

THE VOICE

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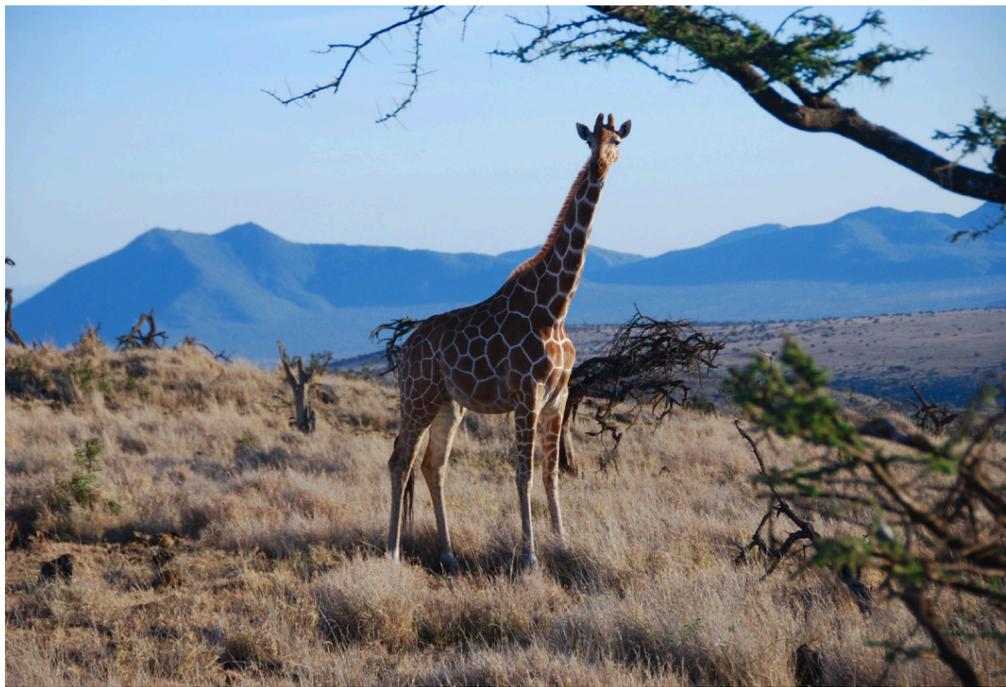


Photo by Lilly Cady '19



Photo by Malcolm Reynolds '17

Saints Go Global On Two New Spring Break Trips

Kenya

By Katerina Silis '17

Almost a full 24 hours of travel took a small group of seven students, Ms. Leins, and Mr. Cotter from Washington D.C. to Nairobi, Kenya. I did not know very much about Lewa Wildlife Conservancy initially except a few internet readings and that Prince William proposed to Kate Middleton on top of Mount Kenya. While I prepared for the trip and researched Lewa, I hoped to learn about the wildlife and biodiversity of Kenya and the sort of positive impact that I could have in conservation efforts there. Little did I know that this trip would be a transformative, eye-opening experience that offered greater insight into the role that Lewa plays in the region with policy measures for wildlife protection coupled

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Prague

By Malcolm Reynolds '17

Prague is an old city. The same weight seeps up from the ground into castles and skyscrapers, is truded in on the soles of grandmothers' and children's shoes alike. It slinks through alleys on a cold breeze and is cast down from wrought iron street lamps. The same sun has risen and set on people without names, Good King Wenceslas, Franz Kafka, and me. Now, that sun throws its last rays of light through the spaces between the fingers on a hand that I hold before my eyes. If I squint just right, the skyline stretches out before me; hills seethe under the scaly hide of a century's homes. The clocktower beneath me strikes the hour and tiny wooden figures dance --- as they once did for princes and bishops

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The C is the New F

By Jacob Lipton '17

Saint Stephen's and Saint Agnes School prides itself on academic rigor. Every student in the graduating class moves onto college, and SSSAS sends students to Ivy League schools regularly. High academic achievement is common, but what really goes into those high grades?

According to Dictionary.com, grade inflation is defined as "the awarding of higher grades than students deserve either to maintain a school's academic reputation or as a result of diminished teacher expectations."

According to a survey sent out to the student body, 59% of responders said they think that they have personally experienced this phenomenon. When asked their opinion, 53% of students were opposed to grade inflation. Most students did not believe teachers are inflating grades, but the majority of students were unsure if they had experienced grade inflation. In fact, less than 19% of responders said a definite "No" to having experienced grade inflation. Answers like, "I think so" and "I don't know" were popular, suggesting that a gray area surrounds perceptions of where a student's grade comes from.

In an interview with Cole Early '17, he explained that the average grade should be, "85%, because it's good but not great."

Dusty Riles '17 thought, "The average grade for our school tends to be a B- because you have a lot of people who are of really high intelligence, but then some people might bring that down. But the average grade of a C that some people tend to associate with average, that is just not realistic at our school because of the high academic rigor and the expectations that students have that a C is just not going to cut it as the average grade."

When Cole was asked about test corrections and paper rewrites unfairly affecting students grades, he said, "Test corrections are great. They don't unfairly affect student's grades. What good is a test if a student doesn't learn any of the

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Second-Semester Seniors Look Forward and Back

Gabe

By Gabe Rudasil '17

Why? Why I am here? Why should I care and why should I work hard? Oftentimes finding a satisfactory answer to these types of questions is quite simple for me. 9 times out of 10 I cite my family and my friends, as well as those around me as reasons for why I do what I do. However, when the question of "Why do you want to go to college?" was posed, I found it initially hard to come up with any reason at all. Since middle school, when my parents first ingrained in me the importance of a college education, I have considered attending college as necessary to help your chances at being successful.

It wasn't until this year, my senior year, shortly after I first heard that question that I began to consider why I want to go to college, apart from the reasons that my parents had sown into me. I found that one of the primary reasons I wanted to attend a military academy, or at the very least be involved in some military program in college, is that I believe that my experiences in such programs will help me to become the person that I want to be. And it was because of revelations such as that, that I began to look back at all that I have done up to this point in my life.

What I have come to realize is that everything that I have done regarding my academics and even my athletics to a certain extent has been to get into college. And frankly, after realizing this I am a little disappointed. I have reached my goal of getting into college, and I have a piece of mind in knowing that I will be going somewhere next year, but at what cost? I feel as though I didn't take advantage of all the opportunities that were offered to me. I missed the chance to help design and build the set of a musical because I thought that it would seem inconsistent on my resume. As insignificant as this may seem it highlights an issue that many students face, and that is playing it safe.

If there is one thing that I learned as a senior it is that you should take advantage of opportunities as they present themselves to you when they do, because you will never know when and if they will come back around.



Above: Gabe Rudasil '17, Zoe Belodeau '17, and Miller DeLancey '17

Zoe

By Zoe Belodeau '17

There's a constant stir of emotions that stays lingering in the back of my mind everyday. On some days, I'm excited to leave. The idea of a new world with new people and new experiences is thrilling to me. Freedom to take care of myself and make my own decisions is something we've all been waiting for. Not really having to answer to anybody that much anymore. Not feeling like I'm just running through the motions, waiting for something new to happen anymore.

Then, there are other days. There are other days where the idea of leaving is daunting. Not having that safety net of friends and relationships that I've taken so long to build up to have to fall back on. Knowing that at first I may not know what to do with myself for lunch or in between classes instead of now, where I walk the halls with ease and talk to almost anyone.

Sometimes I even question whether or not I'm going to be good enough to make it or to be happy in some place new.

The season of lasts has started now, too. The last topic before review in math, the last paper due in English class, the last game against Visitation. It all goes by so quickly. Sometimes I worry if I've really taken everything in or if I've missed something. Uncertainty can be intimidating.

Everyone has been constantly talking about going to college, but now we finally get to see what people are actually talking about. We've filled out our applications and bought our generic sweatshirts that we seem to wear all the time, but we don't really know what it's going to be like. No matter how many tours anyone has taken, how many google images anyone has looked at of their campus or occasionally how many "I'm Shmacked" videos anyone has watched, no one actually knows what it's going to be like. Or more importantly, what we're going to be like.

Miller

By Miller DeLancey '17

With my 13 years at St. Stephens & St. Agnes School coming to an end I started to realize how fortunate I have been to go to such a great school. My time here at SSSAS has neither been a low point nor a high point, it has been a mid point. I hope my high point has yet to come.

Throughout my many years here I never fully understood the reason why this school was so challenging; now I realize that the reason was to get me ready for college and have a successful career and life. I say thank you to all my teachers and I could not have done this without your help.

There are some days where I wish I was back in elementary school because life was much simpler. I then realize that everything is going to be ok and that these little bumps in the road are just going to make me stronger as a person and as a student. Whenever I feel like how much easier it would be if I were back in kindergarten I immediately think of all the great memories in my high school years and before. I think about all of the Sleepy Thompson games and how much fun they were. I think about how all of those experiences I had shaped me into the person I am today, and how those experiences helped me get into college and how those experiences will get me into jobs in the future.

I believe Mr. Ebner's economics class was one of the most important courses I took. All of the life skills that Mr. Ebner taught me were so valuable. Being able to do taxes and manage a budget really will set me up for success later on.

I sincerely thank this school for all of the useful and meaningful lessons my teachers have taught me. A particular moment that sticks out in my mind is trying to get through physics freshman year with Mr. Chipkin. There were times that I wanted to give up, but Mr. Chipkin saw that and spent the extra time with me helping me understand the material. It was in this class that I really learned the importance of pushing on and not giving up.



Halos and Horns

| In | Out |
|-------------------------|------------------------|
| Junior Privileges | Seniors |
| Ap Exams | AP Classes |
| Shorts | Pants |
| Yearly Heartbreak | Championship Hopes |
| Dragon Frappuccino | Unicorn Frappuccino |
| Finals Grind | New Material |
| Lunch in Courtyard | Lunch in Cafeteria |
| Uncontrollable Sneezing | Satisfactory Breathing |
| Panera Delivery | Dominos Delivery |



Kenya Cont.

with community partnerships and an established relationship of trust.

We landed in Nairobi a little after midnight and stayed in a beautiful homestead on our first night in Kenya. The next morning (after very little shuteye), our small group with the aid of a bag full of ripe, juicy mangoes from the our hospitable hostess, visited a giraffe reserve. While there, we kissed, hugged, and fed lovable, endangered Rothschild Giraffes with 42 cm long blue tongues and warthogs wheat molasses treats. We learned about the three different kinds of giraffes in the area: Rothschild Giraffes, Mosai "white sock" giraffes with no spots on their legs, and reticulated giraffes. Later, we rode a small charter plane to Lewa with a lot of turbulence due to wind currents during transit. As we approached camp, already we had seen rhinos, zebras, baboons/other primates, and the euphorbia candelabra, a poisonous cactus whose sap can blind you.

We arrived at the group of tents, kitchen area, and restroom structure that made up our campsite. Sleeping outdoors really immersed us in nature and allowed us to leave the stress of home behind (even when monkeys would steal bananas and food from our tents). We started and ended every day with game drives that were serene with the beautiful landscapes and animals that allowed us to appreciate our natural surroundings.

Another day, we met the head of security and toured the operations room of the rangers at Lewa who patrol the borders of Lewa and its partner Rawana 24 hours a day. We learned that the rangers heavily rely on a strong relationship with the local community, a symbiotic one where rangers could act as a police department, for instance to catch poachers. The ops room had a series of screens tracking all of the different deployed rangers and a walkie talkie system with code words like "Zuzu" to prevent people with ill intent from having access to confidential information in the conservancy. We discovered that rangers had to use rifles to neutralize poachers wielding AK-47s. The rifles were less powerful weapons but more accurate in efforts to protect wildlife.

My favorite day by far was our visit to Leparua School to engage with children of all ages and hear their stories. The students at the school were joyful, talented at soccer, and highly intelligent, most taking their science and math classes in English by high school. While we were there, the zealous director of the school shared his hopes to establish a relationship between their school and ours through a pen pal program. After we planted trees with children from the school and helped teach some of the classes for the younger kids, the principal said that when we returned to the school a few years from now, the trees would be fully grown and that we could return to our tree and find the child who helped us plant the seedling. The tree was a metaphor for the blossoming relationship between our schools as teachers could form partnerships sharing teaching methods while we could form strong bonds and friendships with the children at the school. Both boys and girls wore shorter haircuts as a symbol of the uniformity of the school. Leparua school went to great lengths to support women within the community and protect girls from arranged marriages and customs like lip plates, etc. by isolating children from villages. Also, there was a strong sense of communal love and respect between students and teachers. The older kids had ambitious aspirations of becoming pilots, doctors, and historians.

During our time at Lewa, we met with a number of individuals who educated us and shed light on Lewa's administrative role in the community through welfare programs including the communications

head, head of media/ecotourism, a veterinarian, and a nurse practitioner at a Healthcare clinic. We visited a beadwork project, an example of a successful business for artisans, as well as with women who participate in a micro-lending program. A veterinarian taught us about human-wildlife conflict and the obstacles that come with treating animals weighing more than a ton and how tranquilization works. One day, we visited a Lewa supported healthcare clinic offering condom distribution programs and HIV testing. They also provide education for adolescents, encouraging women to have fewer children to avoid complications related to childbirth. Many executives shared the struggle of trying to create a balance in which the community does not rely on resources from Lewa for survival like water supplies, rather striving to create resources and tools to make people self-reliant.

After admiring the beauty of wildlife, we had a series of conversations addressing threats to their well being including poaching. Poachers are not often animal-hating monsters, rather desperate, impoverished villagers who satisfy the demand for ivory and rhino in foreign markets in countries like China. Poaching puts money in the hands of powerful individuals behind closed doors who offer poachers in African countries relatively small amounts of money compared to the selling price of an elephant tusk or rhino horn.

Prague Cont.

--- for tired shopkeepers and tourists. Oh, the stories these cobblestones could tell. How many sons and daughters watched in awe as each new banner was hoisted over the spires and steeples, how many saw the yellow of Bohemia reflected back at them, the Austrian black, German red. Names may change and new lines are drawn in the sand, but these people have stood their ground. From the clocktower I can see stories playing out that I have seen a thousand times at home. A father kisses his children and dog goodbye as he chases his wife out the door to work. Old friends sit and laugh under the setting sun. They do not care that it will soon be dark; they will wait, as they have waited before, for that sun to rise again.

Grade Inflation Cont.

information that's on it? So test corrections give the student another opportunity to succeed and memorize the information for a future test, quiz, or exam."

Dusty countered saying, "I agree with that on test corrections, but things like class participation, teachers who count that for a large part of the grade, that's just not a good way to grade. In college, you won't be graded on participation. We sell ourselves as a college prep school, so making participation as part of your grade is not going to prepare us for college."

College prep is perhaps SSSAS's first priority for students. In an interview with Dr. Carter, he explained "I think that over time, grade inflation has crept in. From when I was in high school, nationally, grade inflation has come in to a certain extent. In my time here at SSSAS, I have been here for two decades, I have not really noticed grades changing. At the college level, grade inflation has taken off. At the graduate school level, a B is a punitive grade. There are some elite colleges, that if you're good enough to get in, it's pretty much everyone gets As. The average grade at SSSAS should be about a B+ to A-, and that's about what we are seeing."



Rhino spotted on game drive.

Photo by Lilly Cady '18

Carroll Phillips '18 said the average grade should be "Around a B because that way people get As and Cs surrounding that depending on how hard they worked or how much they really know."

On paper rewrites, Carroll said that they are "Definitely fair because it gives you more time to keep working on and improving your writing. English teachers always say how writing isn't a one step process - it takes time and you can always go back and make it better. If you're taking the time to re-work your paper it also shows you're working hard and a good student so the new grade does show the work you've put in."

But for test corrections, Carroll acknowledged that they can, and should boost your grade, "Test corrections for AP/honors classes are helpful to overall have a good grade for your transcript since those classes are harder so tests (even if you do well on it) would still be like a C as a normal grade. Test corrections are helpful and needed in some classes but don't always reflect grades/how you're doing in the class since you can just look at your notes and copy what the answer should be."

Higher grades can be attributed to the extra help students can seek out from their teachers, Mrs. Daly explained, "Math teachers provide students with as much extra help as they need in order to help them succeed. In addition to our free periods and STAT, we often work with students before school and during lunch." She continued, saying that teachers provide many opportunities for students to do well, "We know that students are motivated to do well and earn high grades, but we don't feel pressure to inflate grades. That may be because we give students multiple opportunities to demonstrate their knowledge. We try to give some type of assessment every week in our classes. Students know that if they don't do as well as they hoped on one assessment, there will always be another assessment the following week!"

Mr. Mallet asserted that grades are secondary to the actual learning and preparing that students are doing for college. "The goal of our education is preparation for college and beyond. So if there are opportunities for participation in classes like language, for people to use the target language in spoken word, I think we should value that and grade that based on that priority. I think that the grades don't reflect a normal distribution. I think about what we are doing here and why we are here to begin with."

The importance of college prep was stressed by the students, Dr. Carter and Mr. Mallet. The faculty emphasized how they give students multiple opportunities to do well. While these things may be interpreted as grade inflation, faculty argue that preparation for college goes beyond a letter on a transcript.

One Acts, Many Student Writers and Directors

By Jamie McLucas '18

This year, more students both wrote and directed one acts. Juniors Sam Stevens and Reagan Brown, sophomore Mary Margaret Lehmkuhler, and seniors Nathan Pugh and Rob McPherson each wrote one acts that they also directed. In addition, Sean Dowling, a senior and our school president, is directed a one act written by two former SSSAS students named Ian Blau and Matty Heller who graduated in 2011. Juniors Tessa Moore and Marta Rich also directed a one act written by a playwright. According to Mr. Marvin, this was the first year (that he knows of) that we have had six student-written one acts, and that there are usually just one or two.

I interviewed some of the writers and directors of the one acts, and they all seemed to be very excited, though most of them had not participated in the One Act play festival before. Nathan Pugh, who has participated in school musicals, was looking to challenging himself with this new experience. He mentioned that "the

small time frame is definitely a challenge for one acts, but also something that can be rewarding."

With respect to directing his peers, Nathan explained that he wanted them to be very involved so that he could "adjust the show and the character to their own lives and their own thoughts about the play." Similarly, Rob McPherson said that his approach to directing his peers involves simply allowing the actors to do their own interpretation of the script and then work with them to make the best possible product.

However, directing a one act is not simple or easy. According to Sam Stevens, who also directed a one act last year, there is a lot of work involved. He also said, as someone who has participated in school musicals, that directing a one act is more difficult in some ways than participating in a school musical because you have to manage everyone and actually make the show come to life, as opposed to just

having a learning some lines with someone else directing you.

On the other hand, there are also ways in which participating in the school musicals is more challenging. Reagan Brown explained that while directing a one act requires work, it is much less time consuming than the musicals. As Mary Margaret Lehmkuhler said, the musicals take "upwards of three hours every day."

Sean Dowling said that he came to see one acts when he was younger, and was excited when offered the opportunity to direct one. He took a laid back approach and decided to just have fun with the experience, especially as his one act was a comedic satire on politics today.

The One Acts were performed 27th, 28th and 29th of April. If you missed them, be sure to be there next year.

What Would You Do With \$5 Million? We Asked a Bunch of Freshmen

By Harrison Brown '20 and Afua Nyantakyi '18



Jay Cunningham - "I'd probably donate some of it. I don't know. Invest it, put it in my bank account, save it."



Katherine Atkinson - "I'd spend a million to charity/donate. Then I'd probably buy 2 houses for my family. And travel the world, go back to Greece (my favorite place)."



Vivion Purser - "Use some of it to travel and donate some of it and make sure some of my friends don't go broke."



Luke Senich - "Probably donate half of it to charity. I'd help my family with the other half."



Sydney Cordero - "I would first save it for college then spend the rest towards family and whatever I want, eventually I'd pay for my children's school and more."



Holden Singh - "Spend it. I'd buy a beach house, a basketball court in my house. I would buy a lambo. And then donate the rest to cancer research."

Infinity Mirrors

By Afua Nyantakyi '18

Before the Yayoi Kusama exhibit opened in DC, you could expect to see the same types of pictures and videos while scrolling through your social media. The same old pictures of friends at school, trendy restaurants, or at each others' houses would take up the majority of your Instagram feed. But now, your feed is filled with pictures and videos of the strange, colorful patterns of the Kusama Exhibit.

Now you can expect to see pictures of your friends in unusual places like a room painted white in its entirety covered with colorful polka dots to "obliterate the white space." Or you could see videos panning around small chambers of seemingly endless patterns ranging from polka dots to pumpkins. Seeing all of this not only spiced up your social media but probably fascinated you enough to want to go see the exhibit for yourself.

I recently got the chance to see the exhibit the Hirshhorn Museum of Sculpture and Art because I luckily had friends who devoted themselves to winning tickets through the online lottery. The entire exhibit included the infinity mirrors, rooms and other pieces of artwork, mainly sculpture all revolving around the same subjects such as polka dots or pumpkins.

Ms. Elkins, Art Teacher at the Upper School appreciates how the exhibit is getting people interested in contemporary art. "Yayoi Kusama's paranoid, obsessive view of the world is fascinating and I love that she shares this unique vision with her audiences." Though, Ms. Elkins admitted that as a result of all the hype, the physical experience is less than perfect. Yet, she advised that "If you decide to brave the long lines, the hoards of people, and the docents who rush you through, then I encourage you to leave your phone behind. Rather than see the exhibit through the lens of a camera, try to experience the installations through your own senses."

Like Ms. Elkins, I noticed that lines for the interactive pieces were particularly long, but the walls on the pathways leading to each exhibit bore interesting quotes from Yayoi Kusama and parts of her biography that revealed the deeper meaning behind of her artwork.

She describes herself as an "obsessional artist" and revealed that fixation with polka dots and repetition stems from hallucinations she experienced as a child. She employed this obsessive repetition as a theme in her exhibitions in the early 1960's including her Infinity Mirror Exhibit that is currently being showcased at the Hirshhorn. The mirrors in the room were meant to create the illusion of an infinite plane, a true testament to her belief that "Our Earth is only one polka dot among a million stars in the cosmos. Polka dots are a way to infinity."

You don't need to know much about the depth behind the art to still enjoy the exhibit, however. The optical illusions and visual aesthetic are captivating enough for anyone to enjoy exploring the Kusama Exhibit. Yet, even though going to the Kusama Exhibit is a guaranteed fun time, you're not necessarily guaranteed a ticket to entry. Tickets are only available in two forms for a limited amount of time.

The first is the online lottery held on Mondays at noon. The tickets typically sell out the very minute they are released. The second way to get tickets is by going to the actual Hirshhorn Museum 30 minutes before entry as allowed and hoping to be awarded one of the few walk-in tickets they hand out. The exhibit officially closes on Monday May 13th and moves on to Tokyo, so make sure not miss your last chance to win tickets!



Above: Yayoi Kusami in front of her art
Below: Obliteration Room



I'll Tell You Where to Put That Apple Core

By Harrison Brown '20

What is composting? Do we do it enough? Composting is nature's process of recycling decomposed organic materials into a rich soil known as compost.

According to the SSSAS composting survey, 18.75% of the school never composts, and 34.38% rarely composts. Only 6.25% of the school consistently composts, and 12.5% composts frequently. That means 28.13% of the school sometimes composts. When 90% of the school does compost, they just compost food and nothing else. 72.92% never composts at home.

Brian Kane, Director of Environmental Stewardship, would like to change that. "Always room for improvement, it just takes a while for the habit to form. I think they would do it if they did it at home and it would be easier. In San Francisco, it's required to compost. So here in Alexandria, it hasn't become a habit yet," he said. "I would love for it (composting) to become standard practice, and people wouldn't have to think twice about it. I think it could become a part of more events so it will become habit forming so it would happen at every event," he continued.

Some people may not compost because they do not know what it does for the environment. Mr. Kane said, "No. 1 it reduces solid waste, heading into landfills - fewer carbon emissions from transportation and burning. And No. 2, it's returning natural substances to the earth." It seems pretty clear that we all know that composting helps the environment, but we do not know how it does it.

There are three different kinds of composting according to RecycleWorks.com: Backyard composting is if you have a yard and a balance of browns (fallen leaves or straw) and greens (grass clippings

and food scraps), you have all you need to make compost. Worm composting (vermicomposting) is if you have a tiny yard or live in an apartment or have an abundance of food scraps, this type of composting is for you. Finally, Grasscycling If you have grass clippings and don't want to use them in a compost pile you can leave them on the lawn to decompose. Read about grasscycling for tips, techniques, and benefits.

Mr. Kane is trying to turn composting into a habit for all of us. "I'm trying to get our green leadership council to check the cafeteria regularly and making it stand out during lunch. We're going to make it stand out from now on at our New Saints Orientation. They may not know about it, so that's why we want to inform them about it."

Mr. Kane is not the only one who is trying to make composting a trend around here. The environmental club, led by Jo Herget '17, is making an effort in order to help support Mr. Kane. "A few years ago, it [the club] made composting bins outside the library and in the senior hallway. This year, it was the green leadership council who decided to compost in the cafeteria. The lower and middle schools started the trend," she said.

Earlier this month when the third grade came over to talk about composting in morning meeting, they told us that crumbs, food, and paper is all compostable. They described composting "like recycling but put food in it," and that "anything you eat you can compost." The lower school has been composting since last October.

Jo said she doesn't think enough people compost in our community yet. "I

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Messi Behavior Leads to Suspension, U.S. Back in Contention

By Miller DeLancey '17

The 2018 World Cup will take place from June 14 to July 15 in Russia. There are a total of 209 teams trying to qualify for 32 spots. Two teams have already qualified for the World Cup, Russia and Brazil. In the African region there are five groups consisting of four teams in each group. In Asia there are two groups with six teams in each group. In Europe there are nine groups with six teams in each group. North America, Central America, and Caribbean have one group with six teams in it. Oceania has two groups with three teams in each group. South America has one group with ten teams in it.

In the European qualifier, France, Spain, England, Germany, and Italy have had no trouble in qualifying. One of the bigger surprises comes out of Group D, where Serbia is leading over two very strong teams, Ireland and Wales. Ireland does hold the second qualifying spot, but it is no guarantee that they will keep that spot as Gareth Bale and the Welsh will be a strong opponent. Ireland is also reeling after the loss of their Captain Seamus Coleman to injury. In Group H, a very strong Belgium team is leading with the second spot closely contested between Greece and Bosnia and Herzegovina. In group I the Croatian team led by midfielders Luka Modric and Ivan Rakitic hold a comfortable lead over second place Iceland. After the group stages are done in October, 2017 the eight best second place teams face off with the winner heading to Russia for the World Cup. The nine group winners will advance to the World Cup.

In the African qualifier, Nigeria has

breezed through qualifying. Groups A, C, D, and E are still very close. In Group A, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Tunisia are tied at the top and have separated themselves from the rest of the group. In Group C, Côte D'Ivoire is leading with Gabon in the second qualifying spot. In Group D, Burkina Faso and South Africa are tied at the top with Senegal close behind in third place. Egypt is leading Group E and Uganda is in the second qualifying spot. The five group winners will advance to Russia and play in the World Cup.

In the Asian qualifier, Iran had no trouble in the qualifying stages; they have a comfortable lead in Group A. Korea Republic is in the second qualifying spot with a small lead over Uzbekistan. In Group B, Japan and Saudi Arabia are tied atop the lead with Australia in third place. The third-placed teams of each group will advance to Round 4. The Round 4 winner advances to the intercontinental play-off. The winner will qualify for the World Cup. The two group winners and runners-up will qualify for the World Cup.

In the North American qualifier, Central America, and the Caribbean, Mexico is leading with Costa Rica in the second qualifying spot. The United States sits in fourth place, six points behind the leader Mexico. The United States has six matches left to try and make their way up the standings to qualify. The fourth placed team advances to the intercontinental play-off, and the winner of the play-off will qualify for the World Cup. The top three placed teams will qualify for the World Cup.

In the Oceania region, New Zealand has run away from the rest of Group A and is in great position to qualify. In Group B, Tahiti is currently leading with Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands tied in second. The two group winners will advance to a single home-and-away series. The winner advances to the intercontinental play-off. The winner of the play-off will qualify for the World Cup.

In the South America region, Brazil has breezed through qualifying and has already locked in its spot for the World Cup. Colombia is in second place with a small lead over Uruguay. Chile is in fourth place and Argentina is in fifth place. The Argentinian team is without their star player Lionel Messi after he was suspended for four games after he verbally abused an official. The Messi-less Argentina team lost their last qualifying match to Bolivia 2-0. If this trend continues Argentina may have a tough time qualifying for the World Cup. Argentina as the fifth placed team would advance to the intercontinental play-off. The top four teams will qualify for the World Cup.



Above: Russia 2018 World Cup Logo

Catching Up With Saints Baseball

By Afua Nyantakyi '18

This Spring, Saints Baseball kicked their season off with what most of their members describe as a "rocky start." The team went to Disneyland in Orlando, Florida and won two out of the five games they played. However, Coach Supple still considered the trip a success. "The purpose of the trip was to give the players a time to hang out, have some fun and focus on baseball and enjoying each other. After having to spend six days with each other, in the tight quarters of the hotel, we become a closer knit family -- we're kind of forced to in that sense"

James May '17 attributed the team's current relationship to the spring break trip, saying that "You can really tell a big difference from before the trip and after, it really provided the best platform for us to gel as a team."

Coach Supple agreed that "this year's team is special because of their camaraderie." He also stated that their depth is another noteworthy aspect of the team. "This is one of the largest varsity teams I've ever had, and one of the most talented in terms of how deep we can go. We have a lot of guys in the starting lineup who can really add a lot of value to the team and really step up in big ways."

So far, the team seems to be mostly satisfied with the support they receive from the rest of the school, however, some members still feel that there are still areas for improvement. James admitted that "from an administrative standpoint, baseball isn't really big in the culture of the school." In fact, the scores from any of this season's baseball games seem to be absent from the Saints Pride app, which still has records of other scores from tennis and lacrosse. James suggested one way to improve this was by

setting up a recruitment process as lacrosse and other sports do. "We don't really push to get baseball players, as of now we sort of have guys who play, not always intending to play it at the next level in the future."

Connor Becton '18 acknowledged that "it's pretty obvious we're at the low end of the stick when it comes to funding, but what we have now is pretty sufficient." He revealed that they recently got new practice nets, however it was the first time they had in years and the previous nets were run down with holes. He also noted the difficulty of improving the baseball field "since it is public property."

Senior team member, Malcolm Reynolds '17 said "It's not unfair, but it is frustrating sometimes to see how much attention goes into other sports." As for attendance by the school, Malcolm explained why his expectations are not particularly high. "As someone who enjoys playing baseball and enjoys watching it, even I wouldn't want to sit through an hour and a half of our games."

Connor attributed the low support to "historically not being a very good team." However, he believes that notion will change soon, "The junior class and the sophomore class right now is one of the best we've had in awhile. Things are looking up."

He's definitely not wrong about that, since the team won their last two conference games. Co-Captain Sterling Gilliam '17 agreed, "As our coaches remind us, anything can happen in the playoffs. We're focused on hanging some cloth in the gym after next Wednesday." The rest of the team is equally optimistic about the rest of the season, looking to win the upcoming Conference championship.

Composting Cont.



Composted food being added into soil

really hope it (composting) reduces our food waste. It does already, but I want to see more of it. I want people to spread it as much as they can," she said.

"I think a lot of people don't know what to compost and that's what the club is trying to do. We have a sign in the cafeteria to demonstrate what is compostable and what's not," Jo said. She gave me some more clarity about what to compost. "In our cafeteria, we can compost all foods and paper materials... everything except the plastic silverware. No bones," Jo explained.

If you did not know what composting was before, hopefully, you have a better idea. We all heard from different people that this community does not compost enough, so what do you guys say we do something to change that? The next time you find an apple core, make sure you compost it.

World News Page

By Gwendolyn Rak '18

North Korean Aggression

The tension between the United States and North Korea stemming from the Cold War may be building up again as the Pacific nation increases aggression. North Korea has conducted missile tests, and on the 85th anniversary of the founding of the country's army, *Telegraph* reports, North Korea held the largest live fire drill; this show of military power included "more than 300 large-caliber self-propelled guns." A *CNN* article stated that North Korea is capable of carrying out the sixth nuclear test of the past decade, but Kim Jong-un is waiting for the right moment politically, another important anniversary or date,

The White House initially kept the possibility of a military reaction open, but has since moved toward diplomatic sanctions to address North Korea's action. A *Washington Post* article quotes press secretary Sean Spicer: "The more that we can solve this diplomatically and continue to apply pressure on China and other countries to use the political and economic tolls that they have to achieve a goal in stabilization in the region, but also to tamp down the threat that North Korea faces, I think that that is something that we all share." Although tension between the US and North Korea has increased, most sources agree that war is not an imminent danger.



Above: North Korean soldiers march in a parade

Below: protesters marching through D.C. streets



Worldwide Earth Day Science Marches

The Science March on Earth Day (April 22, the same day as SSSAS's prom) was originally organized to protest President Trump's climate policies, including his appointment of Scott Pruitt as head of the EPA and proposed cuts in research funding. However, with the potential implications of these action on the global community, the march spread to cities overseas. Some of these locations included Cape Town, London, Madrid, and Seoul according to *VOA News*. In combination with the U.S. marches, over 600 cities hosted an event. *The Guardian* reports that in Australia alone, scientists and supporters participated in twelve separate events.

Although the Science March was based here in Washington, D.C., it gained global support because of a common passion for science among particularly students around the world. *CNN* quoted a London marcher as saying, "Insular populist politics, which have temporarily triumphed in the US and UK, need to be balanced by the broader vision of youth." Another marcher was quoted as saying, "Science is not just for scientists, and I believe that all of us, whether we work in a lab or not, should have a voice on its future."

French Elect Centrist Macron

On May 7th the people of France cast their final votes for the next French president, electing Emmanuel Macron with 66.1 percent of the total vote. After two rounds of voting, the remaining candidates were Marine Le Pen, a far-right populist, and Macron, a centrist with a background in banking. Like last year's U.S. presidential election, this is not "politics as usual."

Telegraph compared Le Pen's success to President Trump's, describing her as the candidate for "millions of disillusioned voters [who would] pick her over Mr. Fillion, the mainstream Right-winger." A day after she advanced in the elections Le Pen resigned from her leadership position within her party in order to reduce her partisan ties, according to the *BBC*, but her policies show where she stands on partisan issues, particularly those on immigration and terrorism; *CNN* reports that Le Pen responded to a recent shooting by calling for the closing of "Islamist"

mosques in France, and she believes that immigration should be seriously reduced. Some feared that her election would further threaten the continuation of the European Union, which was put under stress after last year's Brexit.

Emmanuel Macron was not a typical candidate either. After serving as an economic advisor to the current president, Macron decided to create a new party representing neither the right nor the left. *Telegraph* reports that he had support from both sides of the political spectrum, although critics say his promises are empty.

The New York Times reported that Macron was favored to defeat Le Pen in the final election, despite news that the Macron campaign was hacked in the days leading up to the election.

Macron will be sworn in as president on Sunday, May 14.

Crisis in Venezuela



Venezuelan police clash with public

Since Hugo Chavez came to power in Venezuela, there has been a political divide in Venezuela between Chavistas (supporters of the current socialist government) and those who are hoping for the end of the eighteen-year-long reign of the country's socialist party. According to the *BBC*, the current president, Nicolas Maduro, has faced protests and unrest due to an economic recession and high unemployment, heightened by unpopular Supreme Court decisions that protesters believe undermine Venezuela's separation of powers.

On April 21st the *New York Times* reported the unrest culminating in violent riots and looting in the capital city, Caracas. At least twelve people were killed in this pro-democracy demonstration. The death toll has since gone up to twenty nine, according to a *Reuters* report on April 26. In addition to the government's refusal to address the people's demands for elections, Venezuela announced plans to leave the pro-democracy Organization of American States.

To discuss the Venezuelan crisis, President Trump met with Argentine President Mauricio. *The Washington Post* quoted the Argentine leader as saying, "in Venezuela they don't have any respect for human rights... That is not democracy." He told Trump that American governments must continue to create pressure for Venezuela to reinstate democratic policies.

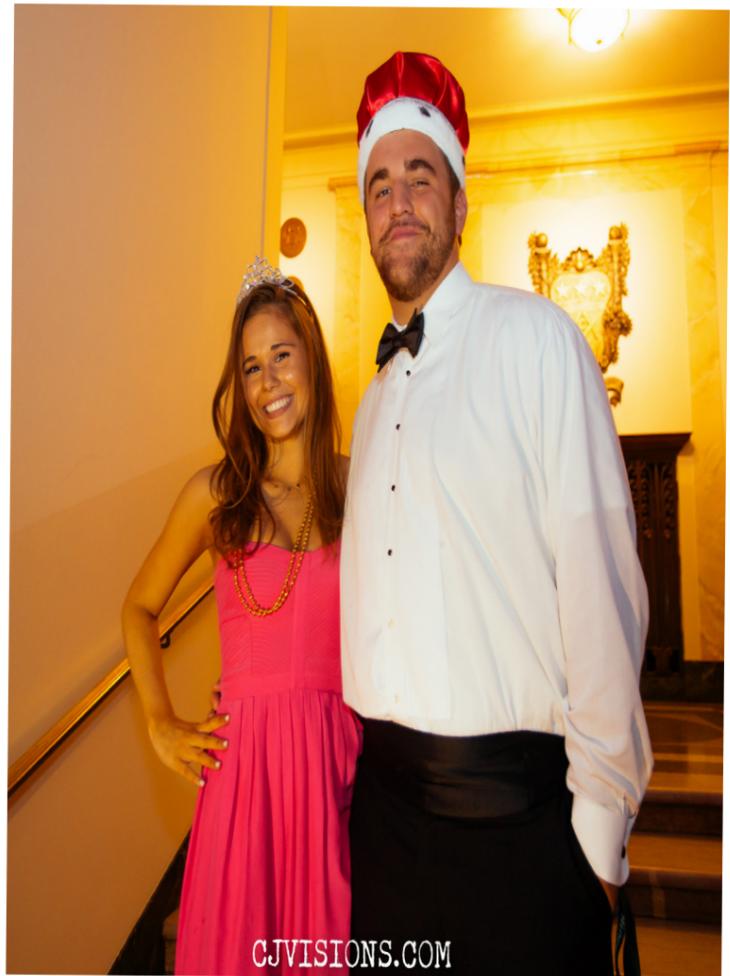


Left: Emmanuel Macron; Right: Marine Le Pen

Masque-rage: Prom 2017



Counterclockwise starting from below: Prom Queen and King, Adele Reardon '17 and Sean Dowling '17; Juniors Sam Kadlec, Maya Tumiwa, and Will Stiers; a group of Senior boys; a group of Junior girls; Hanna Kidane '18, Cristal Badu '18, Cassandra Do '18, Trinity Gourdin '19, and Afua Nyantakyi '18.



The Voice Staff:

| | |
|---------------------|-----------------------|
| Jacob Lipton '17 | (Editor-in-Chief) |
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| Afua Nyantakyi '18 | (Staff Writer) |
| Gwendolyn Rak '18 | (Contributing Writer) |
| Harrison Brown '20 | (Staff Writer) |
| Mrs. McElroy | (Faculty Advisor) |

Contact us! editors@thevoiceatssas.com

