an hour of free time roaming the city. We woke up at 5:30 the next day and flew from Amsterdam to Paris to Nice, a travel experience none of us expected but adapted to easily. Upon arrival in Nice, we found that our luggage had not made it that far, but we had a seven-hour bus ride to catch to Florence so we boarded the bus, in the hopes that our luggage would soon follow.

We finally got to Florence, a day and a half late, with no luggage, but our group still fully intact, spirits high that we had made it to Italy. After a well-needed night of sleep, we woke up the next morning and our luggage arrived right before we left the hotel in sweatpants and pajamas. We spent the morning at the Boboli Gardens and walking through the Pitti Palace, which is full of ornate art and decorations. After crossing the famous Ponte Vecchio, we went to

the Basilica de Santa Croce, where we saw the tombs of Michelangelo, Machiavelli, Galileo and other timeless figures. The Galleria de Uffizi was next on the itinerary, and we saw roomfuls of art by the greats, including Botticelli's "The Birth of Venus." After a full day of art in Italy, we went back to the hotel to get some rest in preparation for our day of making pottery in Tuscany.

The next morning, we got up early to make our way into the countryside to La Meridiana. Taking winding country roads by bus is not necessarily the safest way to travel, and we learned this the hard way. Coming around a bend, an unexpected car collided with our bus. It jostled us all a bit but no one got injured. We didn't let that stop us from making pottery! Vans from La Meridiana picked us up and brought us down to the studio. Ms. D. instructed us as we worked on pots all morning. The staff of the studio then served us an authentic Italian meal for lunch, handmade by a woman who has worked at the studio for decades and the best we had had the whole trip. That afternoon, we glazed our pots and prepared them to be fired; they should arrive home in the next couple of weeks.

On our third and final day in Florence, we went to the Accademia to view Michelangelo's famous David. After the awe of David's beauty diminished, Ms. D. and Dr. Sidle set us loose

on the city for the whole afternoon. Students from the group dispersed to gather last minute gifts for themselves or friends from home. We had lunch at our own leisure and were given tickets to climb up to the top of the Il Duomo di Firenze. This was the trip's last obstacle, as we faced a narrow staircase of people going up and down the dome, not to mention the climb was over 400 stairs up. The panoramic view from the dome's top, however, was worth the climb.

We had our last group dinner together and went back to our rooms to pack. Early the next morning, we embarked on a seamless journey home. Despite the many issues thrown at us during our five days abroad, we made light of our situation and got the most out of the Art in Italy experience.



Excuse Român

By Jessica Edwards '17

After a combination of driving to and from destinations, walking through airport terminals, and flying over endless oceans and land, our group of eleven sophomore Saints, Ms. Burr, and Ms. Stone arrived in Valea Scretzii for what I was told would be a hard, yet rewarding experience.

From the plane, I could have never predicted the beauty of the Romanian countryside. When we arrived at Pro Vita, we discovered that the orphanage was much more than we expected. The village serves as a home in the hills for abandoned or orphaned children, young mothers in unfortunate circumstances, and other poor or homeless people, even the pictures couldn't have prepared me for the beautiful and welcoming community.

The language barrier didn't keep anyone from connecting with the people at Pro Vita; many of them spoke English, and what couldn't be communicated through speech was shared through actions, pictures, and even music. One day after lunch on my way to Casa Tyrol, the house where all of the volunteers stayed, a girl stopped Julia Phaltankar '16 and me on the street to play some music for us, asking us whether or not we liked it, resulting in the three of us dancing down the dirt road to her American song choices. Also, the language differences reminded me why I like working with children so much; a good attitude, some games of hide-and-seek, or a hike on a hill can

make any child feel a little more loved.

At Pro Vita, the Saints group's main task was planting a new orchard on a hill not too far from the houses, but far enough to see the countryside and a few hills in the distance. After stepping in mud puddles, hoeing clumps of dirt, and filling empty holes with 'caca' (which we later discovered was simply compost with water), by our last work day, our group, with the help of some other volunteers, planted more than three hundred trees.

I wouldn't say working in the orchard was the most amusing part about going to Pro Vita, but it was gratifying to see the results. Landscaping certainly gave me an appetite for Pro Vita's delicious food: daily servings of fresh, non-crumbly bread that was soft on the inside yet a little crunchy on the outside and tasted heavenly alone or dipped in a bowl of potato soup. Other Pro Vita delicacies included schnitzel and chicken, which we were luckily able to enjoy, even though most Romanians do not eat meat during Lent.

Outside of Pro Vita we toured Brasov, which boasts a Hollywood-style sign on one of its hills, a KFC, and a McDonalds, among Romanian souvenir shops and bakeries. We made our way from Brasov to Transylvania, where our group visited Dracula's Castle. The castle's legend didn't seem to come to life for me, but the castle is for sale, so maybe its new owner might encounter the vampire. Next, we visited Cetatea Rasnov, which provided one of the best landscape views I saw in Romania; even without paying fifty bani to look through the binoculars, I could see miles of the land,

houses, hills, buildings, and streets that filled Rasnov, Romania. The last castle we visited was Peles Castle, where I looked at a lavish lifestyle much different than that at Pro Vita.

While sightseeing was definitely eventful, I strongly believe that many of my lasting memories were made at Pro Vita. Although I felt more connected to the Saints community by the time we left, I also felt like I was apart of the Pro Vita community, which made it so hard to leave. One girl, Maria, whose hand I held when we were walking up a very steep hill one Sunday afternoon, surprised me with a letter, a picture, and a hug the night before we left. The letter, which she wrote in Romanian, is covered in hearts and basically says the following: "I love you, my friend. I'm glad I met you and I want you to visit and play with me again." I'm glad I met Maria and the rest of the Pro Vita community, and I'm eager for more worthwhile experiences a little outside of my comfort zone.



bus to Bayeux. As we pulled into the narrow cobble streets of this historic and charming town in Normandy, the excitement became tangible. This was it. The moment we had all been waiting for: meeting our correspondents and their families. As giggling and "Oh my gods" rang out through the bus, I turned to my teacher and asked "Is it like this every year?" With an amused grin she nodded yes, and with this I mustered up my courage and exited the bus to be greeted with bisous and hugs by Inès and her family. In the coming days I experienced French philosophy classes, the profound quiet of the beaches of D-Day, the ancient beauty of the Cathedral of Bayeux, the view from the top of the Mont St. Michel, giggling alongside Inès

at French reality TV and a stubborn French cat insisting on sleeping in my bed. Through all of this I never lost that initial giddy feeling from the bus.



L'Échange Français

By Maggie Cady '15

The first day we spent in France passed in a bit of a blur. Between sleep deprivation, hunger and a cold I developed on the plane, it didn't immediately hit me that we were in Paris, France. The rest of our day was packed full since we were trying to fit as much of the city of lights as humanly possible in just two days. It wasn't until that night after dinner when a group of us were eating gelato in the square in front of Notre Dame that we realized: we were finally here.

A similar situation occurred on the

As the Spanish exchange kids set off for New York in October after tearful goodbyes, we reassured ourselves that we would see them again soon on their side of the Atlantic. Five months later, we pulled up to a crowd of cheering Spanish students who welcomed us to Madrid with colorful signs, smiling faces, and the promise of showers after a long flight.

While the French students have enjoyed the Normandy exchange program for over 25 years, 2014-2015 marks the first true Spanish exchange program in SSSAS history. Seventeen Saints families hosted students, and 12 students then spent their Spring break living with a host family just outside of the city of Madrid.

With each host family offering different adventures to their visiting American, no two students had the same experience. Some students visited Picasso's Guernica in the Reina Sofía museum. Others toured Aranjuez, seeing the Spanish royal family's summer home. Many held their breath with all of Madrid in watching El Clásico on TV, a soccer match between rivals Real Madrid and Barcelona.

Naturally the language barrier was one fear we all experienced. Would our Spanish be good enough? Of course our exchange partners spoke English, but most of their parents didn't, nor did many of their teachers.

"I didn't want to make a fool of myself in front of my host family," reflected Victoria Gourdin '15. Other students were nervous about encountering and deciphering the Spain-

Intercambio de Español!

By Isabel Shaw '16

Spanish accent, which, for many students, is one of the most difficult accents. Moreover we all dreaded the infamous vosotros form (Latin, French, and Mandarin students, ask a Spanish student).

The trip, though, gave us a new appreciation for how far our classroom Spanish could take us and how powerful a second language could be. As Adrienne Atkins ('16) noted, "It's amazing how language can connect you to a culture that you couldn't be a part of otherwise."

Our chaperones, Profesora Gasper and Dr. Klein, were also cognizant of the benefits of learning Spanish. Dr. Klein described speaking Spanish as a privilege, saying she is "grateful to my high school Spanish teachers for every word they taught me."

But language was just one piece of our trip. Living with Spanish families, going to a Spanish high school, and hanging out with Spanish students gave us a unique perspective. We were more than just American tourists (although we did do a lot of touristy things); we were truly immersed in Spanish culture.

During a day of classes at the school, students observed both differences and similarities between our school and theirs. Izzy Franklin '15 was able to understand her student's calculus class, noting that "math is cool

because it's really a universal language." Josiah Mackay '16 described the trip as "enlightening."

Our stay allowed us to try so many new things, like tango dancing and paella and not speaking English for hours on end. Helen Cunningham '16 summarized the trip in three words: "comida, diversión, aprendizaje" (food, fun, learning).

We had already met and bonded with our Spanish students when they came to America, but living with them and their families for a week really strengthened our ties. As evidenced by the many tears on the bus to the airport, we will miss our host families greatly. As Aimee Guidry '15 put it, "the hardest part of the trip was saying goodbye."

The trip introduced us to a new country, a new culture, new friends. For just eight days we led new lives halfway across the world, embracing a language that is not our own. We are so grateful to have had this opportunity, and to our Spanish friends, muchísimas gracias y que nos veamos otra vez.



Il Viaggia in Italia

By Eden Solomon '16

When we were ready to leave for Italy, we were told that the pilots of Lufthansa and the Italian airline pilots were simultaneously going on strike, which meant that our trip would have to be pushed back a couple of days. Although we were all disappointed, we decided to not let it ruin our trip. When we left for Italy, we were all thinking, "finally," but for a lot of us it felt surreal. Many of us had only been overseas a few times, if at all.

After a full day of traveling and airplane food, we were seriously jet-lagged, but we couldn't sleep yet due to the six-hour time change. We loaded onto our bus and drove off to Herculaneum, an ancient city that has been preserved by a layer of volcanic ash. Then, we went to eat lunch at a small pizzeria nearby. We all agreed that it was the best pizza we had ever eaten. Afterwards, we shuffled through the Naples Archeology Museum, half-asleep. Finally, we headed for Sorrento. Nothing ever felt as glorious as the moment that we arrived at our hotel.

The next day, we went to Stabiae, Villa Oplontis, and Mt. Vesuvius. As incredible as the underrated town of Stabiae and the ancient Villa Oplontis were, the best part of that day was Mt. Vesuvius. Mt. Vesuvius is known for its eruption in 79 AD that buried Pompeii and Herculaneum. The "30 minute" hike up the mountain was hard, but it was worth it because the view from the top allowed us to see all of Naples. After our challenging trek, the majority of us went back to back to Sorrento, ate dinner at a restaurant nearby, and ended the night with a game of cards.

We started day three off with Baiae, a relaxing vacation spot for the ancient Roman nobility. After our tour guide left, we went off to explore the ruins (which we may or may not have actually been allowed to do). While walking through a tiny, dark cave, Mr. Hochberg found a mysterious hole and fell in... deep; that was definitely one of the highlights of the trip. We also saw Mr. Yee, who spontaneously decided to go to Italy for his Spring Break, and were followed by a stray cat, one of the many cats we met on the trip. Afterwards, we went to Cape Museum. Villa Vergiliiana, Lake Avernus, and Solfatara-- oh Solfatara. Long story short, Solfatara left the majority of us gagging due to the pungent, rotten-eggy smell of sulfur while Mr. Hochberg, in contrast, rolled around in the sulfur (I'm not kidding), enjoying every moment.

On the following day, we first went to Pompeii, which had once been covered by Mt. Vesuvius's eruption. Our tour guide led us through Pompeii's forum, telling us about the arenas used for theater and poetry performances and the Roman pipe systems. After our tour, we grabbed a bite to eat and boarded the bus. At our next destination, Sperlonga, we were free to explore Tiberius's cave, a small beach, and the museum. At the town of Terracina, we saw the most spectacular view and were accompanied by several cats. On the bus ride to Rome, we were all quite tired and delirious, resulting in us listening to 80s music and Mr. Hochberg singing along to "Under Pressure," hitting those high notes... almost.

During our first full day in Rome, we saw the Roman Forum. Even though it rained quite a bit, we were keen on taking in the sites surrounding us. It was so cool to imagine what the forum would have looked like in ancient Roman times. We were able to see the Colosseum, and our tour guide led us through the Forum. After we saw the Forum as well as the Capitoline Museum, Forum Boarium, and the Pantheon, we all went out to dinner and, more importantly, to get gelato, which eventually became an essential part of our daily routines.

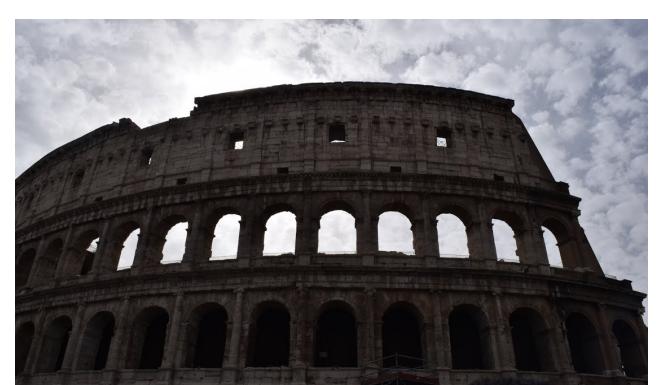
Then came day six. Let's just say that day six put Solfatara to shame on the events-that-cause-me-pain scale. The day started off on a high note, and we were excited to see the Vatican (and possibly the Pope). We toured the Vatican Museum, which was filled with grand statues, and the Sistine Chapel, whose ceiling was decorated with the frescoes of Michelangelo. The day then went from functional to dysfunctional when half of the group wanted to see the School of Athens and the other half wanted to go straight to St. Peter's Basilica. When our group stopped to decide what we were going to do, a security guard yelled at our tour guide, who yelled right back. After about five minutes of them arguing in Italian, our group split up and went to our respective destinations.

The group that went to the Basilica got split up, resulting in three students being stuck outside for an hour, two students leaving with Mr. Hochberg, and the rest of us going to a souvenir shop with Mrs. Streed. Meanwhile, Mr. Arndt's group got stuck in a line for an hour and a half. After we reunited, we ate lunch and spent the rest of the day shopping and touring the piazza. At the end of the day, a student was pickpocketed, and we had to wait at multiple bus stops in order to get back to the hotel. On

top of that, it was daylight savings time, so we basically got no sleep. Day six, day 666, the day that shall not be named-- whatever you want to call it-- was the most eventful day of the trip.

After day six, Mr. Hochberg, Mr. Arndt, and Mrs. Streed decided that we should have a chilled-out day. We went to the Borghese Gallery and were free to walk through each room at our own pace, learning about the various artworks through individual audio pieces. We had a picnic in Pincian Hill Park for lunch and then saw the Ara Pacis. Then came the four-hour siesta, when we had the chance to recover from the previous day. That night, we had dinner and nutella crepes and gelato, Mr. Arndt got a caricature of himself, we went shopping, we walked back to the hotel, and we crashed.

On our last day, we visited the Baths of Caracalla, the Catacombs, which were not as creepy as one may think, Via Appia, Doria Pamphili park, and Trastevere. At Via Appia, we went on a two-hour bike ride on a cobblestone road-- you can do the math. Mr. Hochberg almost got hit by a car and flew off his bike. Afterwards, we went to Doria Pamphili park, which was quite relaxing, grabbed a snack, ate dinner, and traveled back to the hotel to pack our bags for our trip home. By the end of the trip, we were exhausted and ready to go home, but we made memories that will last a lifetime.



Acting Up in the Black Box

By Katie Connor '16

On a sunny afternoon outside CPAC, a group of students sit in a circle and hold scripts in their hands. Emily Baldridge '16 sits on a bench with a laptop propped open. "Do you guys want to do another readthrough with notes?" she asks. The cast agrees, and they begin. At the end, Emily dispenses notes and discusses dates for more rehearsals.

This is the beginning of putting together the One Acts Play Festival. This year, seven directors--four juniors and two seniors--will direct and present a myriad of different plays, two of them student-written.

One of these student-written plays is Joshua Reed's '15. Titled *The Fall of Man and Woman*, he says inspiration was born from watching and failing to understand absurdist theater. "My one act is about a director who makes a play so complicated the actors do not know what they're acting," he explained. As the Director tries to put on the perfect show, everybody from Coffee Delivery Guy to Extra Number 4 become frustrated. The other student-written play is Emily Baldridge's, about a girl whose personified emotions narrate the ups and downs of Prom.

The One Acts Play Festival not only gives students the chance to display original written work, but also allows students a chance to sit in the director's chair and put on a show, but on a smaller scale. In a span of four weeks, directors have to cast, rehearse, pick costumes, and design the set and lighting in time for opening night.

"I spoke with Mr. Marvin and Mr. Yee to

discuss the direction of my play, but then it was mostly up to me to figure out how I would do it," said Joshua. "Some of my ideas had to be cut due to time, of course, since it can only be fit into about ten minutes. I have to make what I envisioned fit on the stage provided in the Black Box. The real world limitations are probably the greatest challenge which I enjoy."

Anna Godek '16 prepared to direct her One Act by calling her brother Ben Godek '10, who directed when he was at the Upper School. He counseled her to "make sure there's a lot of movement, and it's bad if it's just people talking at each other on stage. Just try to make it dynamic-- make sure there's things going on throughout the whole One Act."

Anna's One Act is a series of vignettes that each end with the death of Communist theorist Leon Trotsky in his house in Mexico. She doesn't have huge goals for the three-person show. "I wanna have fun, I guess that was mainly it," she said. "[To] be in the theatrical environment, but I don't have to be a performer. I think that's nice. That's something I want to do."

The ease of partaking in a One Act with minimal conflict is also what drew in Joshua Reed. The Play Festival offers a chance for students to dip their toes in the water. "I decided to direct a One Act this year because I have always been interested in the drama department but have never had time to perform in the play or the musical due to conflicts mostly from sports," he said.

There's also a casual, more improvised

feel to the shows, as if they were thrown together last minute. This is coupled with the intimate feel of the Blackbox. "When I went to them in middle school," recalled Anna, "you usually end up sitting on the floor right near the Blackbox stage so the actors will be right there and they'll come and sit on the edge of [the stage]--like, they're right there, and they'll talk to the audience. There's much more of a participatory feel in the One Acts than there is in the musical or the Fall Play."

Says Joshua Reed, "In all seriousness I am looking forward to seeing the actors and actresses come together to make something awesome."



Sam Stevens '18, Kyla Carney '17, Nathan Pugh '17, and Helen Cunningham '16 rehearse for Emily Baldridge '16's One Act, *The Thought Council*.

8 Seconds Versus the Rest of Your Life

By Katie Wood '16

The Longest Ride is a stereotypical Nicholas Sparks book-turned movie that has managed to find slightly new angle on the classic star-crossed lover's tale. The movie follows the path of two difficult relationships in two different time periods. One is the tale of a gentlemanly North Carolina bullrider, Luke Collins, who falls in love with Sophia Danko, an intelligent art curation student at Wake Forest University.

On Luke and Sophia's first date, the couple happens to encounter a flaming car that has run off the side of the road. Luke approaches and pulls a very elderly man out of the vehicle as the man mutters about a box. Sophia grabs a small wicker box out of the car and they take the elderly man to the local hospital. After basically telling Luke that things will never amount to anything due to her upcoming internship in New York, Luke leaves Sophia and the man at the hospital and then drives off into the night in his red pickup truck.

Sophia opens the small wicker box only to find a window into this man's life; his name is Ira, he received a purple heart for his service in World War II, he was a tailor, and most importantly, he was married to the love of his life Ruth.

When Ira wakes up, Sophia begins to gather more information about the story of Ira and Ruth. Before Ira went to war, his one promise to Ruth was that they could have a big family when he returned, but that would never happen. A young man had been injured outside of the trenches, and Ira took it upon himself to go rescue the man. In doing so, Ira was shot in the stomach rendering him unable to have children.

As Ira is telling his story, the plot evolves between Luke and Sophia. The film continues to flip back and forth between the 1940's and 2015, but due to the simplicity of the film it is fairly easy to follow. The parallelism between the two stories is an interesting aspect but since every Nicholas Sparks adaptation has had this format it is beginning to seem a bit overdone.

Ultimately, Sophia decides that her relationship with Luke, regardless of their short timeline, is worth the risk. The two go on generic Nicholas Sparks' dates that include picnics and romantic walks but the romance eventually comes to an end when Luke gets into a serious accident with a bull during a competition.

Sophia puts her internship in New York on hold and goes to the hospital to care for Luke. It is then revealed to Sophia that Luke was attacked by a bull named Rango almost a year prior that put him in a coma and required him to stop riding for a period of time. Sophia begs Luke to stop riding due to the risk of his death but Luke refuses insisting that he has to get to the top of the bull riding circuit because it's the only life he's ever known.

Sophia breaks up with Luke and immediately heads to Ira's house for advice. This break-up is supposed to serve as the climax in the story as Luke walks away to ride again but the fight seems somewhat predictable and therefore has less of an impact on the viewers.

The scene cuts to Ira and Sophia in his home where Ira reveals to Sophia that his inability to have children took a real toll on his relationship with Ruth, and after Ruth discovered that it would be nearly impossible to adopt, she broke down and decided to leave Ira. Ira, being the typical Nicholas Sparks man, says that all he wants is her happiness so he makes the sacrifice and lets her leave.

Sophia realizes that she made the sacrifice by not going to her internship so the choice is up to Luke whether their love is worth it. The scene cuts to the bull riding finals in Las Vegas where Luke is drawing which bull he will ride. No surprise, he picks Rango, the same bull that put him in a coma a year earlier. The question is whether he will choose to sacrifice the life he knows for love or if he will ride in order to get "everything he ever wanted."

In terms of acting, Scott Eastwood played the role of Luke Collins, and, as the son of Clint Eastwood, he had a lot to live up to. Ultimately, his performance was convincing

and his appearance was perfect for the image of a rugged Southern rancher. However, Britt Robertson's role of Sophia was far less convincing. In many romantic scenes she seemed somewhat detached, and the fighting scenes came across as somewhat forced. Overall, the most impressive performance came from Alan Alda in the role of Ira, his connection to Sophia appeared truly genuine, and the scene with him crying over Ruth's death brought most movie-goers to tears. So while this movie is a cheesy Nicholas Sparks romance, there are scenes such as Ruth's death that will bring you to tears and other scenes such as Luke picking Rango that will come across as just plain overdone.

For those of you who are expecting to take your boyfriends for the hard core bull riding portion, the bull riding is a fraction of a long movie wrought with tears and tenderness. This movie will appeal to those who love Nicholas Sparks movies. However, for the people who are expecting a fresh twist, it is nothing more than Sparks's typical parallel love story between two overly attractive twenty-somethings and a charming elderly couple on the verge of death.



Body Positivity Cont.

and discussed during the group session. For example, one of the activities is to write a letter to a younger girl describing what pursuing the "thin/beauty" ideal has cost you. Then we read them aloud to the group. This can be very empowering because it helps us realize that we all have similar fears about our image, no matter what people might assume based on what they see on the outside," Mrs. Harrison said.

Of the members in the group, several stepped forward to share their thoughts on what they have learned in the course and the importance of its lessons to the SSSAS community. Maddy Esworthy '15 said, "I think the most valuable lesson I learned was that there are a lot of other people going through the same thoughts and issues. It's a topic that is not normally spoken about in large groups of people so it was nice to be able to see that other people are in the same boat. Understanding that you're not alone in body image stuff is very uplifting."

Jenn Jafari '16 echoed Maddy, saying, "It is very effective in being a great way to have a support system if you're struggling with body image and to help you learn more about how to help those that do. It would help us to look past people's physical appearances more and to appreciate them for who they truly are rather than how they compare to a photoshopped model."

How will the group be further integrated into the community in the coming years? Mrs. Harrison shared her hope that the school will be able to "offer the group to as many students as are interested in experiencing it and to heighten awareness of body acceptance and resisting the cultural pressures to conform to the unattainable ideal that the media projects." She also stated that the group may eventually be student led rather than being organized by a faculty adviser: "If we have interest by upperclassmen girls, we would be willing to consider training students to run the group instead of adults - but to do so you would

obviously have to participate in the group as a member at least once."

Maddy said, "I definitely think this program could benefit the entirety of our SSSAS community, girls especially but boys as well. It's a chance to discuss the "unmentionable" aspect of the body image problem in our society and also our school community as well. We are a school that is very competitive with other schools and inside itself as well. It's hard to feel like you are able to be yourself when there are constantly people trying to be better than you. This discussion really helps you realize that your view of yourself is all that matters in the long run, so if you're happy, that is all that needs to be known."

If you would like to participate in this group experience, email Mrs. Harrison at sharrison@ssas.org to let her know that you are interested.

SSSAS Organizes D.C.'s First Tolerance

By Jacob Lipton '17

When Tourettes Syndrome advocate Justin Bachman spoke at SSSAS last year, no one thought his involvement with the school would continue. Yet this past Sunday, a group of Saints students saw something amazing: a collaboration with the teen speaker and a year's worth of long nights, lunch meetings and phone calls to sponsors culminate in the first D.C. Metro Tolerance Fair.

Last Sunday's fair included workshops and speakers for all ages, including a special keynote presentation by Justin Bachman, founder of the Tolerance Fair. Mr. Weiman, the LS director conducted a magic workshop on breaking down cultural barriers, and Dr. Jacobs even led a yoga session. There were also art activities for kids, and library resources were available to parents and children. Interactive activities for all ages guaranteed a fun and informative afternoon.

A description read at morning meeting by the Tolerance Fair Leadership Academy (TFLA) explained that "The Tolerance Fair is an event that features speakers, breakout sessions, interactive activities, and organizations that exhibit to educate about the audience they serve. The Tolerance Fair also highlights volunteer opportunities for community involvement and showcases resources for people in need."

Ms. Davis, director of multicultural education, diversity, and equity initiatives, further explained that, "The best way to describe it is social entrepreneurship. Students are learning how to plan, implement, and execute an event for a social cause."

The Tolerance Fair found its way to SSSAS after Justin Bachman, a 17 year old with Tourettes Syndrome who lives in Solon Ohio, visited SSSAS. He visited our school to share his story with us and talk about tolerance. After he left, Ms. Davis stayed in contact, explaining, "I kept in touch with Justin and his family, and they invited me to go to the Tolerance Fair out in Ohio last year, so I went to that. They told me that they have done the Tolerance Fair for four years in Ohio, and would really like to take this to other places in the country, especially in Washington D.C., and asked if our school would be interested in getting a leadership academy to plan the Tolerance Fair."

After it was approved by the administration, it was announced to students, and many committed to it. "We announced it

and got many kids committed to it, and it is a commitment. They are working all year long for this, giving up much of their free time not just at school but on the weekends making calls," Ms. Davis added.

Javon Price '16 who is the president of the TFLA made the commitment, and is proud to be a part of the first tolerance fair in the region. "Our meetings are usually fast paced due to the huge amount of areas needed to be covered. We began meeting once a week, then it moved to twice a week halfway through the year, and now we meet every day! A project such as this takes a lot of hard work and dedication and I can speak for the entire academy when I say we are truly honored to be given the privilege of creating this region's first tolerance fair!"

When asked why he got involved in the TFLA, Javon replied, "I became involved in the Tolerance Fair Leadership Academy because what the Tolerance Fair promotes runs parallel with my own morals and beliefs. I think acceptance and understanding of all persons is important. I believe in learning about things that can sometimes be a little uncomfortable, but in the end makes you a more educated & better person. The Tolerance Fair advocates that everyone, no matter what path you have taken in life, deserves a chance to be understood, to be acknowledged, and to be accepted. I think it is important that our school becomes active in this event because our school's mission statement is also in line with what we hope to achieve at this year's tolerance fair."



Members of the Tolerance Fair Leadership Academy pose for a picture with Justin Bachman

An answer given by everyone when asked "Why do you like going to the Nats games?", is scattered between food, the players (particularly Bryce Harper and Ryan Zimmerman) and the atmosphere.

Mr. Adams expressed his love for the games because of the "pace of the game, the sounds, the smell, the sights - it's all sentimental. Especially going to the game with my daughter when they won the 2012 regular season, the place was rockin'!"

The games also serve as birthday celebrations or nights out with friends. Bridget Walsh '15 said "I celebrated my 17th birthday with my friends at a Nationals game last year and we had so much fun hanging out, eating the food, and watching the game. I was so excited for opening day this year, especially because it's probably my last one for a while." Delaney Holden '15 added that because her family is so into sports, and has been for as

long as she can remember, the competitive and exciting games are fun to be a part of because the stadium gets so loud.

Many of the faculty are also fans of the team, including Joe Shabelski, the JV girls soccer coach and assistant athletic director/groundskeeper, who also works at the Nationals stadium and attends a large portion of the games. "I have been around them for so long and I love the sport, so getting to see some of the players after the game is a really cool experience that I'm very lucky to have. I get to see the game so up-close and right there because I help with the field cleanup... you have probably seen me at a game or two."

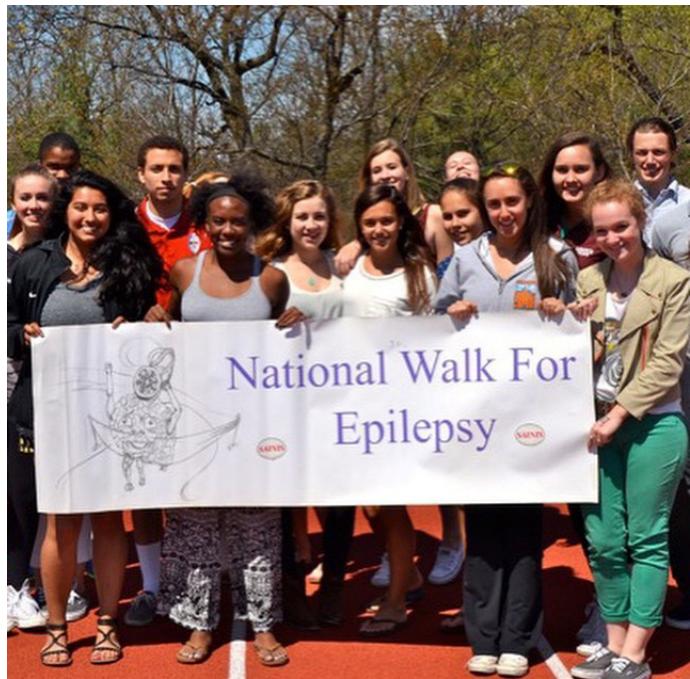
Whether you are a big fan of baseball or simply want to relax and experience a unique experience in the nation's capital or eat some really yummy food, going to a Nationals game is a perfect way to spend a day.

Nationals Contd.

The outlook for this season is very strong. With a strong returning lineup of Bryce Harper, Jayson Werth, Ryan Zimmerman, Ian Desmond, and Denard Span, the Nationals should clinch their reigning NL East Championship. This year, the Nationals also signed a seven-year contract for \$210 million with a dominant and talented pitcher, Max Scherzer, who is considered a game changer. With these players, the Nationals should be able to live up to their expectations and potential.

Many students and faculty at this school attend the Nationals games regularly during the summer. Lily Walsh '18 says she goes as often as she can in the summer, usually with her family and friends, but what she loves most is the atmosphere of the ballpark.

Students Spring Forward at SSSAS



Clockwise from top left: A group of senior, junior, and sophomore girls pose for a photo before Prom; Caroline Wiseman '17 transitions the ball down field during Spring Fling; Mary Elizabeth Cordia '16 and Olivia Pugh '17 don Hogwarts robes; Sammi Archer '16, Iso Partee '17, Adele Reardon '17, Kelsey Van Horn '16, and Madison Garret '16 pose before Prom; Kate Lucas '16 and Mary Eliabeth Cordia '16 at the biology zoo field trip; French Students wave for the camera; Students come out to support the Epilepsy Walk



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