

THE AUGUSTINIAN

“Tolle Lege”

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St. Augustine High School

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Saints winter sports turn up the heat, winning two CIF titles



Basketball and soccer won CIF D1 and Open Division championships, respectively.

Mr. James Horne; Mr. Matt Haniger



By Mattie Gosling ('26)
STAFF WRITER

From draining three-pointers in the gym to winning tight PK showdowns in soccer, taking people down in wrestling, and scoring the diving try in rugby, our winter athletes have done it all this winter.

Basketball

This was another slam dunk of a season from Saints basketball as they were crowned CIF D1 champs. Junior

Jaden Bailes had a record breaking season, reaching 1,000 points across his Saints career. The cherry on the top was that he earned it during The Holy War game against Cathedral. He attributed this incredible milestone to his teammates saying, “They gave me the best opportunity to make the bucket,” emphasizing how important brotherhood is.

One of Jaden’s favorite memories this season was sophomore Pai Polamalu’s dunk against Canyon High School. “A strong connection off the

court is what leads to success on the court,” Jaden said.

Another team leader this year was senior Manny Cortez, constantly working behind the scenes to improve the team as a whole.

Despite the abundance of talent, this incredible team could not be complete without Head Coach Mike Haupt. “What makes our team special is the ability to tease each other and work hard at the same time,” Coach Haupt said.

SEE SPORTS, pg. 8

Verdict: Mock Trial rules the courts



By Peter Thorne ('26)
STAFF WRITER

The Mock Trial club took the school by storm this year, earning an impressive sixth place in the county out of 42 schools, beating not only OLP but also Cathedral.

Mock trial is fairly self-explanatory: they’re competitions in which schools compete against each other, arguing a simulated court case. Each school is given the case packet which contains the details of the fact scenario in the case as well as witness statements for four prosecution and four defence witnesses, and pretrial materials.

Even those who don’t see themselves practicing law professionally, Mock Trial can help hone a variety of skills useful for anyone. Club president Edward Wakefield emphasized how Mock Trial can “vastly improve your public speaking.”

Mr. Bier, the club’s moderator, emphasized the value of Mock Trial, noting that Saints alumni who participated have pursued careers in a wide range of fields, including acting, political science, engineering, speechwriting, communications, and, of course, law.



The Mock Trial defense team at the courthouse.

Christina Musgrove

Besides professional growth, Mock Trial can be an important tool to the development of students’ civic understanding. Edward pointed out that it can specifically aid students in gaining a “deeper understanding in our judicial branch.”

While it’s a significant time commitment, Mock Trial is very accessible.

“When we have new people come in, we don’t expect anyone to know anything about the law,” junior Jacob Washington, a defense attorney, said. People are taught about the proceedings of the legal court systems regard-

less of whether they are first-timers or veterans.

In order to make up for any deficit in knowledge of law and procedure, the team seeks the guidance of guest attorney coaches, experts who have made careers in practicing law. They advise the students on their arguments and train them in objections and critical legal reasoning. This year saw an expansion in the number of attorney coaches helping the Saints team, allowing for more individualized feedback and contributing greatly to the team’s success.

She Loves Me set for spring



By Michael Hoag ('26)
CONTRIBUTOR

Saints Theater is preparing for an exciting production this spring. Audiences are sure to be swept away by the timeless romantic musical *She Loves Me* — the inspiration for *You’ve Got Mail*. It is set to be performed April 4, 5, 10, and 11 at 7pm, with a matinee on April 12 at 2pm.

Set in a 1930s Budapest parfumerie, it’s a delightful and charming story of love, humor, and mistaken identities. The plot centers around two quarrelsome coworkers, Georg Nowack and Amalia Balash, who are both secretly in love with anonymous pen-pals who ironically turn out to be each other, leading to a series of comedic moments.

The show will be directed by Saints’s very own Mr. Travis Blumer.

“This is my favorite musical,” Mr. Blumer said. It’s definitely more traditional than anything I’ve directed before, and I’m really excited that we have the right cast and crew to do it.” He noted that the essence of *She Loves Me* “is really about how love can overcome our ego and insecurities. You have to let all of those things go and take the risk to find the person you’re meant to be with.”

The cast and crew share Mr. Blumer’s excitement for the show.

“I feel like there’s something for everyone in this musical,” senior Jon-Matthew Oliveros, who plays the owner of the parfumerie, said. “It’s about growing up and moving past youth.”

“It’s a fun play to watch, and with all the different characters, it definitely relates to Saints,” said senior Max Leadley, who portrays Kodaly. “We watched the show in our Theater Arts class freshman year, and we’ve been begging Mr. Blumer to do it since.”

Sophomore Yianni Trakas, the production’s student technical director, explained that despite the fun, there are always challenges.

“Musicals are always harder to work on. There’s a lot of attention to detail. It’s a huge set, and there’s going to be a very large deck crew,” Yianni said.

Director of Music and Choreography Colden Lamb, a long-time partner of Saints Theater, reflected on the show’s set and what audiences can expect.

“This show helps us remember a time when musicals were well-constructed, and the biggest spectacle was the songs and romance,” Lamb said. He also praised the set design, noting, “What I love about our set is that it opens up like a ‘Once Upon a Time’ pop-up book.”

She Loves Me will be an unforgettable experience, blending beautiful music with captivating performances and a story that will tug at your heartstrings.

With an all-star cast, dedicated crew, and directors with a deep passion for the material, there’s no doubt this production will leave a lasting impression.

Mr. Chesser releases first album: *Exploring Roots*



By Michael Luzi ('25)
MANAGING EDITOR

In late January this year, Mr. Brant Chesser released his first album on Spotify and Apple Music called *Exploring Roots*. This album is Mr. Chesser’s first published work and certainly won’t be the last.

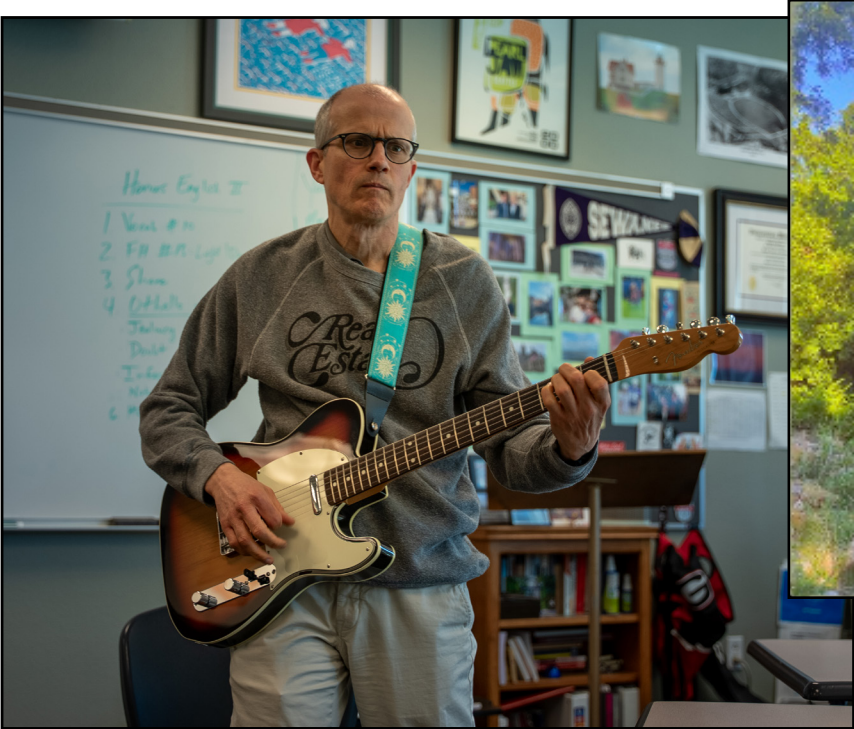
Mr. Chesser started his musical journey in his senior year of college at Sevanee. He grew up listening to bands like REM and Pearl Jam on cassette tapes and CDs, and he would always try to decipher the lyrics. In his hometown of Nashville, Tennessee, everyone played an instrument, inspiring Mr. Chesser to learn one as well.

“I didn’t start playing guitar until late in college,” Mr. Chesser said. “I said to myself, ‘you know what? Life’s going by too fast. I should probably learn how to play a guitar before I get too old.’”

He started to take lessons his senior year, learning the fundamentals of guitar and “gaining the calluses” that came with honing his skills. After learning a few chords and guitar techniques, he started to write his own songs, which he would perform on the open mic nights at local coffee shops.

While living in Nashville, Mr. Chesser had his first experience in music production with his friend Dylan Hedges, whose dad was a professional blues guitarist. They created a duo called West Main, and with the help of Hedges’s dad, they recorded an album in 2004 named *Long Way Home*. Despite having CD copies of the album, they never released it to the public.

During his tenure at Saints, Mr. Chesser has played with several teachers on different occasions. Most notably, he has worked with Mr. Andy Pruter



Mr. Chesser's new album, *Exploring Roots*, is available to stream on Spotify and Apple Music.
Jameson Grohman ('26)

on their rendition of “St. Augustine” by Band of Horses for the Junior Mass, a tradition which they started last year for the class of 2025. He has also worked with Mr. Pruter and Ms. Cindy Au in the band, ABC (Andy, Brant, Cindy), for the 2024 Taste of Saints.

“As a result of our shared love of similar bands, we naturally work well together,” Mr. Pruter said. “We complete each other’s musical thoughts without even using words. It’s like a no-look pass from Magic to Worthy on the fast break for the great Showtime Lakers of the 1980s.”

Last year, the seeds for *Exploring Roots* were planted. Inspiration for the album began when Mr. Chesser started reading *Into the Wild* by Jon Krakauer with his AP English Language class. The book tracks the events of protagonist Christopher McCandless traveling

through remote Alaska, describing his journey in nature.

Mr. Chesser found inspiration in the book, often finding himself taking nature walks. While on these walks, he loved the “rhythm of moving” he experienced, and with his years of experience writing songs, he got to writing the tracks for *Exploring Roots*.

Mr. Chesser employed many of the techniques and sounds used by some of his favorite bands throughout the album. Though he is more comfortable with rhythm guitar than lead guitar, he filled his songs with reverb heavy riffs.


“I like ‘reverb drenched’ fills. Bands like Real Estate or My Morning Jacket, anything that is reverb heavy, I’m drawn to that sound because it is just pleasing to my ear. All of the leads and fills [in the album] are inspired by that,” Mr. Chesser said.

In September, while playing one of his songs for his sophomore class, one of his students suggested that he put some of his songs on Spotify in order to gain a following. A little hesitant at first, he decided to talk to Ms. Au, the Saints music director, for advice on where to start. She directed him to the owner and chief engineer of Rarefied Recording in North Park, Roy Silverstein, who has over 25 years of experience recording and mixing music.

With the help of Rarefied Recording, Mr. Chesser had *Exploring Roots* professionally mixed, making his dreams of releasing original music become a reality.

His Spotify career is not over, though, as he is currently producing another album. This time, he hired a professional drummer and bass guitarist to help enhance his music. This album is set to be released before spring break.

Commanding creativity: Mr. Secrest's art of discipline



By Jose Manuel Prado Gonzalez ('27)
STAFF WRITER

When I first joined art class this semester, I figured it would be a pretty chill class. I thought I would be able to draw whatever I wanted and pick up a couple art tips along the way, adding to my experience from past art classes.

What I wasn’t expecting was a class that not only improved my drawing skills, but also taught me a lot about discipline, strategy, and moral conduct, along with anecdotes that could help me in other aspects of my life.

The key to all of this: Mr. Brandon Secrest.

Mr. Secrest is a former Navy Seal, achieving the rank of lieutenant. This experience taught him much about leadership and impacted his method of teaching.

“Teaching is a lot like leadership, y’know. When you’re a leader in the Navy, you’re really a teacher — you’re teaching people how to be: as a professional, as an ethical person, as a thinker, y’know? You’re leading through examples, so there’s really not a whole lot of difference to me between being a leader and being a teacher. The modality changes, so now I lead through art,” he said.

During his time in high school, he was a fantastic swimmer, competing on the U.S. National Triathlon Team, U.S. Amateur National Team, and World Triathlon Team. In his senior year, however, he broke his wrist during a rehearsal for a school play.

“I broke it, and I didn’t realize that I

broke a bone that only has one point of circulation. It hurt a lot. Whatever. I finished my swim season since I was doing really well,” Mr. Secrest said.

After having a doctor look at his wrist and having a screw fitted in, he needed to undergo rehab, preventing him from joining the Naval Academy for a year. After graduating, he was deployed to every country in the Middle East except Yemen and Iran, in addition to several countries in Africa. As for his time during the war in Afghanistan, he didn’t feel it was appropriate to divulge such matters in the school paper.

After ten years of service, he decided to leave the Navy early. After discussing it with his then-girlfriend, now wife, Mr. Secrest decided it would be better to stay close to her when she went off to study in Cleveland, Ohio.

“During my time in Cleveland, I loved it. I loved being an art student, and while I was there, I realized that I actually liked teaching,” Mr. Secrest said.

Later on, he would take up a part-time job as a lecturer, but it wasn’t enough to “feed a family.” He then got a call from his friend and fellow painter, Patrick DiAngelis, the Head of the Art Department at Francis Parker School.

DiAngelis told him that a position opened up here at Saints, and so Mr. Secrest emailed Mr. Hecht, and the rest is history.

As an art teacher, Mr. Secrest strives to push his students to their maximum potential, believing that success as an artist isn’t defined by financial profits. Instead, he said, successful artists share



Mr. Secrest doling out his trademark ration cards.
Enzo Simon ('27)

many valuable traits found in every other discipline, including keen observation, attention to detail, commitment, consistency, and hard work — all of which he aims to drive home in his classroom.

Mr. Secrest also applied his military experience to whip the Marty’s situation into shape. After observing the pure chaos of its line, he invented a new system: he fashioned 15 wooden passes which students are required to have to enter Marty’s. As soon as they exit, they hand the pass to the next person in line, thus limiting the number of students in Marty’s to 15 at a time. This new system has worked wonders for taming the line.

When he’s not teaching, Mr. Secrest refines his personal studio and remains actively engaged in his career as a working artist, currently preparing for an upcoming solo exhibition this fall.

Above all else, however, Mr. Secrest prioritizes his family, spending most of his time with his wife and two (soon to be three) children. Oh, and enjoying his beloved show *Severance*.

When asked what he would have done differently if he could start over, Mr. Secrest said, “Nothing... Don’t regret. You can’t regret the past ‘cause it’s done. You can have remorse for the things you did wrong.”

Evan Perez: SD Student-Athlete of the Year

 **By Ben Bayona ('27)**
STAFF WRITER

On the weekend of February 27, senior Evan Perez competed in the Wrestling State Championship. He's the fourth-ever Saintsman to accomplish this feat. This grand achievement is only one of many in Evan's illustrious career as an athlete and as a Saintsman.

In addition to going to State, Evan was also recognized in the San Diego City Conference as the Student-Athlete of the Year. The San Diego City Conference contains 23 schools, with seven other seasonal schools in the mix. Evan Perez beat out athletes from schools such as La Jolla, Lincoln, and Cathedral.

He began his wrestling journey in ninth grade. As a sophomore, he stepped into the role of team captain and placed in a handful of tournaments, as well as being sent to Sectionals — an honor held by few Saintsmen each year. Evan continued improving his skills, taking part in a clinic and embarking on a brutal journey to drop his weight class by junior year.

In his senior year, Evan reached his peak form, becoming a dominating force to be feared. He struck hard and fiercely, shooting his way through the competition. Evan won the El Cajon Invitational; placed in the La Costa Canyon tournament, one of the most com-



Senior Evan Perez (left) was named San Diego Conference Student-Athlete of the Year. Courtesy of the Perez Family

petitive in San Diego; and made it all the way to the state championship. He did all of this while juggling theater, a new weight class, and a sinus infection.

While Evan has pinned victory after victory throughout his wrestling career, he is personally ready to tap out, though he is willing to maintain a presence in the Saints wrestling community.

"I'll come to the wrestling room during my winter breaks," Evan said, "but I think I've shut the door on wrestling as far as my progression."

He continues to influence the wrestling team, helping the novice wrestlers reach their greatest forms, perhaps as great as Evan himself.

Alongside his wrestling career, Evan has taken part in multiple aspects of Saints life. He's a perennial member of the Saints Drama Department, currently preparing for the spring production of *She Loves Me*. Evan also serves as a leader to other Saintsmen, leading retreats as a Big Brother, tutoring with the National Honors Society, and serving on ASB.

"It has been a privilege to watch Evan mature into a leader who cares about all he does in the wrestling room, the stage, or the classroom," said Coach Michael Perez, the head coach of the Saints Wrestling Team. "More importantly, Evan has matured spiritually, which you can see in his honest, com-

passionate, and respectful character. He is a man of faith who will evangelize the message of the Gospel in how he does things."

Throughout his time at Saints, Evan Perez has attained greatness across many fields. His main takeaway from his time here is the people with whom he shared his Saints experience.

"I think it's those simple moments with friends that I really like, where you're just not worried about anything but just spending moments with people I hold near and dear," Evan said. "It's something that I'll value for the rest of my life."

Side Gigs: Trent Gorsich goes to the NBA



Trent and his father sitting courtside at a Timberwolves game. Courtesy of Trent Gorsich

 **By Kieron Scanlan ('26)**
STAFF WRITER

Your favorite column, *Side Gigs*, is back, this time highlighting senior Trent Gorsich, who works as an analyst and statistician for the Minnesota Timberwolves and for several other NBA stars to help improve their game.

Considering that Trent is working for an NBA team, it's fair to assume that he's been a fan of basketball his whole life, but

he actually only started following the NBA in his sophomore year. He said he "never watched it at all as a kid" and "knew nothing about it."

Instead, Trent grew up as a big fan of the NFL and was intrigued by all of the statistics. As he became more involved with sports stats, he saw how basketball statistics were much easier to accurately predict.

This is when Trent began to notice his skill for analyzing and projecting basket-

ball stats. He focused his passion on projects where he would make predictions and keep track of specific stats.

One of these projects was an article Trent wrote about the Timberwolves' 2023 playoff run, in which they came back from losing against the Denver Nuggets. This article was posted to Twitter and only gained around 32 views. Despite this, it managed to reach the right person, Jaden McDaniels, the power forward for the Timberwolves. McDaniels read the article and reached out to Trent, asking him to join a Zoom call.

Understandably, Trent did not believe that this was the real Jaden McDaniels.

"This is totally fake," he thought to himself. "I'm gonna click on a link and download malware on my computer." He was surprised to learn that it was indeed McDaniels and he was genuinely impressed by his work.

After speaking to him, Trent realized he could make a career out of being a statistician for basketball players. Working with NBA players looks very different from day to day. Sometimes, it requires serious work such as focusing on specific statistics and talking about the state of the team. Other times, it involves playing NBA 2K with players like Anthony Edwards and Jaden McDaniels.

Eventually, Trent was able to make connections with other NBA stars outside of the Timberwolves, including players like Kyrie Irving and Shai Gilgeous-Alexander. Trent puts a lot of focus on watching film to get a good understanding of how to improve a player's game.

When asked how he learned how to do all of this, Trent described it as "almost natural." He has a knack for spotting the weakest link on defense or seeing what plays should be made.

Trent doesn't need to travel for his job despite the fact that the Timberwolves are located in Minnesota — most of the work he does can be completed in the comfort of his own home. Trent is yet to attend a Timberwolves home game, but he has seen them play on the road multiple times, most recently against the Phoenix Suns.

Trent hopes to be either a sports agent or work for a specific team on the statistics board. Working for one organization is very appealing to Trent, as it would allow him to give his all and see the success he brings to the team being a part of a team where everybody cares so much about winning.

While every teacher Trent has had at Saints has been an inspiration to him, two that stand out are Mr. Wehbe and Mr. Isaak because they have been very supportive of his work and instrumental to the work that he does. Mr. Isaak, shocked that Trent sees him as an inspiration says "in my 23 years here at Saints, I cannot think of another case where someone at saints has made such a big impact on an organization like the NBA." Both teachers are very passionate about sports, leading to conversations about the game and how statistics can be applied.

Trent will be attending Rice University in the fall, where he will major in Sports Analytics. Trent hopes that attending school in Houston will give him an opportunity to work with the Houston Rockets, which will "begin [his] pursuit of an NBA job."

Just as he often has in the past, Trent took a gamble, and it paid off big-time.



Trent with his new best friend, Coby White. Stay in school, kids — math pays off. Courtesy of Trent Gorsich

Solar panels to energize Saints campus



By Henry Barwick ('26)
STAFF WRITER

Last month, you may have noticed the construction crews working on the faculty parking lot, and wondered about the canopy-like structure they were installing. They were in fact solar panels, and near the end of this month, these renewable and effective energy sources will be powering our wonderful, multi-purpose gymnasium.

“The administration looks at what’s best for the school in the long term and how we can reduce money expenditures,” Facilities Manager Coach Casey explained.

One of the school’s largest expenditures is the gym. Thanks to its considerable size, it is often a venue for several events and requires frequent, heavy maintenance, resulting in, among various other factors, a high cost. The administration decided that solar panels were the solution to reduce these expensive overhead costs of energy consumption, figuring its best location would be atop the faculty parking lot. In addition, it is simply better for the environment, providing a source of green energy for the school, positively impacting the North Park community.

There are two phases to this project.



Progress after phase one — the completed canopy over the faculty lot that will house solar panels. Jameson Grohman ('26)

Phase One, which began in March, involved building the structure that will support the solar panels. Phase Two, which will begin on March 31 and continue through April and early May, involves the actual installation of the solar panels and connecting them to the power grid. In addition to installing solar panels, they will be installing Electric Vehicle (EV) chargers so those with electric vehicles can now charge them during the day.

According to Coach Casey, they hope to have the project fully completed by graduation in May. This does, however, mean that there will be some slight disruptions in the next few months. Parking will be harder to find as a result of faculty being forced to park on the street, so you may need to get to school a couple minutes earlier if you drive to school. How-

ever, the long-term benefits of the project far outweigh any slight disruptions in parking.

Coach Casey said that there are three main benefits of the solar panels: “They will decrease energy consumption by a lot, they will add to the school aesthetically and make the school look nicer, and it will help on hot days to have the cars covered.”

The tiresome trek for Saintsmen crossing the border



By Liam Olds ('26)
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Situated only 14 miles from the United States-Mexico border, St. Augustine High School is unique in the number of multinational students who attend the school. Nearly 40 Saints students live in Tijuana, Mexico and cross the border every day to get to school.

The students crossing the border are committed to their education, hoping that attending school in the U.S. would better their chances of admission to American colleges and universities. Several of the commuters had little or no experience with education in the United States before coming to Saints.

“Since I was little, I knew I wanted to study in a college in the U.S.,” senior Javier Guillot said, “I wanted better chances to study here in the U.S. and I thought studying in San Diego would give me better chances than studying in Tijuana.”

Javier attended fourth and fifth grades in Coronado, but conducted the balance of his schooling in Mexico.

While students come from all over the county to attend Saints, none have to deal with commutes as extreme as those coming from Mexico. Border lines, security checks, and secondary inspections all increase the time students spend traveling to school. Ensuring they have the optimal credentials and documentation to cross the border in a safe and timely manner adds additional obstacles for commuting students.

Few Saintsmen rely on visas to attend school in the United States, but almost all students commuting from Mexico use SENTRI cards. SENTRI cards are a form of identification that allow pre-approved travellers to cross the border at an expedited rate. There are separate lanes for SENTRI card holders at border crossings, allowing travelers to bypass long lines of commuters.

Without SENTRI cards, commuting from Tijuana is exhausting. According to information provided by U.S. Customs and Border Protection, the average time to cross in rush hour is about 100 minutes.

Mme Marie-Line Allen who, as the only French teacher at Saints, teaches almost all of the Spanish-speaking students, attested to having students who

had to get in border lines as early as 3 a.m. in order to make the 7:45 bell without a SENTRI card.

“If you don’t have SENTRI, there is no way you can do this,” said Javier.

For those with SENTRI, the commute is still extremely taxing. Getting to school on a typical day can take anywhere from one to two hours depending on traffic and conditions.

“It takes me one hour, one hour and a half — maybe two if there’s a lot of traffic,” senior Carlos Castan said.

The variability in commute times is also very volatile, as Javier explained: “There’s no set time, it’s exponential. Like if I leave at 6:10, I might take an hour, if I leave at 6:20, I might take an hour and 40 minutes.”

The volatility of wait times forces students to plan ahead.

“I normally try to leave by 6:10 or 6:15 — if I leave by 6:20, then I get here late,” Javier said.

Most of the time spent in the car is in line at the border. While some students estimated they would spend only 20 minutes at the border on a good day, others were more conservative, placing the typical wait in the 40 to 60 minute range.

These wait times have the potential to get even worse. With increased attention on the U.S.-Mexico border from President Trump, the Sheinbaum administration in Mexico has cracked down on border security with the hope of preventing additional tariffs on Mexican products. Thousands of troops stationed on both sides of the border to reduce fentanyl smuggling have contributed to amping up security. Random vehicle searches are being conducted in record numbers. According to the *San Diego Union Tribune*, such action on the Mexican side of the border is believed to be unprecedented in recent history.

Saints commuters have reported a variety of different experiences with the new procedures. While junior Alberto Guerrero said he had not noticed any significant difference in wait times, Carlos and Javier both cited longer wait times of about 15 minutes.

“Since Trump got in, I’ve had to leave earlier to get here as early as I used to or on time. And I’ve had more close calls with getting here on time than before this semester. The line is longer and slower,



An aerial view of the daily congestion at the San Ysidro point of entry.

not just slower,” Javier said.

In addition to getting up early and commuting in the mornings, students also have to cross the border again in the evenings to return home. This creates a long, grueling day that eats into the time students have to complete work, play sports, and rest.

Mr. Timothy Golden, who has the opportunity to comment on both the academic and athletic sides of student life as a counselor and tennis coach, stressed the added caveat of sleep.

“One of the things that we always stress with every boy is the importance of rest and sleep because we know how related that is to our brain functioning and everything that we need to do to be successful here,” Mr. Golden said. “The biggest challenge I see with them is just the amount of time it takes and the dedication it takes to get here in the morning, to get home in the evening and to get enough rest they need to be successful.”

“I have less time and more fatigue, because the commute to Saints and back from Saints adds at least two or three hours of wasted time to my day that other Saintsmen don’t have that don’t cross the border. And that commute also takes a toll on my body like, I get tired more easily, I get drained of my energy,” said Javier, who, in addition to being a full-time student, also has to balance his role as a captain on the varsity tennis team.

Additionally, as Mme Allen pointed

out, living life split between two countries and two languages can be grueling.

“It’s stressful to cross a border and to function in two countries at the same time,” Mme Allen said. “When you have to function 24 hours a day in a language that is not your native language, you also get exhausted.”

However, multinational students do have some unique advantages.

“It’s a richer experience because they think in two different languages...they also approach reality differently, they have two cultural backgrounds so they think differently...there’s more adaptability among those students,” Mme Allen said.

Mme Allen pointed out that having a different approach to problem-solving scenarios gives students a unique perspective into language, math, science, and a multitude of other subjects.

These unique perspectives of students from different backgrounds are precisely what make Saints such a special environment. Students are exposed to alternative ways of thinking and diversity like that of a college campus.

“That’s why it’s nice to have all these students with different backgrounds, who speak a different language, who celebrate different moments — or celebrate the same moments but differently. It’s rich. It makes a much more colorful tapestry,” Mme Allen said.

Academic League buzzes in victory



By Joseph Walker ('27)
STAFF WRITER

The Saints Academic League team just wrapped up their season with an undefeated record and a Southern Division League Championship to boot.

As club moderator, Mr. Bier’s experience with Academic League at Saints began two years ago. “I wanted to celebrate the academic side of the school like they celebrate the sports side,” Mr. Bier said. “We get very excited about the sports side and these kids work hard for these matches, which to them are just as exciting.”

Academic League is essentially a “Team Jeopardy,” as described by Mr. Bier. “It’s fun because it makes the kids think about these different areas,” including sports, history, math, current events, science, fine arts, religion and literature. With these broad subjects, many questions can contain parallels to current events and history.

“It’s interesting to see these students go from 2025 to a long time ago,” Mr.



Academic League celebrating a victory over Coronado HS. *Mr. Steven Bier*

Bier said.

The competition consists of trivia questions, separated into toss-ups and bonuses. Suggested by the name, toss-ups can be answered by either team, being awarded to the team who can buzz in first and answer correctly. Whoever earns the toss-up is then read three additional bonus questions that they can collaborate on. After a set amount of time, the team with the most points wins!

Regarding club interest, Mr. Bier said that “Some people think that it’s

only for the straight A students — [but] it is for everyone.” Athletic and academic warriors alike have spots on the team, and Mr. Bier encourages anyone to give it a try. “You may find that you fit into areas that we need,” he said.

And despite its seemingly serious nature, there are, in addition to the actual trivia and all its accompanying banter, several instances of fun. One of the most memorable moments of each match is the final timeout, during which the song “Jump Around” by House of Pain is played — along with some accompanying dancing — to help relieve any tension from nervous players or spectators.

Academic League is an amazing club, going undefeated in their league while spreading fun and excitement.

Mr. Bier concluded, “My goal is to not just win but to have fun doing it, and I hope other schools pick up our enthusiasm and share it amongst themselves and others,” and he urged students to “come out and give it a try!”

Lacrosse shows SD who's boss



Saints lacrosse fending off Grossmont High School. *Nick Katz ('26)*



By George Burrell ('26)
STAFF WRITER

Welcome to this month’s Team Feature! This issue, we’re spotlighting the lacrosse team, which has been one of the fastest-growing teams at Saints, with many underclassmen taking up the “crosse” and many returners coming back to guide the team to victory.

Lacrosse is regarded as one of the most fast-paced and competitive of the spring sports. To play, one must not only be agile and fast, but also strong and accurate. Lacrosse is played with ten players on each side. Each team is equipped with crosses, which are long sticks with nets attached to the end. Crosses are used to throw and catch the ball, in addition to whacking the other team.

Saints’s lacrosse team was established in 2010 and has been gaining momentum ever since. With one of the largest attendances in the team’s history, Saints lacrosse is looking to win its first league title.

“While we are looking to take home a championship, we are looking to make Saints history this year by staying consistent and energetic throughout the rest of the season,” senior Dash Frazee said.

The team is led by Head Coach John Tolla, who has been the lead of the Saints lacrosse program for the past 15 years. When asked about the team’s potential for this year, Coach Tolla remarked having high hopes for his guys.

“Despite the 0-2 start, I am pleased with the effort shown by the boys in both contests,” he said. “This team

has enormous potential and I am looking forward to seeing them grow and achieve great success as the season progresses.”

According to Coach Tolla, lacrosse practice is the heartbeat of the team.

“We start with core skill repetitions passing: catching, ground balls, et cetera, and move into situational drills that build awareness and vision for the time the opportunity arises in game play. We sometimes finish with CTCs, which was one of my favorites as a player, and I know the boys enjoy thoroughly,” Coach Tolla said.

Similar to other spring sports, lacrosse is very team-oriented. This year, Saints lacrosse has both new members joining as well as numerous returners, including twelve seniors.

“Anytime you have that level of experience on the roster, opportunity springs eternal,” Coach Tolla said.

The team is also blooming with new recruits from the freshmen and sophomore classes.

“We have a lot of young guys with high expectations, and I have no doubt that they will fulfill them,” Dash said.

Lacrosse teaches much more than how to play the sport.

“My job is to make these young men incapable of quitting, no matter the circumstance,” Coach Tolla said. “I want to build a character capable of warding off defeat no matter the game score. So, my goal is to prove to the boys that it doesn’t matter *who* you play but *how* you play, both in life and sport.”

Nevertheless, the Saints lacrosse team is excited to see what the season holds for them. “We are full of potential,” Dash said.

NEW intramurals are faaaaaantastic!



Saintsmen competing in the existing intramural sports, football and basketball. *Courtesy of Saints Yearbook*



By Enzo Simon ('27)
EDITOR

Imagine if there were a homeroom where you could hang out with friends from different grades. Chilling with the seniors, laughing with the freshmen — it sounds like a dream, right?

Well, Saintsmen, it’s about to become a reality next year as Saints introduces a new homeroom system and a variety of exciting intramurals.

Homerooms will now include students from all four grades, helping to foster connection and collaboration throughout Saints.

In addition, Saints will make football an official intramural sport as well as bringing back dodgeball. Saints will also be introducing a new, unique competition: trivia bowl.

Other games, such as eSports, over-the-line, and volleyball, have been discussed but not finalized.

Chaplain's Corner

The Road to Leadership



By Fr. Max Villeneuve, OSA
COLUMNIST

Recently, we celebrated our annual Junior Mass, a cherished Saints tradition honoring leadership as the Junior class prepares to take the mantle of guiding our school. Recently, Mr. Leo Sullivan ’63, a Saintsman featured on The Saints Podcast (shout out to Devin and Tommy!), reminded us of the courage of Colonel Gerald Turley, class of 1949. His story is one every Saintsman should know.

In March 1972, Gerald was in Vietnam as an “advisor” to South Vietnamese troops, tasked with aiding them without directly engaging the Communist North. Then came the “Easter Offensive”—a massive attack by the North that began with over 11,000 artillery rounds fired at the South in a single day. The barrage rattled the South’s commander, who begged Gerald to take over. Though hesitant—command wasn’t his role—Gerald stepped up, realizing the North might break through.

Assessing the crisis, this Saintsman and Marine pinpointed a critical bridge

the North aimed to cross. He requested permission to destroy it which was denied. Knowing the stakes and risking his career, Gerald ordered the bridge blown up anyway. This bold move stalled the enemy, giving the South time to regroup and U.S. B-52s time to strike, altering the battle’s course. Gerald would go on to receive medals for his bravery, and had a successful career in various roles in the Department of Defense.

Now over 95 and living in South Carolina, Colonel Turley received a call from President Hearn, who was able to speak with his daughter. President Hearn asked her how much the impact of being a Saintsman had on Gerald’s actions during those days in Vietnam, or was it solely the influence of being a Marine? His daughter replied at once, “Oh, being a Saintsman — totally.”

Today’s juniors can look to Colonel Turley as they encounter opportunities for leadership. Saintsmen are called to serve and show courage, ready for whatever the world throws our way. God bless the Junior class as they rise to lead!

San Diego scores new MLS team



By Benjamin Nault ('26)
EDITOR

FOOTBALL IS BACK BABY!!! No, I'm not talking about some American pastime that we call football even though the ball is primarily thrown... with our hands. No, I'm talking about the most recent addition to San Diego's professional sports teams: San Diego Football Club (SDFC).

SDFC is a very welcome new name to the San Diego sports scene. Though not the first professional soccer team in San Diego's history, it is already looking to be the most successful. San Diego has had seven professional soccer teams across many indoor and outdoor professional leagues.

In the National American Soccer League (NASL), the San Diego Toros played one year in 1968, and the San Diego Jaws played one year in 1976 before moving to LA and Las Vegas, respectively. The San Diego Sockers formed in 1978 and played in the NASL until it disbanded in 1984, when they transitioned to indoor soccer. The original franchise went under in 1997, but the name has since been revived for the current San Diego Sockers team that plays in Major Arena Soccer League.

San Diego 1904 FC played in the lower levels of American soccer before being absorbed by the current (yet inactive) Albion San Diego, a member of the National Independent Soccer Association. San Diego Loyal SC recently shut down in the 2023 season after competing for three years in the United Soccer League.

Along with SDFC, the San Diego Wave FC is the other active football club in San Diego. They compete in the National Women's Soccer League, and both teams share Snapdragon Stadium as their home pitch.

The biggest problem with past clubs have been finances, with many clubs going under or moving out after financial troubles. Coach "Chief" Johnston, whose brother has season tickets to SDFC, commented on whether this issue will be a problem for SDFC.

"It's a no-brainer in southern California to have an MLS team, the league brings a ton of financial stability...it just has a very sound financial setup," Chief said.

He also believes that the success of

the club and the already sizable fanbase will continue to grow and contribute to the stability of the club.

Though early in the season, SDFC is looking to be a huge competitor in the future if they keep their current momentum. Competing in the MLS, (Major League Soccer), the undefeated team is 2-0-2, propelling them to second place in the western conference.

The MLS has 30 teams in all, 15 per conference (western and eastern). SDFC currently has 8 points in the standings (as soccer is a point-based sport when examined from a broader, season-wide lens), which puts them at a four-way tie for fourth place.

In SDFC's inaugural game, they beat LA Galaxy, the reigning MLS champions, in a 2-0 upset. They then beat Real Salt Lake, another upset, sandwiched between ties to St. Louis and Columbus.

The roster is filled with much talent, some of which you've probably already heard of. Of course, the top player thus far has been Anders Dreyer. Dreyer has scored three of the club's six goals so far, and has been a major contributor to the teams' successes.


Hirving "Chuck" Lozano is the club's most accomplished player, and he is definitely someone to watch shine under the pitch lights. Lozano has had a history of prestigious matches, playing for Mexico's international team on multiple occasions, as well as playing for the prestigious Dutch club PSV. Unfortunately for the team, Lozano sustained an injury in the first half of the club's second game, rendering him unplayable for the time being.

While looking to be a powerful player in the MLS, SDFC also has many cultural implications, as fans are given an opportunity to cheer on a men's soccer team in lieu of SD Loyal's departure. Being so close to Mexico, it is an understatement that our cultures mix...A LOT. Football is one of these bridges between the two sides of the border.

"There is a fan base here in San Diego...the community will, I think, provide the support," Chief said.

Overall, this club is hopefully going to experience much success in years to come, if not in its first year in the league. It will be fun to see this new team develop into a major contender and to see how the players develop into the nation's best.

Dolin Drafts: March Madness picks



By Cole Dolin ('27)
STAFF WRITER

**Stats and seedings current as of March 14, 2025*

Ever since the fateful day of February 9, 2025, sports fans have been cursed with near nothing to watch besides the boredom of regular season basketball. This plague comes every year after the end of the Super Bowl until March, and the relief can't come soon enough.

It's felt like years since I last watched a sports game worth a second of attention. But in only a few days, the greatest basketball tournament in the world is coming to satisfy our need for entertainment: March Madness.

March Madness began in the early 20th century when sports fans could no longer take the hard spring and summer months of complete boredom. Today, the tournament is a reminder for all sports fans of the pain faced by early sport goers.

This year, the tournament is bound to be a great source of entertainment. As of the time of writing, the current number-one seeds for the tournament are **Auburn**, **Duke**, **Houston**, and **Tennessee**.

Auburn has been a force to reckon with this season, going 27-2 while playing in the Southeastern Conference (SEC), arguably the best division in the whole NCAA. The SEC is projected to have over a dozen teams make the tournament, more than any other division.

In my opinion, **Duke** poses the largest threat for **Auburn**. **Duke** has one of the best programs in the history of basketball, and they currently feature the projected number-one player in the 2025 NBA draft, Cooper Flag. He is a freshman guard for the Blue Devils, and he averages about 20 points per game.

As the remaining number-one seeds, **Houston** and **Tennessee** are both very good teams, but I don't think they have a chance to win the tournament. They have the skills to make a run, but in the end, I don't believe they will make it very far.

You may be wondering, "Cole, if you don't think **Houston** and **Tennessee**

will win, then who can?" Great question. My favorite team in the NCAA falls right outside the top four. This team is the number-five seed, **Florida**. The Gators currently are 25-4, a very good record for being in the SEC.

Florida has had some unfortunate losses, but they have beaten two of the top four teams. In early January, **Florida** took on number-four **Tennessee**, and they ended up winning by 30 points. Even though **Florida** lost in a later rematch, the first game shows that they indeed have the capacity to demolish a highly-ranked team such as **Tennessee**. **Florida** also played number-one **Auburn** in February, beating them by nine points.

What makes this team so special? One of the primary reasons for their success is their shooting ability, as eight players on **Florida**'s team have a three-point percentage of 30% or higher.

Every year, a few unexpected teams make a run in the NCAA tournament. This year is no different, and even though they are not entirely underdogs, I believe **Missouri** (15) and **Kentucky** (19) can make runs to at least the Elite 8 and maybe even further. The true underdog of the tournament is **Vanderbilt**.

Known for having the worst SEC sports, I believe **Vanderbilt** can shake this reputation in this year's tournament. Their 20-10 record may not be as impressive as the other powerhouses in their division, but they have beaten many top-25 schools, including **Tennessee**, **Missouri**, and **Kentucky**.

Vanderbilt's biggest problem is their second-half play. In every game that I have watched, they are able to compete with the other team in the first half, but they fall apart as soon as the second half begins. If **Vanderbilt** is able to fix their second-half play issue, then they may have a decent shot to win big in the tournament.

This year's March Madness is setting up to be a remarkable one, as the teams are loaded with great players and the matchups should be great. Make sure to watch every second of play while you can because after this, the plague of boredom will kickstart again and leave sports fans bored until fall.

Pennies become too expensive for America



By John Cook ('26)
STAFF WRITER

Money makes the world go round. From grocery shopping to school tuition, it's virtually everywhere. In U.S. history alone, there have been countless debates about how money should be handled, by both the consumer and the government.

Nowadays, cash is not as widely used, with many people opting to use credit or debit cards for most of their purchases. However it still remains a big part of transactions nationwide. To keep enough money in circulation, the U.S. Mint presses new coins every year. This is where the problem starts.

For years, the materials needed to mint a penny have cost more than the penny itself. It has come to an all-time high this past year, and according to the U.S. Mint, it costs 3.69 cents to get one penny minted into circulation. This has led to the government losing 85.3 million dollars in just 2024 alone.

Early efforts to save money have included lowering the number of pennies

minted, with 2023 and subsequently 2024 having the fewest number of minted pennies since 2012. This method has had some success, with the overall money loss being reduced by 7.7 million dollars since 2022. President Donald Trump has had some even more extreme ideas on saving money. Recently, he announced that he has told the U.S. Treasury to stop the mintage of the penny.

While this looks like it would save government money, another problem comes to the forefront: nickels. While



pennies lose 2.67 cents per coin, nickels are a lot worse at 8.78 cents each. While this is usually mitigated by minting fewer nickels, if pennies are discontinued, more nickels will need to be minted in order to keep enough for circulation.

However, whether the penny stays or not, the U.S. budget will barely change. While tens of millions of dollars is a lot, minting pennies constitutes only one-millionth of the total U.S. budget of 6.75 trillion dollars. If nickels become the new norm, that

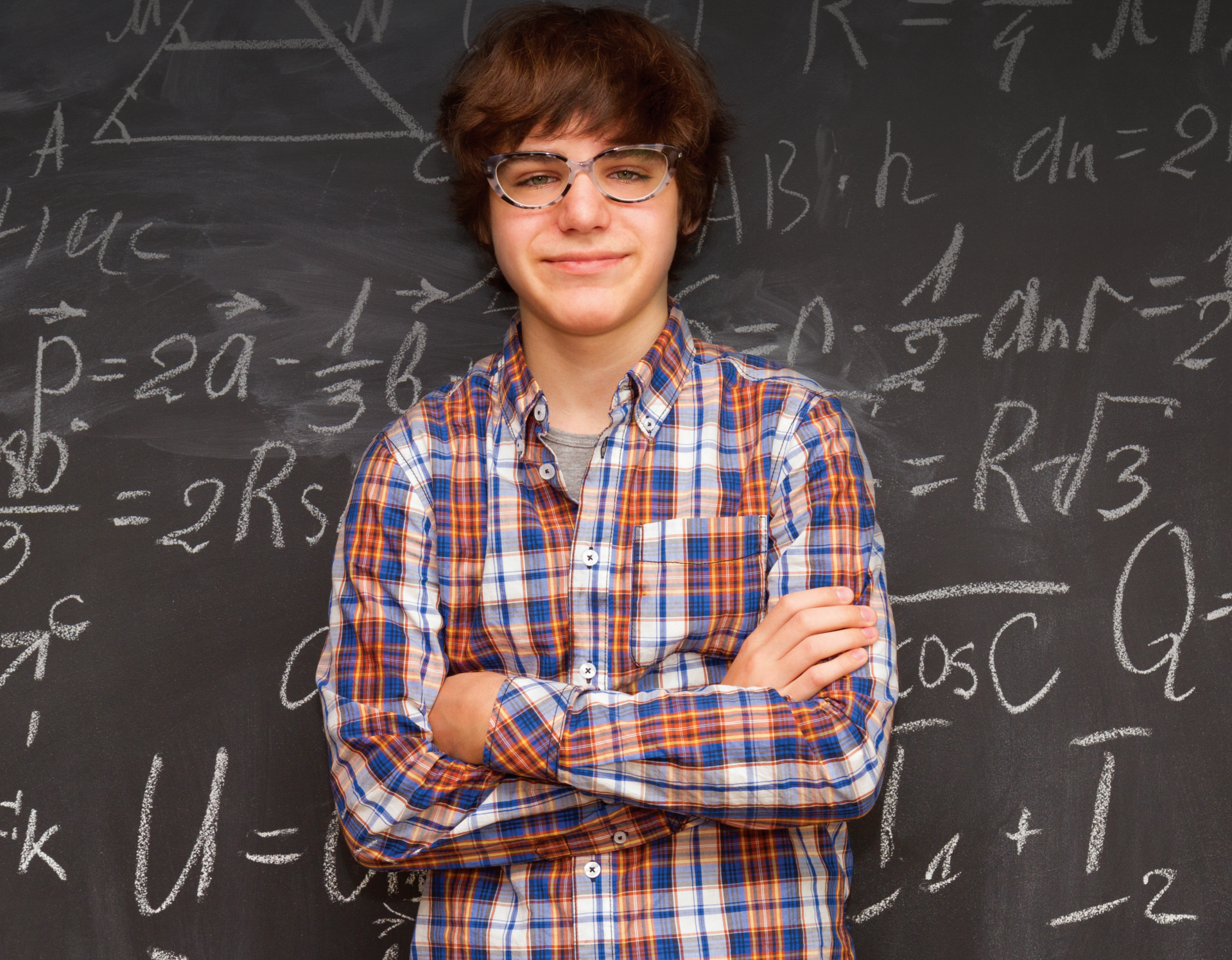
fraction will increase, but again not to a detrimental level. Overall, this change will affect the consumer more than anything.

When Canada banned its penny in 2012, the solution across the country was to round every transaction to the nearest five cents. This was calculated to be unnoticeable to the everyday consumer, and actually helped to speed up checkout lines. Because the change was rounded, cashiers could use fewer coins overall and save a couple of seconds per transaction.

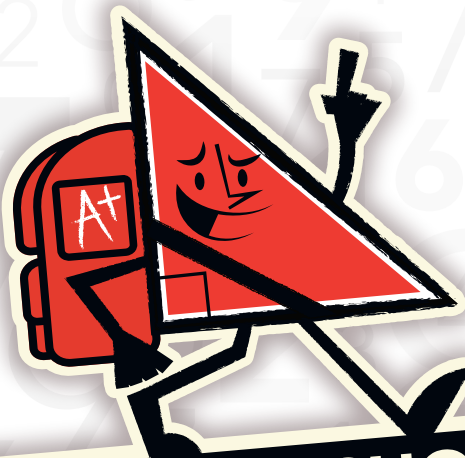
This has also proven to be helpful to growing businesses as well. Employees could spend less time counting change and focus on more important tasks. It is also easier for employees to count in fives, so there will be less chance for a mixup.

Even if pennies are taken out of circulation, it is likely that they will not be gone for good. The U.S. Mint makes celebrational coins for many occasions, so even if there is not a yearly version, the penny could stick around in one form or another.

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Ten dubious ways to “earn” a varsity letter



By Benjamin Nault ('26)
EDITOR

Varsity letters have been around since ye olden times. There are so many great stories of Saintsmen that have rightfully earned varsity letters. Some Saintsmen, however, went through the black markets and underground scene to scavenge theirs (such as those listed under “Editorial Staff” just below). We are here to expose these fraudulent, pretentious, ostentatious fools who think they can get away with their letter-earning misdemeanors. If you don’t play a varsity sport, the subsequent list is a viable way to tip-toe your way around the system.

The Augustinian recognizes that all allowed ways of earning varsity letters are legitimate, as long as the top dog, Mrs. Oliwa, gives the okay.

1) Helping Coach Casey move a box

Everybody knows that if you give a mouse a cookie, then it will ask for a glass of milk. If you give a Casey some help moving boxes or cleaning up after football games, however, you get a letter. It’s as simple as that.

2) Making your own

We’ve heard that it’s really easy to make a fabric letter. All you need are scissors, fabric, a tiny bit of God-given talent for crafts, and you’re good. You could also always ask Mr. Secrest to draw you one, and bring it to your local tailor to get your 1:1 replica of a letterman jacket.

3) “Asking” for one

Now, we do not condone robbery of any kind. With this being said, have you ever noticed how Coach Linville just keeps some sample jackets in his office?



These schmucks obviously didn't deserve their letters. Mr. Vladimir Bachynsky

Prime real estate. Of course, you will have to be very kind in “asking” him for permission to “borrow” one, but we Saintsmen are naturally charming and kind individuals. Who could say no to us, right?

4) Talking to an OLP girl

A challenge for “men” across time, talking to a girl remains one of the biggest feats one can accomplish. When you’re talking to a girl, often a pit-like group of friends form nearby encouraging you. You know where else there is a pit? Varsity sporting events. Clearly, the hunt is the most prestigious varsity event, and hence it is truly a disappointment we haven’t gotten a letter for this one yet.

5) Write for The Augustinian

We will give you a letter.

6) Creating world peace

Though not as difficult as ringing a

bell or talking to a girl, this one might take a bit of prep. We editors may be able to wing the SAT and get a 1640, but you, my friend, can not wing the solution to world hunger and succeed. At least we don’t think so. We don’t know, we’ll try this one out on Saturday and report back with our findings.

7) eSPORTS

Passionate and determined to fight on behalf of this “prestigious and challenging art,” retired varsity *Super Smash Brothers* player Enzo Simon said, “eSports is a sport. It has the word ‘sport’ in it. Can’t get any clearer than that, you degenerates.” Still, we’re not so convinced. This is also coming from the guy who broke his wrist doing theater, so we don’t think he would be the top reference for athletic prowess.

8) Academic letter

Now, we’re not saying that being an

absolute academic stud is nerdy. Ok, maybe it is. But hey, we all have a letter for academics (and other things), so we can make fun of our own people. All you need to do is keep a 5.32 GPA through a bajillion semesters of school, and half of freshman year doesn’t even count. Not too difficult guys, come on. Although, some do feel like the collar feels quite weird with only one pin on it, so some (*cough* Benjamin Nault *cough*) delegated the role of keeping it company to their trusty Mega Charizard-X pin. Fly high, little guy.

9) Dream of varsity sports

For those of you who don’t play a sport (which, for those of you still reading I assume is the case), all high level coaches will rant on and on about getting mental reps and visualizing the play at hand. If mental reps are so important to a varsity athlete, then surely you who never leave the field, even in your sleep, should’ve earned a letter for your rigorous work by now.

10) Tutor for Mr. Isaak

Mr. Isaak’s math peer tutoring is probably the most opportune place to earn your letter. Just show up, yell at some little rat for doing their basic derivatives wrong, or worse, not knowing how to factor, then leave.

As you can see, Saintsmen, there are many different ways to earn your letter. Some are fair, and some are very much cheating the system. Some I couldn’t even place on this list, as they are simply so ridiculous no one would ever attempt them. For example, trying to play a varsity sport. What a sham that whole fiasco is. Whatever your passion is, there’s a varsity letter out there for you. Just don’t get arrested in the process.

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SPORTS

continued from page 1

Our boys put up the ultimate fight in state, losing by one point in the second round to the number-one seed Polytechnic High. Nevertheless, it’s been an incredible season, with more to come next winter.

Soccer

In soccer, Saints became CIF Open Division champs not once, not twice, but three times in a row! Coach Johnston had great things to say about his team’s performance this season, noting how it was “the standards that the players held on each other” that got them to the level they’re at today.

Senior captain and Western Player of the Year Emiliano Postlethwaite scored the game tying goal in the CIF final against Del Norte, along with the first PK that would eventually lead them to victory.

The boys got all the way to the semifinals for state playoffs, an incredible achievement that Saints soccer should be proud of. Even with so many seniors graduating this year, Coach Johnston plans to keep the standards high and

the training harder for next year’s team. He can’t wait to see another banner hang in the gym.

Wrestling

It was cauliflower ear season as our boys placed 3rd in CIF D3 wrestling. Georges Daniel had a great season and great memories, sharing how his favorite memory this season was when after a match, Georges told his frustrated and salty opponent (who was still trying to fight Georges) “I’ll pray for you bro, don’t worry,” showing the true heart of a Saintsman. Georges said maintaining weight throughout the season was like “fighting a grizzly bear with a toothpick,” which sounds extremely difficult.

Amongst the names of prominent figures on the wrestling team, Coach Evan’s was mentioned the most. He was “a great supporter during the season and the off-season,” who came to all dual meets and watched individual matches of players on the team. Great job to the wrestling team, we can’t wait to see what great achievements next year holds.



Juniors Jaden Bailes and Carson Prah clutching up in the championships.

Mr. Matt Haniger

Rugby

Saints rugby slammed through the season, having some incredible wins and close games against some of the best programs in the nation. Junior captain Jameson Brown and senior vice captain Caelyb Aguirre led the team to dominant performances against Mission Vista, Mira Costa, Patrick Henry, and especially Fallbrook for senior night.

Saints absolutely blew out Fallbrook in the classiest of ways, earning its spot as Coach Raines’s most memorable moment. An emotional game that was a perfect way to send the seniors off to college, “leaving that jersey full with honor,” Coach Raines said. The blend between tactics and love for the sport is what drove this rugby team down the field and is the most necessary combo for success.