



# SAINTS SCENE

## The Road Together... The Gifts He Gave Us

Never forgetting the wit, the kindness and Christian intellect of John Keller, O.S.A: the gentle priest and firebrand spiritual architect of a modern St. Augustine High School



President Edwin Hearn

*By Edwin Hearn, President,  
St. Augustine High School*

Occasionally, we meet people who seem to engage us in a way that we take an interest in their leadership. They operate on a different level, are visionary, serious and seem to perform at a level we rarely see. While not understandable, they have authority in our lives, not due to their power but due to their attributes and the way they conduct their lives. They challenge our thinking and change us!

Fr. John Keller, O.S.A. is one such person. Although he has lived a simple life and has pushed any acclaim to the side, when he speaks people take notice. His impact will continue to resonate among those of us who were fortunate to have lived and worked by his side.

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## Double Front Page Coverage

Two front pages instead of one. *Featuring:*

- 1. John Keller Edition | 2. State of Saints Edition



Fr. John Keller, Class of 1955, O.S.A. lived a simple life and pushed any acclaim to the side. When he spoke people took notice. His impact will continue to resonate among those of us who were fortunate to have lived and worked by his side.

## Who Will Have the Greatest Impact on Your Life?

Dear Parents and Friends,



Principal James Horne

You never know when you will meet the individual who, outside of your parents or perhaps a spouse, will have the greatest impact on your life. But one thing is certain, the people who impact us the most are those who play an important role in our personal lives and they oftenshape our values.

*Continued on page 15*



## Coverage of Dual Services for Fr. Keller

Please see Page 15



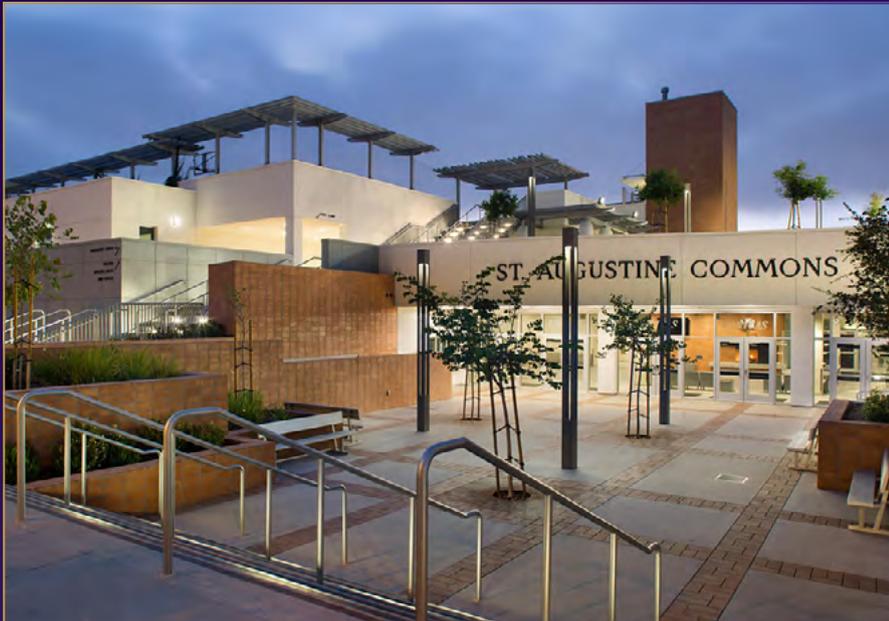


# SAINTS SCENE

## State of the School

### Special Report from the Office of the President

By Edwin Hearn, President, St. Augustine High School



With the new year in full swing and with unparalleled possibilities awaiting St. Augustine High School in the future, it is with a grateful heart that I look back on the fall semester and say thank you. During my 18 years at Saints and prior to that Fr. John Keller's, '55, OSA, three years as president of the school, the campus was rebuilt to the tune of \$60 million. Saintsmen, parents, past and present, and friends of the school were asked to contribute to the rebuilding of the campus and stepped up. Where there was a trickle of funds before the first campaign of the Master Plan, the culture and generosity of the community began to shift to a more charitable position.

*Continued on page 16*

## New Challenges Are Available

Dear Parents and Friends,



Principal James Horne

Is your student bored? Is the sport or activity he is interested in a fall or winter activity? Is he looking for a new challenge?

*Continued on page 11*

The Road Together...

## Saints Celebrates its Generations with Grandparents Day



President Edwin Hearn

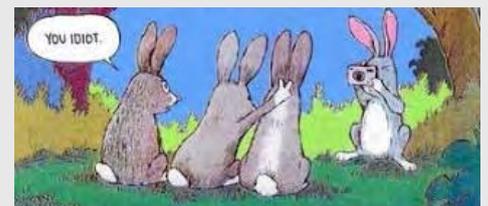
By Edwin Hearn,  
President,  
St. Augustine  
High School

Appropriately educating a young man in 2024 is a complex proposition.

*Continued on page 17*



**SAINTS RULE.** Varsity Soccer's 1-0 win over Del Norte High gave the Saintsmen their second CIF Open Division Championship in a row. #7 Tavo Ybarra scored the deciding goal. Cheering Tavo's successful free kick are #8 Alonso Somohano, #11 Nico Zarur and #10 Iain Wagner. Next month: Soccer Photo Essay & results of State Playoffs. Photo by Saints Dad Mr. Bill Hill.



Easter Break at Saints runs from Thursday, March 28 through Sunday, April 7.

# THE Smart Page

2024

News of outstanding scholarship at St. Augustine High School

## Eight Saints Scholars Advance to Austin Exams

Nathan Butler, Daniel Feiner, Chase Gadler, Ryan Ortega, Mitchel Sandford, Romeo Velarde-Alvarez, Samuel Velasquez and David Wise were invited by the school to sit for this year's Austin Exams.

The "Austins" are rigorous oral examinations in English, mathematics, religion, science, social studies, and visual and performing arts. The exam also assesses the participants' understanding of the Integral Student Outcomes.

Seniors with the highest weighted academic cumulative grade point average at the conclusion of the seventh semester (P.E. excluded) are automatically invited to sit for the Austins. The remaining students, normally five, are selected by the Academic Council\* from the top 10% of the graduating class.

Faculty chairpersons of the academic departments recommend specific academic distinctions for participants. The administration ratifies these recommendations.

These academic distinctions include: Austin Scholar Summa Cum Laude (with highest praise) Austin Scholar Magna Cum Laude (with great praise) Austin Scholar Cum Laude (with praise).

At the conclusion of the oral exams for these young men, the chairpersons of the academic departments will then recommend graduation with specific academic distinctions for each participant. The administration ratifies their recommendations.

*\* The Academic Council evaluates the instructional program; to recommend changes in the instructional program to better meet the needs and abilities of students; to evaluate innovative ideas relating to the curriculum and to present them to the faculty; to recommend textbook policy; to recommend procedures to be used for classroom visitations and faculty evaluation; to recommend graduation requirements. Membership of the Academic Council includes – Academic Dept. Chairs, two counselors and select administrators.*



Nathan Butler



Daniel Feiner



Chase Gadler



Ryan Ortega



Mitchel Sanford



Romeo Velarde-Alvarez



Samuel Velasquez



David Wise



## Daniel Feiner Named Saints Villanova Scholar



Daniel Feiner

Each year, Villanova University recognizes one student from each of the Augustinian Secondary Education Association member schools for a full scholarship to continue their education in the Augustinian tradition.

This year Villanova University is proud to recognize senior Saintsman Daniel Feiner for his tremendous achievements in studies and service.

Dan is compassionate, resourceful, and driven to make an impact. He is also responsible, dedicated, and honest. He is an active member of the school's math tutoring program, a four-year member of the baseball program and the founding member and leader of the school's hottest new club – the pickleball club.

This amazing award is valued at over \$250,000. Students selected for this distinction are outstanding scholars and Christian citizens who model the values of Unity Truth and Love in their lives.

Dan's desire to succeed is evidenced by his extracurricular involvement and the several academic and service awards. He is an excellent citizen at school and has a cumulative GPA of 4.3, making regular appearances on the principal's honor list. Dan has had tremendous academic success and earned awards for being the top scholar in AP Chemistry, AP US History, Ethics, Social Justice & Morality, Algebra II/Trigonometry, English IA and Spanish I. Dan has also been a member of both the National Honor Society and the California Scholarship Federation.

Dan has also dedicated many hours as leader in the Campus Ministry office. He has served as a Big Brother (student leader) for the Freshman, Sophomore and Junior level retreats.

Furthermore, Dan is an excellent citizen in the community and has provided leadership and given unselfish service to the local Catholic High Schools as he organized and led the effort to host an interscholastic Food Drive around the theme "Fill the Holy Bowl".

## Senior Romeo Velarde-Alvarez recognized as a National Merit Scholarship Finalist



Romeo Velarde-Alvarez

Officials of National Merit Scholarship Corporation (NMSC®) announced late last month that Saints Senior Romeo Velarde-Alvarez was one of the many Finalists in the 69th annual National Merit Scholarship Program. Being recognized as a National Merit Finalist is an honor reserved for the top 1% of graduating high schoolers nationwide.

"We are not surprised by Romeo's accomplishment," said James Horne, Principal of St. Augustine High School. "He has demonstrated impeccable scholarship since arriving on Nutmeg Street. We congratulate him, his family and the many instructors who have worked with him along the way."

More than 1.3 million juniors in about 21,000 high schools entered the 2024 National Merit Scholarship Program by taking the 2022 Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT®), which served as an initial screen of program entrants. To become a Finalist, the student must have an exemplary academic record, participated in school and community activities, and demonstrated leadership abilities. Merit Scholar designees are selected based on their skills, accomplishments, and potential for success in rigorous college studies, without regard to gender, race, ethnic origin, or religious preference.



# The Honor Roll

Congratulations to the following listed Saintsmen for having earned a grade point average of 3.60 or higher during the fall/winter semester of 2023-24. Roster was compiled by Mrs. Jeannie Oliwa, School Registrar.

## SENIORS

### Class of 2024

### PRINCIPAL'S LIST

#### GPA of 4.0 or better

Christian Audish  
Colin Babich  
Thomas Banzhof  
Nathaniel Butler  
Griffin Capiello  
Carlos Casta  
Lukas Cerny  
Aaron Cramp  
Joshua Cruz  
Luca DiMarino  
Benton DiPasquale  
Jack Dougenis  
Daniel Feiner  
Colin Foley  
Sam Fries  
Thomas Fuller  
Chase Gadler  
Shane Garcia  
Andre Gaston  
Julian Gistaro  
Javier Granda  
Robert Grohman  
Justin Heffler  
Griffin Helfand  
Matthew Hopkins  
Patrick Hormiz  
Talan Hunter  
Ryan Ireland  
Omar Jaibaji  
Owen Johnston  
Ryan Kajmowicz  
Aidan Kalla  
Landen Kassab  
Luca Liciaga  
Javier Lopez  
Stephen Lorentzen  
Pedro Maria-Romek

Shane Martin  
Harry McCue  
John McNamara  
Julian Molina  
Noah Nayve  
Evan Newlon  
Benjamin  
Joseph Nguyen  
Ryan Ortega  
Ethan Piñon-Larkin  
Thomas Pokorsky  
Lucas Rogers  
Elliott Romaya  
Julian Salem  
Logan Sanford  
Mitchel Sanford  
Hector Santillana De Soto  
Colin Shughrou  
Alonso Somohano  
William Stowell  
Patrick Studebaker  
Michael Surwilo  
Juan Thomas-Rosas  
Remington Tully  
Luis Urbina Calvillo  
Fernando Valladolid  
Belendez  
Romeo Velarde-Alvarez  
Samuel Velazquez-Ocello  
Iain Wagner  
Alexander Watson  
David Wise  
Matthew Wisniew  
Kenneth Wright

### FIRST HONORS

#### GPA OF 3.60 TO 3.99

Tyler Abbo  
Daniel Arellano  
Landon Banks  
Andrew Bier  
Tyler Cabana  
Joseph Campos

Sebastian Careaga  
Letayf  
Alejandro Carrillo  
Puente  
Dominic Cortes  
Alfonso Cosio  
Nathan Covington  
Daniel Cuellar  
Byron Cunningham  
Ian De La Rosa  
Alejandro Duron  
Nicolas Escalante  
Humble Faalave-Johnson  
Donovan Faranso  
Sebastian Flores  
Alan Gamiz  
Devin Garmo  
Dyan Garmo  
Andrew  
Ghannadian  
Samuel Grauerholz  
Leo Graves  
Salvador Gutierrez  
Navarro  
Alejo Hao  
Isaiah Hasten  
Elias Herrmann  
Jet Himmelberg  
Kieran Hodson  
Zachary Horne  
Brady Klem  
Gabriel Konja  
Jose Lavat Gomez  
Sebastian Lopez  
Curvelo  
Joseph Mansour  
Daniel Minutella  
Jake Naimi  
Wesley Newton  
Ethan Nguyen  
Sebastian Oliveros  
Alexander Parada  
Rocco Parente  
Drew Patterson

Parker Patterson  
Brayden Pinto  
Dylan Rodolfo  
Erik Rodriguez  
Lawrence Rudolph  
Carson Sahd  
Tyler Schweer  
Yvan Sevilla  
Nevin Steinbuch  
Aaron Talbott  
Jorge Andres  
Tessada  
Evan Tofolo  
Antonio Toma  
Conner Torquato  
Ruben Torres  
Sanchez  
Abel Velez  
Ryan Vu  
Octavio Ybarra  
Diego Yee  
Maldini Zanayed  
Nicolas Zarur  
Gael Zazueta Santini

## JUNIORS

### Class of 2025

### PRINCIPAL'S LIST

#### GPA of 4.0 or better

Sean Abrom  
Emilio Aizpuru  
Owen Arnaudy  
Dominic Bartel  
Stephen Berggren  
Christopher Black  
Derek Borja  
Nathan Brosnan  
Adan Cardona  
Kapon Nakanelua  
Joshua Chu  
Levi Clair  
Alexander Clem

Jonah De Perro  
Nicholas Dolin  
Alexander DuBreuil  
Milan Flores  
Dash Frazee  
Trent Gorsich  
Andres Mogollon  
Reid Guhse  
Javier Retana  
Matthew Horne  
Michael Ivanjack  
Ramy Jaibaji  
Jorge Jimenez  
Nicholas Kiesel  
Maxwell Leadley  
Michael Luzi  
Luke O'Leary  
Joshua Padilla  
Jackson Pawl  
Evan Perez  
Ryan Popkins  
Emiliano Postlethwaite  
Achai Reddy  
Ryan Sablan  
Alexander Samo  
Simon Sanders  
Joseph Sbuttoni IV  
Braeden Steele  
James Steiner  
Owen Sullivan  
Anthony Tompkins  
Trent Torres  
Liam Veeramallu  
Jonah Villafaña  
Kelvin Vu  
Luke Weinpel  
Jack White  
Parker Wickstrand  
Lucas Younes

## FIRST HONORS

### GPA OF 3.60 TO 3.99

Jacques Allende  
Riley Anderson  
Wilford Anderson  
Samuel Ayana  
Charles Berkley  
Anthony Bravence  
Carlos Castan  
Fabian Castillo Mayoral  
Miguel Chaquica  
Jonathan Chavez  
Pablo Cosio  
Raphael Dunne  
Luke Duong  
Gabriel Estrada  
Oliver Fendley  
Emilio Gallego  
Mason Gossage  
Luke Graulich  
Elias Guerrero  
Marcelo Hank Canavati  
Noah Heuring  
Nathaniel Johnson  
Jacob Kajmowicz  
Alexander Kemp  
Philip Knapton  
Drake Konja  
Preston Lavarez  
Gregory Leong  
Michael Morton  
Marco Mouritzen  
DeClan Mullins  
Ezekiel Musni-Davis  
Matthew Naccari  
Elias O'Hollaren  
Jon-Matthew Oliveros  
Henry Payne  
Santiago Postlethwaite  
Johnathan Putrus  
Diego Ruiz  
Emiliano Serrano  
Aaron Simmons  
Clayton Staylor  
Marcus Stokely  
Johnny Stone  
Antonio Tamayo  
Dillon Tar  
Diego Turner  
Jacob Valdez  
Carson Van Nort

Kendrick Vazquez Diaz  
Edward Wakefield  
Derek Weber  
Tyler Wick  
Ian Woods

## SOPHOMORES

### Class of 2026

## PRINCIPAL'S LIST

### GPA of 4.0 or better

Callum Arnaudy  
Cruz Badillo  
Kristofer Bautista  
Turner Bronson  
Nathan Bui  
George Burrell  
James Burrell  
John Cook  
Matthew Cramp  
Dominic Cresto  
William da Luz  
Payton Del Toro  
Joshua Pederson  
Jamison Gerding  
Diego Tapia  
Mateo Tapia  
Matthew Gosling  
Jameson Grohman  
Alberto Guerrero  
Jonathan Haskett  
Alan Hernandez  
Michael Hoag  
Peter Jordan  
Ezra LaCoursiere  
Ryan Mary  
Nathan McDonald  
Kenneth Michalowski  
Benjamin Nault  
Garrett Nering  
Liam Olds  
Carson Prahl  
Diego Rosas-Luken  
Carlos Rubio-Lopez  
Michael Ruiz  
Julius Salem  
Benet Salmon  
Maximilian Schwarz  
Peter Thorne  
Lorenzo Toma  
SebastianTucker

Patrick Ward  
Gianni Yousif

## FIRST HONORS

### GPA OF 3.60 TO 3.99

Dylan Alkatib  
Antonio Atallah  
Jaden Attisha  
Julius Audish  
Jaden Bailes  
John Banzhof  
Nicolas Barreto  
Henry Barwick  
Tom Battaglia  
Mason Bautista  
Benjamin Bayless  
Kirin Beckhaus  
Brock Benson  
Ruben Curiel Romero  
Kekoa da Luz  
Alec Daniels  
Anthony Di Giovanni  
Santiago Diaz  
Xavier Escobar  
Peter Hanna  
Liam Hodson  
Maurice Howard  
Luke Huelskamp  
Carter Jones  
Karl Laffaye  
Bronx Letuligasenoa  
Devin Manns  
Jose Martinez-Robles  
Aidan McKerring  
Fintan McMahon  
Ian McMahon  
Simon Moss  
Matteo Newell  
Darius Nwagbuo  
Braden Palmer  
Luke Parker  
Rodolfo Perez-Velazquez y  
Almada  
Charles Platt  
Ryan Reichenberg  
Diego Reyes  
Derick Ritter  
Marcelo Rodriguez  
David Sabaga  
Kieron Scanlan  
Kyle Shaeffer

Cristiano Shores  
Colin Smith  
Spirit Soonthornnon  
Connor Stowell  
Galo Villalobos  
Matthew Wampach  
Julian Warter  
Jacob Washington

## FRESHMEN

### Class of 2027

## PRINCIPAL'S LIST

### GPA of 4.0 or better

Blake Abbo  
Augustin Attar  
Caleb Bailey  
Benito Bayona  
Grayson Bell  
Anthony Berardino  
Cooper Brosnan  
Victor Castan  
Iason Chang  
Teddy Kimo Crisostomo  
Roberto Datiles Jr.  
Moises Diaz  
Cole Dolin  
Santiago Escotet  
Edgar Esquivel  
Yabet Gebrelu  
Gannon Hayes  
Miles Hess  
DeClan Higgins  
Forrest Higgins  
Tim Huschke  
Diego Izidoro  
Erik Johanson  
William Kennedy  
Lorenzo Leal  
Bryson Morris  
Angel Munoz  
Gabriel Myers  
Nikola Pandza  
Dominic Perry  
Paisios Polamalu  
Charles Pruter  
Rommel Quintana  
Mauricio Razo  
Luke Rhea  
Sebastian Rodriguez

Nicholas Sanchez  
Lorenzo Simon  
Noah Steele  
Griffin Steiner  
Johnny Vattuone  
Elijah Villafana  
Joseph Walker  
Cullen Watts  
Matthew Weinpel  
Bennett Wilson  
Oliver Winn  
Jack Wisniew  
James Zumwalt  
Alexander Zwolinski

## FIRST HONORS

### GPA OF 3.60 TO 3.99

Alexander Abbouna  
Raymond Briere  
David Cancel  
Zavier Cooke  
Lazlo Garcia  
Michael Gomez  
Joseph Gormly  
Noah Keeton  
Alexander Kijowski  
Ian Kunde  
Mercer Lujan  
Guillermo MacFarland  
Owen Marcinkowski  
Dario Montoy  
Jonathan Morrill  
Jorge Munoz  
Justin Murigu  
Nathaniel Murphy  
Maximo Piancone  
Jose Gonzalez  
Justyn Rademaker  
Nolan Reyes  
Chase Riley  
Emiliano Rodriguez  
Jacob Ruiz  
Andrew Samarkos  
Thomas Schliem  
Rory Sullivan  
Matteo Toriello  
Ioannis Trakas  
Jesse Trujillo  
Noah Westfall



## It Takes a Village

St. Augustine High school is tremendously grateful for all the local organizations that work to provide an educational internship experience for our students. Huge thanks to these generous Internship partners.



Jeff Ring learned lots about the cargo and shipping in the San Diego Harbor interning for the Pacific Maritime Group.

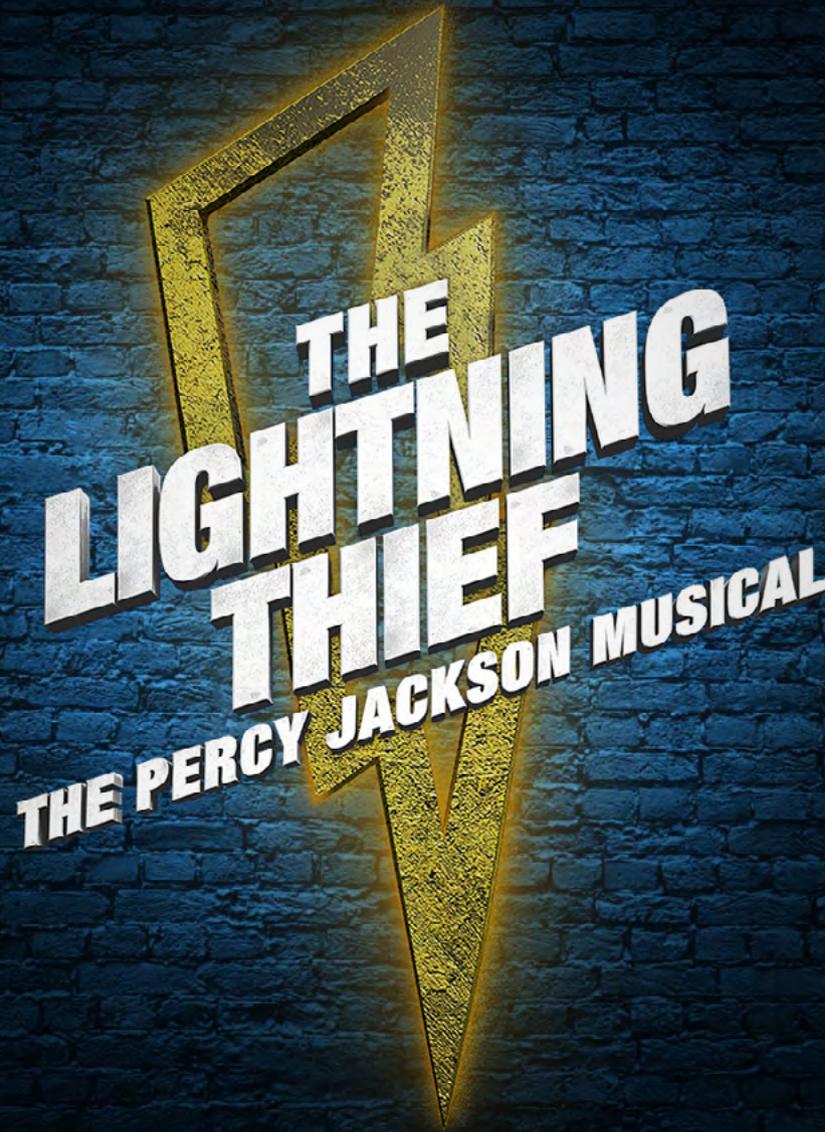


Sal Gutierrez learned about Finance and investing as he interned at the Investment Placement Group.

- Carlsbad High School
- Our Lady of Grace School
- VASDHS La Jolla
- Penasquitos Pet Clinic
- Matadero Production
- SoCal Sports Productions
- Mathnasium
- Investment Placement Group
- Rick Engineering Co
- Morgan Polymer Seals LLC
- Bruce Hofbauer Insurance
- 44 Pro Performance Sports Farm
- 4Sight Academy
- Pizza on Pearl
- Hannalei Elementary School
- 1RM Performance
- The Gym at Mission Hills
- Walter Redondo Fine Art Collection
- USD Rugby Club
- Countywide Powdercoating
- AWM Global Advisors
- Indoteak Design
- Di Donato Associates
- Dental EasyCare
- Falck San Diego
- Media Arts Center-Digital Gym
- Little Fish Comic Book Studio
- Quantum Sails
- Dolci
- IBP del Noroeste
- Rainbow Mart Inc.
- StellarCare
- DLX Financial
- The Mansour Group at Marcus Millichap
- PsychSanDiego
- Farmers Insurance Open
- Calimax
- Konja and Associates, CPA
- Baja Wood Internacional
- Jamie O'Brien Surf Experience
- Haichris CORE Medical and Surgery Center
- International Manufacturing and Assembly
- Hampton Inn
- Tech4Learning, Inc
- Digital Entourage
- Huerto Don Ciccio
- Ferreteria y Materiales
- Catherine Soriano, O.D.
- St. Didacus Parish School
- Fitness Quest 10
- Lefty's Chicago Pizzeria
- Garmo & Garmo, LLP.
- Valletta Orthopaedics
- Healthy Within
- Dr. Nathan Hammel, MD: CORE Orthopedic
- NOAA Southwest Fisheries Science Center
- Troutman Pepper
- San Diego County District 2 Supervisor Joel Anderson
- Elektro-Automatik Inc.
- Survival Systems International
- Walsh Engineering and Surveying Inc.
- San Diego Aerospace Museum
- USD Athletic Office California Orthopaedic Inst.
- Oasis MD
- North County Water and Sports Clinic
- Prime Plastic Surgery
- Solis Chiropractic
- UCSD: Department of Neurosciences
- Children's Primary Care Medical Groups
- Nicholas N. Gadler, DDS
- Axos Bank
- Little Italy Pasta Inc.
- Dr. Pablo Luciaga, DDS
- California Department of Transportation
- Peraza Real Estate
- San Diego Fire Department
- Mark Ignacio Law, APC
- Telaeris Inc.
- IB CPA
- DCR Manufacturing
- La Galeria
- Xolos F.C.
- Transnational Line
- Superior Financial Planning
- Realty Executives
- Brassington Caseworks
- Pacific Maritime Group
- Mission Hills Nursery FS
- Industries I.A de C.V.
- Asesoría y Litigio Estrategico
- CMC Consultorio en Gerencia de Construction
- Alonso Somohano
- ECO Gardeners
- NAI Mexico, Inc
- Chula Vista Police Department
- Stallergenes Greer Inc.
- Rady Shell at Jacobs Park
- West Coast Civil
- SDTW Direct
- Bueno Café
- Barry Estates Inc.
- Stamina Studio
- Mayor Todd Gloria
- Sip Whiskey
- Saint Patrick's School

Continued on page 11

St. Augustine Players Present  
**The 2024 Spring Musical**



**THE  
LIGHTNING  
THIEF**  
THE PERCY JACKSON MUSICAL

**Opening Night:**  
**Friday, April 19 @ 7pm**

**Performances:**  
**April 20 @ 2pm**  
**April 25, 26, 27 @ 7pm**

Book by Joe Tracz

Music & Lyrics by Rob Rokicki

Adapted from the book *The Lightning Thief* by Rick Riordan

This dynamic musical adaptation of Rick Riordan's bestselling book opened on Broadway in 2019. When teenager Percy Jackson discovers he's a demigod, he and his friends embark on an epic journey to find Zeus' missing lightning bolt and prevent a war among the gods.

At the Raymond Center on campus.

## New Challenges Are Available

*Continued from page 3*

At Saints, he can participate in athletics (15 athletic teams, 4 intramural offerings), the arts (jazz band, symphonic band, ceramics, acting, set design) and a multitude of club and leadership groups (ASB, French club, IRC, chess club, newspaper, Key Club, yearbook, Loyal Sons of St. Augustine, art club, music ministry, Orphanage club, and more).

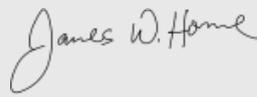
Participating in extracurricular activities helps him in other ways, too: It looks good on college and job applications and shows admissions officers and employers he is well-rounded and responsible. But wait there is more...

Research has shown that participation in extra-curricular activities has a beneficial effect on academic performance (Marsh, 1992) and promotes greater academic achievement (Gerber, 1996). Additionally, it suggests a positive relationship between structured non-academic activities and self-esteem (Coladarci & Cobb, 1996). Lastly, extracurricular activities are closely linked to prosocial peer relations and lower rates of drug use and teen pregnancy (Borden, Donnermeyer, & Scheer, 2001).

Although Saints is a small school environment we offer a huge array of opportunities for students to explore their physical, creative, social, faith, leadership, and career interests with like-minded people.

With the second semester underway get those boys off the couch and away from the screens! Encourage your son to try a new activity! It may bring him in contact with people he didn't know shared his interests and curiosity and it will surely contribute to his full development.

In the Spirit of Catholic Education,



James Horne  
Principal



## Hands On Semester Like No Other

*Continued from page 8*



Thomas Banzhoff interned for County Supervisor, Joel Anderson and is pictured here in the chambers of the County Board of Supervisors.



Shane Martin learned about the treatment and care of small animals interning at the Penasquitos Pet Clinic.



Ethan Pinon-Larkin (top) and Cenzo Zoni (lower) were living the dream interning at the Jamie O'Brien Surf School on the North Shore, HI.

## The Gifts He Gave Us

*Continued from page 1*

Just about the time Dougherty Gymnasium was completed in 1952 after only 30 years from the founding of Saints, John Keller made his official entrance into the St. Augustine community as a freshman. By his own admission, these early days were not pleasant. He was bookish, not an athlete and did not immediately connect with boy culture like most of the young men at Saints do during their high school days. At almost the precise moment of beginning his academic life, the Augustinians were making an intellectual push in the school to foster a more robust and challenging program.

This effort was led by a talented Augustinian priest, Fr. John Aherne, O.S.A. who was serving the school as the Assistant Principal. He was tapped to lead the school as the interim principal until that November when he was named principal. Under his guidance the intellectual environment of Saints markedly improved during the next decade of his leadership. The climate on campus shifted and John Keller watched it all through his Saints Experience and discovered the direction for the rest of his life. He joined the Order, and as an Augustinian priest, he served Saints as a teacher, principal, and president of the California Province as a provincial, and worked in campus ministry at the University of San Diego, a position he loved.

Fr. John Keller, as a Saints student, saw the way Augustinians lived in community and their interest in promoting Augustinian spirituality. When asked what phrase should be chosen for the statute of St. Augustine and the student, John paraphrased a sentence from the Rule of St. Augustine, “One in heart and mind on the way to God!” This was a capstone phrase from St. Augustine that captured Fr. Keller’s central theme of his life. There was an intellectual element that would become more pronounced through his time at Saints—one that was appealing, one that captured the attention of others and one that he would promote throughout his priestly life.

The value of this truth found its way in the work of the late Fr. Bill Mahedy, O.S.A., who developed a framework for the value of our relationships and community in our personal well-being. Fr. John Keller, who worked with Fr. Mahedy developed these important ideas that sprang directly from their Augustinian experience. Fr. Keller worked diligently with Mahedy on a conceptual framework that ultimately became a tenet for a program developed for veterans returning from Desert Storm who were dealing with PTSD. It became one of the important ways the Veterans’ Administration ministered to returning veterans.

After being elected Provincial in the 1980’s, it was clear to Fr. Keller that the declining number of Augustinians would necessitate the hiring of more lay people to take the place of Augustinians in their schools. The question of how the ten Augustinian schools would remain Augustinian was his overriding concern. He could have used a top-down approach but chose a ground up process. After promoting Fr. John Sanders, O.S.A., to the principalship in 1988, the two of them developed a questionnaire that would identify the values that were most important to the two Augustinian educational communities at Saints and Villanova Preparatory School in Ojai. The Core Values of Unity, Truth and Love emerged as the critical values that were at the heart of both schools. Interestingly, these are the same values that are found on the seal of Villanova University.

With these values having been identified, the structure of Augustinian education could then be taught to lay people. Fr. Keller was an instrumental voice in developing the Augustinian Values Institute (AVI), an annual Institute for educating the educational communities of the ten North American secondary schools. Those who were chosen to attend heard presentations on each of the Core Values, Interiority, and the life of St. Augustine. It has become the way for the Augustinian ethos to be internalized in the inner workings of the schools.

“One in heart and mind  
on the way to God!”



After the sudden passing of Fr. John Sanders, Fr. Keller, however, remained the protector of the Core Values and purveyor of ideas and the energy to move them forward. This not only applied to Saints and Villanova Preparatory School, but the rest of the North American schools.

The annual Augustinian Secondary Educational Association (ASEA—the formal association of the schools in North America) meetings were a forum in which Fr. Keller pushed the group forward. He was full of ideas for further developing Augustinian education that were sometimes met with indifference by the other Augustinian heads of school. This was troubling for a person such as Fr. Keller.

Fr. Keller, not to be deterred, felt a deeper experience for those who had attended the AVI needed to be developed. Out of this sprang Building the City of God, an experience he championed for years. It has served Augustinian educators for the past six years.

With the advent of these two programs, Fr. Keller's impact has not only affected Augustinian education in North America, but also in Ireland, the United Kingdom, and Australia.

As others discovered these tools, both the AVI and Building the City of God have helped to pass on the richness of Augustinian education to lay men and women working in their schools across two oceans. His persistence has placed Saint Augustine's ideas at the center of our work.

Meanwhile back on campus, after Fr. Sander's died, Fr. Keller was named principal from 2000 to 2003. Fr. Keller saw the need to employ a new model of governance—the President/Principal Model. He divided the position of Head of School into two positions—one that ran the internal workings of the school and the other who looked outside the school to further the development of Saints.

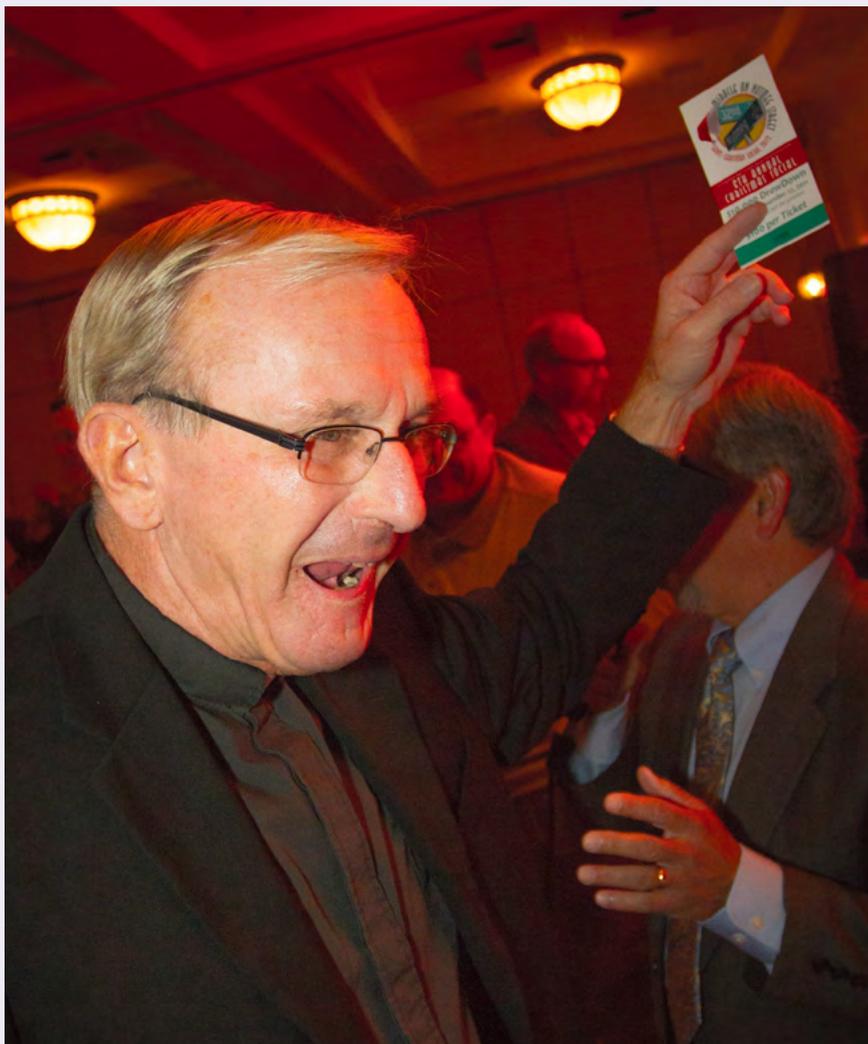
First, he hired James Horne as principal to operate the school, while he became the first President of Saints.

Realizing that Saints faced unprecedented competition with the new Catholic schools to its north and south, he began forming a strategic Board of Directors for the purpose of developing a



Fr. Keller in reflection at the groundbreaking in 2006 for Phase I of the modern St. Augustine High School.

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Master Plan for the campus, hiring an architect, a builder, and developing a way to rebuild the campus and raise the required funds to re-imagine Saints. In 2006 the groundbreaking for Phase I took place. It was one month prior to Fr. Keller stepping down as President. He had completed his work.

In 2006, I was named the second President of Saints.

It was his vision that propelled Saints forward into the campus and school that exists in 2024. After he stepped down as President, Fr. Keller was named the Director of Education for the Province. It was his good advice and friendship that helped guide the development of Saints and Villanova Prep in Ojai from 2006 through till today.

Even with fewer Augustinians, our schools have remained true to the core values of the Order of St. Augustine. It can be said that Fr. Keller was a thinker and a molder of Augustinian communities. His kindness and happiness were part of his priesthood that brought people together. He took credit for none of his remarkable accomplishments.

*His humility through his entire life has been a model of Christian charity.*

The Augustinian elements embedded in Saints and Villanova Prep were strengthened and broadened so that more people could see the value of the centrality of Augustinian thought in the good development of life at Saints.

His interest and persistence have been a strong contributing factor in the schools we see today and the health of Augustinian education worldwide. It is with grateful hearts we acknowledge Christian charity at its best—an impact that will resonate for years to come and will continue to influence our approach to how boys are taught.

## And Also With You

[from St. Martin of Tours, Church, La Mesa]

It is with great sadness that we announce the passing of Fr. John Keller, OSA.

Fr. Keller died peacefully after a brief illness Friday, January 26, 2024. He was a beloved member of our parish for many years. He was a parishioner here at his ordination in 1964 and offered his very first Mass here. Since our current church building was not completed until the end of 1965, he would have offered his first Mass in what is now Fr. Barry Hall. He will also be remembered for his long association with St. Augustine High School as well as the many years he celebrated Mass for us and his for his inspired homilies.

And yes it is sad we cannot now enjoy his company here, but he worked his whole life to be with God and think he is now in that presence, so congratulations are in order for sure. A choir of angels came to greet him and sped him to paradise.

And, Oh and cannot finish this remembrance without one of Fr. Keller's favorite jokes. [Fr. Keller: Tapping the microphone] "... is there something wrong with this mic?" Congregation "...And also with you."

## Service for Fr. Keller at St. Patricks



**STANDING ROOM ONLY.** Services were held, February 19, 2024, at St. Patrick's Church in North Park for Father John Keller, O.S.A., Class of 1955 St. Augustine High School. Fr. Barney Johns, O.S.A. officiated. Mass concelebrants included Robert Cardinal McElroy, other Augustinian Friars, and Priests from around the San Diego Diocese.

## Service for Fr. Keller at Saints



### CELEBRATION OF LIFE.

More than 1000 attended the Mass honoring the life and accomplishments of Fr. John Keller O.S.A., '55. The Celebration of Life was held on February 28, 2024, on campus at St. Augustine High's Commons. Memorial Mass was presided over by Saints Chaplain Fr. Maxime Villeneuve O.S.A. Services included a Homily by Thomas Whelan O.S.A., '53, and the Eulogy by school President Edwin Hearn.

## Who Will Have the Greatest Impact on Your Life?

*Continued from page 1*

For me this person was Fr. John Keller, OSA. Fr. Keller and I met in the Spring of 2003. Little did I know that this initial encounter would lead to decades of inspiration and shared interests around creating the best for Catholic Schools and the families who support them. I was also hugely unaware that I was interacting with a man who dedicated his life and priesthood impacting Catholic Education for the better, not just in San Diego, but nationally and internationally as well.

John was a tremendously accomplished educator and leader. Some of the posts he held over his career included teacher, principal, President at St. Augustine High School, the Asst. Headmaster at Villanova Prep, the Pastor at Our Mother of Good Counsel - Los Angeles, a professor at St. John's Seminary College, the Director of Spiritual Ministry at University of San Diego, and the Provincial of the Augustinians in the West.

Despite his many successes, Fr. Keller was a simple and quick-witted man who was always keen to move away from the spotlight and instead highlight the contributions of others. His shying away from praise was equal parts humility and a desire to recognize the efforts of his friends.

Because to John, friendship was one of the greatest of God's gifts. I've spent lots of time this month thinking about Fr. Keller and our relationship. And among other things I re-read some of the letters/ cards he had written me over our 20 years of work and travel together. Though they were written on many varied occasions and about many varied topics they all had one thing in common.

In each and every letter he thanked me for my friendship.

And for those who knew John this should come as no surprise - Friendship was one of the things most important to him, not titles or accomplishments.

Fr. John Keller was simple, funny, and commanded the sharpest of intellects.

He was a giant in the world of Catholic Education, both as practitioner and as a thought leader. I feel blessed to have been guided by him and for having worked alongside him .... He was my boss, my mentor, my priest and most importantly my friend.

Life is a tapestry of unexpected encounters, woven with moments that can alter our course irrevocably. John's friendship is a reminder to me that the person(s) who shape our lives and our destiny do indeed arrive unannounced. As we remember Fr. John Keller may we embrace the uncertainty of chance encounters, knowing that profound connections may linger just around the corner in a friend waiting to transform our lives in ways we never imagined.

Yours in the Spirit of Catholic Education,

James Horne  
Principal



## State of the School

*Continued from page 3*

This change of direction has been vital to our ability to grow the Augustinian mission, rebuild the campus and ensure that boys from all walks of life are able to become Saintsman regardless of family circumstance. This past semester has seen a record amount of giving at Saints. The amount raised for a small Catholic all-boys school during the past six months has been astounding and this philanthropy from July 1, 2023, to mid-January speaks to the good news.

Anthony Wagner '94, a former Saintsman, wanted to honor fellow Saintsman and long-time faculty member, Thomas Cudal '72. Tom had been instrumental in Anthony's acceptance and success at Saints and continues to be a mentor to him. On November 8, 2023, Anthony organized a kick-off cultivation party at his home to begin a fundraising effort to establish a scholarship fund in Tom's name. This new fund would be part of the Endowment Fund and would support underserved young men with financial assistance to attend Saints.

To name a scholarship requires funds of \$100,000 or more. In less than 2 months, the scholarship reached that goal and by mid-January, the scholarship had grown to \$144,180. We know teachers are the critical piece in a strong learning environment and young men are motivated by teachers who care for them. At Saints, we are blessed with teachers who not only teach their subjects but teach in the larger sense. They form young men who are self-confident, faith-filled, and successful professionals. Tom is one of those teachers.

We are blessed he teaches English and worked as the Assistant Principal and Associate Student Body Coordinator at Saints since graduating from college. He is a person who makes a critical difference in his student's lives. Those of you who have given to this new scholarship, thank you for making a gift. Your love for Tom is evident by how quickly this scholarship has been funded.

To give you an idea on the year-end giving totals, I would like to remind you that on November 28, the first Tuesday after Thanksgiving was a day of service for our boys. They worked around the county for the San Diego Parks and Recreation Department. On the same day Saintsman were giving back to the community, my office kicked off a day of giving. Due to a large gift, we were able to raise \$257,000 for the Endowment Fund within that same 24-hour window. When the books closed

for 2023 on the last day of December, we raised an additional \$241,879 from Giving Tuesday, November 28 to the end of the year. The total giving for a little more than one month totaled \$498,879.

With most of these funds flowing into the Endowment Fund, Saints is making excellent progress in establishing a financial assistance fund that will continue to grow and be of even greater support to our families. The Board of Directors decision to grow the Endowment Fund in 2018 from \$4.5 million to \$40 million by 2038 will create an income stream of \$2,000,000 a year that will flow in perpetuity into financial assistance.

As income from the Endowment Fund grows, Saints will have more options to cover operating costs rather than raising tuition. During this same time, gifts from wills and trusts accounted for another \$2,314,037 raised. Most of these gifts were designated to the Endowment Fund. When accounting for these gifts, the Thomas Cudal '72 Scholarship Fund, Giving Tuesday and the Christmas Appeal, Saints was the recipient of total of \$2,812,916.

Today, the Endowment Fund stands at \$17,200,000. In the past six years, the Saints Community has averaged \$2 million a year in gifts to the Endowment Fund. These single acts of generosity are creating futures for young boys whose families never thought a Saints education was possible for their son. We are grateful for your generosity these past two decades. It is making a difference in so many lives of young men we educate. We are confident they will be men later in life who will also see the financial needs of others and act.

An education is a gift which cannot be lost or stolen. It lasts forever and keeps on giving and due to the manner in which our young men are educated, they desire to and can change the world. A huge thank you to the entire Saints Community for supporting Saints. We are indebted to you and feel your love and support for our great school in your never-ending generosity.

Sincerely,



Ed Hearn

## Saints Celebrates its Generations with Grandparents Day

*Continued from page 1*

It is truly a joint venture of the Augustinians, the Board of Directors, the administration, the faculty and the family. All the contributors must be in-sync and trust the good intention of each partner. When the message is clear from both the family and the school, ambiguity is minimized and our students have a much better chance of becoming practicing Catholics and productive members of our community.

On behalf of the entire community, we thank the grandparents of our young men for the very important role they play in the education of their grandsons.

Grandparents often make the critical difference in their grandson's life. From the Saints' vantage point, it obvious that the love of both the parents and grandparents has created an environment that is shaping a bright future for our students and community.

**Friday, March 22, 2024, St. Augustine High School will celebrate the 34th annual Grandparents Day.** The day will begin at 10 a.m., with students meeting their grandparents in Keane Plaza where the Austin Parents Association will offer a light brunch of bagels, pastries, fruit and coffee. Grandsons may take their grandparents on a tour of the campus. Mass will begin at 11:00 AM, in the Fr. John Sanders Gymnasium.

Following Mass, the students are encouraged to enjoy an off-campus lunch with their grandparents.

With many Saints' families facing unsure financial situations, grandparents have been playing an increasing role in assisting with their grandson's Saints education. Grandparents Day is one way Saints is able to say thank you to the grandparents for their role in their grandson's upbringing, ensuring not just the academic education, but strengthening their grandson's Catholic faith and passing along innumerable family traditions to the younger generation.

The heart of the day is the celebration of the Mass, a special time allowing the grandparents to experience the Mass as their grandsons do each Wednesday morning of the school year. This is an extraordinary moment giving great hope to a generation of Catholics who years ago placed their faith at the center of their family life and now see this tradition secure in their grandson's.

Grandparents attending this event for the first time often remark that the day is a testament to the good work that goes on at St. Augustine High School every day. The reverence and respect Saintsmen have for Mass is very impressive. Just as our weekly school Mass is seen by the students as the most important aspect of the week, the Grandparents' Day Mass holds the same respect. The Saints weekly Mass is a time for worshiping our Lord and to reflect on the week past and the week to come.



Previous Grandparents' Day Mass



SAVE THE DATE  
32ND ANNUAL

Grandparents  
Day

MARCH 22, 2024

11:00 AM

FR. SANDERS GYM

ST. AUGUSTINE HIGH SCHOOL  
3266 NUTMEG STREET, SAN DIEGO, CA 92104



**SAINTS SCENE**

Your Award-Winning\* monthly report on the St. Augustine High School Experience

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**Correction Policy:** While every effort is made to be accurate, we occasionally err.

We do apologize to those impacted and kindly ask that you notify Saints Coordinator:

Thomas.Shess@gmail.com for any corrections.

**\*Awards:** Saints Scene has been voted by the San Diego Press Club as the best Community Newsletter in 2011, 2019 and 2021.

**Mission of St. Augustine High School – Our mission is to provide a Catholic liberal arts education for young men in an environment that promotes the development of mind, heart and body in the Augustinian tradition. By helping to form loving disciples of Jesus Christ we communicate to the world the gospel values of community, truth and love.**