



Despite Pandemic, Adopt-a-family drive is success

BY PETER JAMES
REPORTER

Despite the obstacles and changes brought about by Covid, SLUH's Adopt-A-Family Drive continued its annual success.

SLUH partnered with St. Francis Community Services Southside Adopt-A-Family Program to help families in need and to bring the spirit of Christmas. The Adopt-A-Family Drive allows students and their parents to "adopt" St. Francis families and families in the SLUH community by providing them with clothing, coats, toys, household essentials like toilet paper, and gift cards for groceries, gas, and department stores. The drive's collection lasted from Monday Dec. 7 to Friday Dec. 11.

"It was very successful considering all of the changes we made for this year and considering the great needs that families are in," said Campus Minister Simonie Anzalone. "We just had so many generous folks participate, we know right now

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After months of waiting, SLUH's full return becomes reality

BY CARTER J. FORTMAN
EDITOR IN CHIEF

Following a delay from the originally-planned date of Nov. 30 because of November's Covid spike, St. Louis U. High will return to full capacity beginning Monday, Jan. 11.

Students will be distanced anywhere from three to six feet apart at all times, a reduction from the current six feet distance. The change was brought about after the school observed other schools being able to safely return to full capacity with three feet of distance. Teachers will still be required to maintain six feet of distance between each other.

"The risks for high school students are very, very low," said President Alan Carruthers. "And it really affects those with complicated immune systems,

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many of whom are currently taking fully virtual and will still have that option. So in the end, I think that the social distancing is really the most important for the adults in the building."

The decision to come back was made because of the very low numbers of students and faculty that are either in quarantine or fighting the virus just two weeks after Thanksgiving. School leaders were surprised to find that Thanksgiving, while it produced many quarantines, did not result in a large spike in cases. According to Carruthers, the school is confident that their safety measures are working.

In order to put some time in between potential exposures and the return to campus, the school announced that classes

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Faculty reflects on cherished Christmas memories



photo | Lynne Casey

A young Lynne Casey (left) and her sister visit Santa

BY SAM TARTER
FEATURES EDITOR

As the Christmas holiday approaches, and as the 2020 year comes to a close, the Prep News wanted to share some positive and heartwarming stories about the teachers at SLUH, and their favorite Christmas memories.

John Kavanaugh

One Christmas, my dad Tom Kavanaugh (SLUH '68) and uncle John Kavanaugh SJ (SLUH '59) conspired to amaze me and my siblings (younger sister Jenny and younger brother Tommy) by making it appear that our dad literally pulled a 7-foot balsam spruce tree out of his

pocket!

That year, we did not have a tree yet, and it was Christmas Eve. After an evening late lunch of deli meats and crackers at our Grandma Julia's house followed by a gift exchange, and after the excitement of a full holiday table spread, late dinner, and raucous mayhem with our cousins in the basement at my Great Aunt Kay Connally's house, our parents brought us kids home around 9 or 10 p.m.

Uncle John had hidden himself and the tree somewhere (perhaps stowed in the side yard). Our mom, in on the fun, sat us down in our front room and told us our dad had a surprise for us.

Sleepy-eyed and nearly ready for bed, we were nevertheless definitely game for one last Christmas Eve gift. We were very young; all of us under ten, but attentively watching the front door mesmerized by the mystery. What could it be? Apparently my dad helped my uncle into position with the tree outside our closed front door, and then my uncle retreated to the base of the tree down the front porch steps and out of sight. Suddenly the door flung open, with our dad grinning mischievously in the doorway.

"I have a special surprise for you," he intoned.

He looked down, and with a magician's flair, reached into his coat pocket. We peered, squinted, and careened our necks to see what might be in his pocket. What was it?!!

Then, miraculously, the very tip of a massive tree began to emerge, it would appear, from beneath his arm, out of his pocket! He began pulling (the base of the tree being held and thrust forward by Uncle John unbeknownst to us) and pulling and PULLING!...until the

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Admin. rolls out with Exam schedule

BY LUKE DUFFY AND
JOHN POSEY
STAFF, REPORTER

After much suspense over what the end of the semester would bring, the exam schedule has been released and presents a few changes from previous years. Semester exams will take place in-person on Thursday, Dec. 17; Friday, Dec. 18; and Monday, Dec. 21. A detailed exam schedule has been emailed to all students by Assistant Principal for Academics Tom Becvar and shows where students will go for their exams based on class, teacher, period, and cohort.

When interpreting the exam schedule, students should keep in mind a few factors. Firstly, unless an exam is given in the Commons, it will be separated by cohort. All

students will be on campus, they will just be taking exams with members of their own cohort. This change has been implemented to maintain social distancing with a greater number of students on campus.

"It's not going to be any different from what we're doing on a regular school day right now," Becvar said regarding social distancing.

Another difference about this year's exam schedule is that it contains far fewer classes than in previous years. Given the circumstances, many teachers are giving exams ahead of time, whether that's in the form of a Canvas quiz or an essay. It is recommended that students clarify what their exam will be if there is not a

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Commentary: What are we celebrating? Remember Christmas Roots

JACK FIGGE
CORE STAFF

Walking through the streets of my neighborhood at night with my dog, I witness the spectacle of Christmas decorations my neighbors have put on display. I am always amazed by the creative decorations that adorn my neighborhood, from a ten foot Olaf the Snowman blow up to flamingos decked out in Santa hats. However, one common decoration that I feel I see fewer and fewer of is the nativity scene, leading me to ask myself: Have we lost the true meaning of Christmas

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Band performs to virtual audience in two shows

BY NICK CAMPBELL AND
ANGAD GOTHRA
REPORTERS

As the Covid pandemic continues to make group gathering even more difficult to orchestrate, band director Jeff Pottinger and the rest of the SLUH band have found new ways to come together and make music during the Concert Band's Christmas performance on Dec. 8, as well as the Jazz concert on Dec. 15.

Unlike past years, where family, staff, and other students filled the Schulte Theatre and Si Commons, Pottinger and the rest of the band faculty were forced to make multiple changes in regards to attendance.

"Our first question was 'what about the audience?'" said Pottinger. "There are a lot of things to figure out, like how many

could come? Who should be allowed to be here? and how are they going to be interacting with each other?"

At first, Pottinger, Jazz Band 2 director Joe Koestner, and percussion lead Micheal Faris were hoping to host a scaled-down concert in the Si Commons for parents only, where guests could be seated at a table already partitioned with plexiglass. Unfortunately,

a spike in regional Covid cases forced the school to reconsider.

"As everything spiked after Thanksgiving break, several of us just felt it was irresponsible to try to bring that many people in at once," recalled Pottinger, who then made the decision to stream the event instead. "We chose to send out a Zoom link to allow

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photo | Carter J. Fortman

Students play for a virtual audience

Harrold embraces African heritage through Kwanzaa celebration

BY ROARKE UNRAU
REPORTER

Around the holidays, most SLUH students are looking forward to finishing exams and getting into the Christmas spirit. But senior Albert Harrold will be changing things up this year by celebrating Kwanzaa as well as Christmas. Kwanzaa, invented in 1966 by Dr. Maulana Karenga, often doesn't get the spotlight during Christmas time. It was originally invented as a way to bring African Americans together during a time of hardship.

As a holiday, Kwanzaa is celebrated globally by people of all races. It is a seven-day holiday that starts Saturday, Dec. 26 and ends Friday, Jan. 1.

Kwanzaa, just like Hanukkah, has a special candle holder that holds seven candles. One is lit every day. But this is where the similarities begin and end. By the end of Kwanzaa, there will be three red candles on the left, three green candles on the right, and one black candle in the middle. The candles each represent something. The black candles represent the people themselves, the red candles represent the struggles or bloodshed in the past, and the green candles represent the earth and the future.

"Kwanzaa is mostly celebrated in America, but it is celebrated in other parts of the world. It is really a holiday for the African diaspora. But it is mostly celebrated in America by African Americans. It is celebrated throughout the world, and black people aren't the only people who celebrate it," said Harrold. "It can be ob-

served just like how the Chinese New Year is observed by people who are not Chinese. Or how Cinco de Mayo is observed by people who are not Mexican."

"The seven days and candles of Kwanzaa represent seven principles of Kwanzaa," said Harrold. "Umoja is the day of unity. This is the first day. A day of unity of family, community, nation, and race. Kujichagulia is the day of self determination and being responsible for your own conduct and behavior. Ujima, which is the third day, is a day of collective work and responsibility, working to help each other and the community. Ujamaa is a day of cooperative economics and is working to build shops and businesses. Working to build black businesses, and working to increase the economic hold black people have because it is really low. Next we have Nia, and the purpose of this day will be remembering and restoring African and African American culture, customs, and history. Kuumba is the day of creativity, using creativity and your own imagination to make communities better. Imani is the final day of Kwanzaa, it is the day of faith, believing in people, families, leaders, teachers, and the righteousness of the African American struggle."

For Harrold, Kwanzaa is not only just a holiday, but more a time of coming together and sharing African and African american heritage with others. But mainly, it's about family.

"The holiday is all about unity and family and coming together and learning about

our African heritage and our African American roots and our African American heritage. Really just coming together in a common heritage despite everything," said Harrold. "And this is really important to me during this time because we are in a pandemic and a lot of times it's easy to forget what we're doing and it's easy to lose sight of our goals. For me, family has always been something that I could come back to and some people that I could always rely on."

Harrold first learned about Kwanzaa from his mother at a young age. As a child, he celebrated Kwanzaa every year. And he is now looking forward to celebrating it once again as a family now that he is older and knows more about the holiday.

"My family celebrated Kwanzaa when I was very, very young. They did this on my mom's side. They would celebrate at a different person's house for each of the seven days, and just come together as a family," said Harrold. "This will be our first time as a family, including our grandparents who will be joining us, celebrating Kwanzaa all together. I am actually really excited and really happy to be doing this."

Only a few days away, Harrold, who is leading his family's observation of the holiday, still has a lot of preparation left in order to be ready for Kwanzaa when it arrives. Whether it's learning the different Kwanzaa customary words and phrases, or just gathering the proper materials needed.

"I've started my prep by one: studying the different



art | Albert Harrold

Swahili words and what they mean. And two: getting my family organized and locating where we can buy these materials from black owned businesses," said Harrold. "And also it's important to know that I'm stepping up and really doing the organizing for my family and planning."

For Harrold, it's important

to know that Kwanzaa is not just a normal holiday, but runs deeper for African Americans and Africans alike. It is a way to celebrate African American culture in America, and above all, being comfortable as yourself while celebrating it.

"This holiday is actually extremely important to me. Especially as a Black boy in

America, a country that historically has tried to erase my ancestry and take everything that made me African away from me," said Harrold. "This is just a way to stand back and be proud of who I am and be resilient, and despite all of that still be proud to be Black. Black and proud."

PN 85 Editorial Policy

The Volume 85 *Prep News* opinion section serves the purpose of being the vehicle of the personal opinions of students, faculty, or others. All topics discussed in the section will be related to St. Louis University High School.

Nothing published either as an editorial or as a letter to an editor should be considered the opinion of the school, the administration, or anyone other than its author or authors.

A *Prep News* editorial is the opinion of all seven editors on a particular topic.

A commentary or column is an opinion of one member of the *Prep News* staff, not of the *Prep News* itself.

A perspective or notebook, like a commentary, is the opinion of one person, often a *Prep News* staff member.

Unlike a commentary, such a piece is often intended primarily to convey a personal experience rather than to provide a viewpoint on an issue. Unlike a letter, such pieces are usually developed at the request of, and sometimes under the guidance of, the *Prep News* editors.

Every member of the SLUH community is welcomed and encouraged to submit a letter to the editors.

Every letter received by the editors will be read and given consideration. All letters must be signed, but the author's name may be withheld from publication by request and at the discretion of the editors.

The *Prep News* editors reserve the right to edit any submissions for publication in order to meet grammatical standards, but they will not skew the author's original intent. Also, the editors reserve the right to withhold from publication any submission if it is deemed vulgar, tasteless, or otherwise inappropriate. Authors should be available for the editors to contact them before publication to address matters of concern.

All authors wishing to have letters published must submit them by 4:00 p.m. the Wednesday before the letter is to be published.

Letters should be emailed to prepnews@sluh.org, and, if possible, a signed copy should be given to a *Prep News* editors or moderator or mailed to the *Prep News* courtesy of St. Louis University High School, 4970 Oakland, St. Louis, MO 63110.

PN 85 Policy and Platform

As the student-run newspaper of St. Louis University High School, the *Prep News* is a weekly publication that strives to inform the SLUH community about events and people, with its focus on those pertaining to the school, primarily through the written word.

The *Prep News* is neither the voice of the administration nor the students. Rather, the newspaper serves to gather and distribute information for the entire school. The *Prep News* editors and staff members make every effort to be objective in their news coverage and editing.

The members of the editorial staff are co-workers and share equally the duties of writing, copy-editing, layout, and staff management. All of the editors

share responsibility and leadership of the paper. The editors are supported by a core staff of regular reporters as well as artists and photographers.

It is the role of the editors to seek out and facilitate the reporting of all significant news at SLUH. While any faculty member or student is welcome to submit suggestions to the editors for potential articles, the *Prep News* is never obligated to publish any article idea.

Our primary emphasis as editors of the *Prep News* is upon clear and accurate writing and careful editing. We also attempt to include visual expression—photography, drawing, technical aids, etc.—in every issue and on our website. Despite our desire to make the paper visually ap-

pealing, we commit ourselves not to allow form to supersede substance.

The editorial staff will use social media to communicate with the paper's readership and to update students about SLUH events and highlight the paper's content, mainly in the form of Twitter. The editors will not allow their goal of speed and accessibility online to weaken their commitment to accuracy and depth.

The *Prep News* strongly encourages underclassman involvement, and our office on the second floor of the Jesuit Wing, room J220, is always open for involvement, criticism, praise, or suggestions. Contributed student opinions are also welcome under the *Prep News* Editorial

Policy. Without student reaction and feedback, the *Prep News* could not function.

If the *Prep News* is inaccurate, we will correct any significant error in the following issue and on our web site as soon as possible.

Furthermore, the editors assume sole responsibility for the text of news and sports articles, features, and editorials. We ask faculty or students who take issue with the manner in which the news was reported or find an error to bring it to the attention of the editors, not the individual reporters.

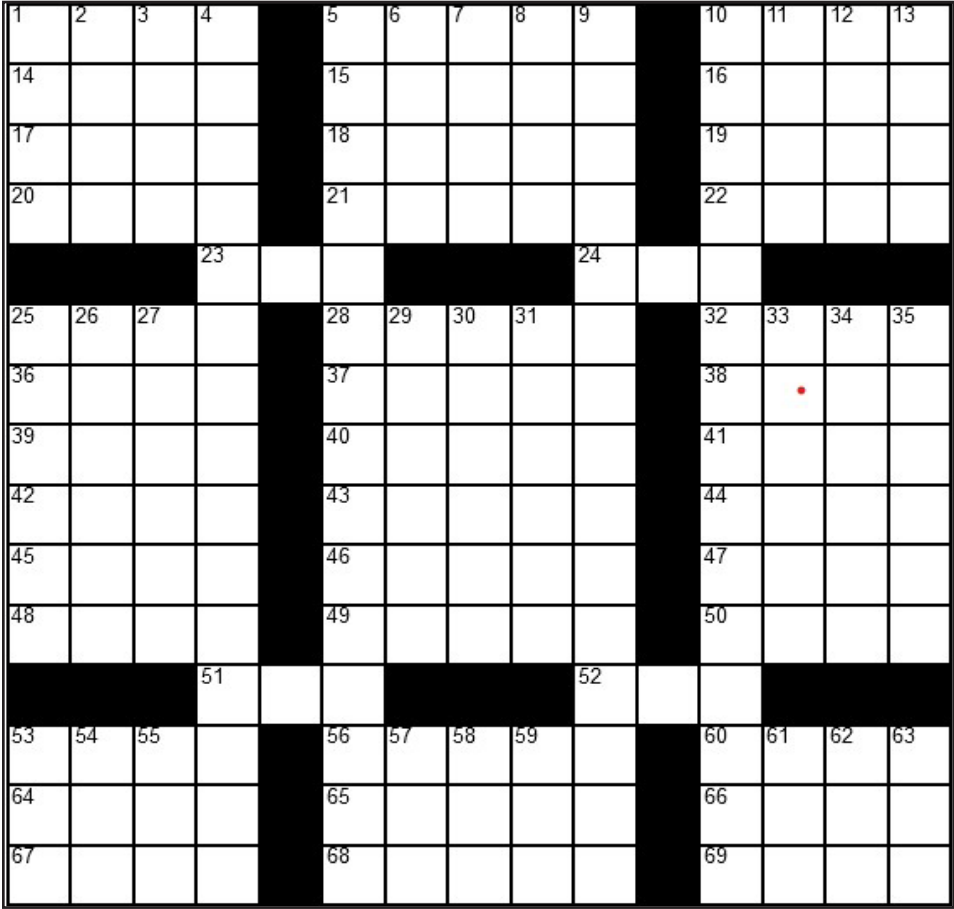
This is the platform of the editors of Volume 83 of the *Prep News*.

STL Metro District 8 Honor Orchestra

Congratulations
to Justin Glass 14th chair Violin 1,
Thomas Nguyen 13th chair Violin 2,
Alex Unseth 1st chair Cello.
Over 130 students auditioned, so
congrats!



PN “IVO100” Puzzle



ACROSS
1. *Nervous
5. *63-Down or USA, e.g.
10. *How clarinet or saxophone is played
14. Kind of exam or hygiene
15. What happens when you win, usually
16. Henry Jones, Jr., commonly
17. Origami step
18. Milton Bradley left the ladders but replaced each snake with one of these
19. Young picked early in the 2018 NBA draft
20. Recessed area of a church
21. Ask for money
22. Attention-getters

23. Pooh's smallest friend
24. "One if by land, two if by _____"
25. One way to be rolling (abbr.)
28. Blues superfan Anderson
32. * Ψ Ξ Ξ or ψ ξ ξ (those are Greek capital letters)
36. *Extra sign at an intersection with multiple red ones
37. *When an early riser might rise
38. U.N. body that suggests reducing greenhouse gases
39. What a whitesmith works with
40. Descriptor for Sophia Petrillo or Edna Mode
41. Mother Earth and creator of the universe in Greek mythology
42. Empire of The Emperor's New Groove
43. This puzzle's gridlines relate to the asterisked clues but are also found in this
44. 655, to Caesar
45. Medieval weapon with one heavy head
46. Brazilian jeans company
47. Swiss furniture company
48. Former SLUH President David Laughlin is this sort of teacher
49. Sodium chloride is this type of compound
50. Fast fliers out of service since 2003
51. Honda Pilot or Ford Explorer, e.g.

52. Pinocchio's nose knows
53. *King cobras and black mambas do this
56. *This puzzle's gridlines also represent units important to someone who says "____ much."
60. *Neon is this type of gas
64. In one's birthday suit
65. Opera showstoppers
66. Fencing move that's not common in lightsaber battles
67. _____ to growth
68. Investigations of the interactions of multiple components (abbr.)
69. Longer than eras, longer than epochs

DOWN
1. * _____ kind, meaning unique
2. Word repeated between rain and top in Bad and Boujee
3. "It really is good, guys. And _____" - Ted Drewes
4. Willy Loman and Stanley Hudson, e.g.
5. Minutiae about Santa
6. Grades 1-12
7. *Rally that occurs late in an inning
8. Followers of Q
9. Has actress Poehler work until the end of the night
10. Having trichinosis
11. Heading on a memo that indicates the subject
12. *Weekend with Friday or Monday off

13. Colorings for eggs or T-shirts
25. *Ahead _____, meaning more appropriate for the future
26. Medieval weapon with two curved blades
27. A water bottle with a blade to propel mist
29. How Horton hollers
30. *"_____ further than others, it is by standing on the shoulders of giants." - Isaac Newton
31. Disc golf disc named after Dr. Evil's weapon of choice
33. *These are seen with people who have a lot of belly fat ... or none
34. A chip off the cold block
35. Impressive late 20th-century sports cars that were never mass-produced
53. If you forget to say this, you draw two cards
54. *The Uncola
55. _____ to Joy, Beethoven piece based on a poem
57. A rhyme that expresses dry humor
58. * _____ Enough, 1970's TV show about a large family
59. Skull for a scow
61. * _____ 5, typical working hours and a 1980 movie with a catchy theme song
62. Did XC
63. Longtime home of the Braves, now just playoff baseball

crossword | Paul Baudenistel

20 pieces of Christmas Advice for SLUH Students this year

With the approaching holiday season, the Christmas veterans of the *Prep News* have decided to supply you with some of the best advice we have to help you fully embrace the festive spirit.

1. Why wait till next year to re-gift? Just do it now!
2. Tell people how thankful you REALLY are.
3. Remember your priorities! 1) Presents 2) Presence
4. Practice your solidarity! Give grandma's bad food to the dog
5. This is the year! Invite the WHOLE family, even those cousins who you haven't seen since first grade.
6. Now's the perfect time to go for a swim and get a sweet lake tan!
7. It is Jesus's birthday! Go out and party!
8. Don't forget about the most important gift! Receipts!
9. Make sure to survey the room on who really won the election.
10. There's nothing like sitting down on the couch and getting cozy to watch the best Christmas movie *Over the Hedge*.
11. Why get on the ladder and put up Christmas lights when you can make your 50-year-old dad do it for you?
12. Tired of the old caroling song, try some Death Metal Christmas songs

13. Pig out on some Christmas ham and then get out your old Wii set and ham out to some Guitar Hero while everyone's asleep.
14. A conversation with your family of the most recent Covid-19 testing can be a *positive* experience.
15. Take the time to sit down with your younger relatives to explain how Santa fundamentally defies the laws of physics. Like his average velocity would have to be several thousand meters per second, and he has to be breaking Newton's laws of motion with how quickly he'd have to accelerate.
16. Want Santa to get out of your house? Drop some laxatives in the milk. He'll really be running then!
17. Why cook a Christmas dinner when you can just reheat Thanksgiving leftovers? Who cares if they have a little mold on them?
18. Nothing quite says Christmas like a nice bonfire. Try burning your siblings' presents for fuel!
19. Don't use Christmas lights to decorate your Christmas tree. Use all the extra toilet paper that you have hoarded up from March's shutdown.
20. Buy out all the Christmas gifts this season, and then sell them for a higher price. PROFIT!! That is the real meaning of the season.

Santa contracts virus; appoints Schulte as replacement

BY JACK FIGGE
CORE STAFF

After being forced to quarantine, jolly old Santa Claus appointed SLUH's semi-professional look alike, Mr. Dan Schulte to temporarily fulfill his holiday duties this year. On Tuesday, Dec. 15, sources confirmed that Santa Claus contracted the novel

coronavirus after attending an elf rager last Friday night in his workshop, reportedly having shaken his Santa Claus thang all night with more than 200 elves and several reindeer. Forced to quarantine for two weeks, Santa called on Schulte to bring holiday cheer to all the good little boys and girls. "Schulte was an obvious choice," said Santa in a Zoom

interview from the North Pole. "You know he has that defining characteristic of a big belly which sort of jiggles like jelly. That just sealed the deal." Schulte will be tasked with delivering presents to all of the good little boys and girls this year, a job that he looks forward to. "Over the past two years I have begun to sort of—key

word, sort of—develop a fondness for children," said Schulte as he loosened his belt a notch in order to accommodate the major consumption of cookies he will endure on Christmas eve. "I still don't really like them, but hey when the big guy (Saint Nick) calls you up, you can't turn him down." Schulte however isn't looking forward to making kids'

Christmas merry; instead, he is ecstatic about the chance to deliver JUGS to millions of naughty kids around the world. "Yeah coal was old-fashioned," said Schulte with a twinkle in his eye. "Santa's punishment system for naughty kids needed a revamp so I was like, 'Perfect, I deal with naughty kids on a daily basis, I'll just use the system that

I know works at SLUH, the JUG."

Upon learning of Schulte's appointment, many students of St. Louis U. High flooded social media outlets warning kids to not expect presents this year, just JUGS.

Seeking positivity in 2020, finding the good in a year full of grief

BY NOAH APPRILL-SOKOL
AND JACOB SPROCK
NEWS EDITORS

English poet John Milton once used the term ‘silver lining’ to describe the way the sun’s light reflected off of a darkened storm cloud, choosing to see God even in the scariest of places—in this case, a looming storm.

This year has been quite a storm. A pandemic has overtaken the U.S. and has resulted in over 300,000 deaths. Riots have broken out all across the nation over the killings of George Floyd and Breonna Taylor. A polarizing presidential election has shaken the country and brought with it a surge of animosity for the ‘other side’ of the aisle. It is understandably very difficult to see the good from the past twelve months.

Yet, in the midst of endless adversity and constant difficulties, the SLUH community has prevailed, continuing to search for the silver linings and make the best of even the darkest situations.

The *Prep News* looks at five different aspects of the school—Campus Ministry, the Fine Arts Department, the freshman class, SLUH’s clubs, and the administration—to highlight some of the many rays of light that have emerged from this bleak year.

Campus Ministry brings about spiritual consolation

SLUH Campus Ministry’s response to both the pandemic and the lack of spiritual opportunities shows how anything is possible in a pandemic. Despite the logistical chal-

lenges posed by 2020, Campus Ministry was able to navigate many obstacles to bring about a greater sense of hope in the SLUH community.

“I think our attitude from the beginning has just been: let’s find a way,” said Director of Campus Ministry Joseph Hill S.J.. “Now we have not been able to do everything, but for most things, we were able to find a way.”

The Mass of the Holy Spirit was the first all-school Mass of the year and came at a time when Campus Ministry was unsure how all-school Masses would work in a pandemic setting. It also featured the new Jesuit provincial and the final vows of SLUH’s principal Ian Gibbons S.J.

“The situation wasn’t ideal,” said Hill. “But I think it was a way to reunite the community after obviously a long time apart, and to ask the Holy Spirit to bless our year.”

While retreats might seem unfeasible during the pandemic, Campus Ministry has done extra to maintain a safe and spiritual atmosphere. Campus Ministry has had five retreats this year, all of which had positive reviews.

“I saw Francis Alfred a week after the retreat and he said, ‘This is the best retreat I’ve ever been on,’” said Hill, who attended the Junior Retreat over Thanksgiving break. “I know that Kairos with the seniors was also a great moment for a lot of those seniors. Retreats are so important. They’re essential to our formation program, and we just weren’t going to let them go.”

One new event that Campus Ministry has hosted this

year has been the Food, Faith, Formation gatherings (FFF). These monthly gatherings are fun ways for students to gather together safely during the pandemic in order to pray and meditate, as well as, play and eat food with friends.

“It was a great way to bring the whole school together and bond,” said Junior Alex Mitendorf. “I have really missed seeing people during the pandemic, but this has been a fun and safe way for me to interact with people.”

For Campus Ministry, being resilient and finding joy in the small successes has been vital to maintaining a positive outlook and staying hopeful in this crazy year.

“Resilience is that you just keep going. You take the hits but you don’t give up. Every single program is the story of how we got it all the way through to the end,” said Hill. “We’re not at the top of Mount Everest, but the fact that we’re standing at the top of something is a great accomplishment.”

Fine Arts spreads joy through their talents

In our Danis Lobby, written on a crest ingrained on the floor, are the words “Religion et Benis Artibus”, which translates to “For Religion and the Good Arts”. It’s a motto SLUH displays proudly, and it’s one that SLUH has been faithful to even in the pandemic as fine arts teachers flex their creative muscles to work around the difficulties imposed by the pandemic.

“I’ve always believed that a good teacher has to be reflective and willing to change if

things aren’t working in the classroom. This year has really put that to the test,” said choir director Addie Akin.

Akin, normally someone who creates and sticks to a rigid schedule, has found that she now has time to interact more with her students beyond the usual choral instruction.

“While I’m proud of my level of organization, at times it can be a hindrance. I’m so tied to that schedule, that I can’t pause to answer a student’s somewhat off-topic yet important question,” said Akin. “This year has afforded me TIME to do that. It has forced me to slow down and focus more on my students as people.”

For Akin, the students are a big part of why she has been able to persevere and make a class that’s still enjoyable and interactive.

“Honestly, it took me a while to find a groove this year. There was a definite grieving process regarding ‘normal,’” said Akin. “However, I remind myself every day how fortunate I am to have a job. How fortunate I am that my students are still able to sing. How fortunate I am to have students with a seemingly endless supply of smiles and goodwill.”

This year has been especially difficult for choir and band due to the nature of singers and woodwind/brass players to spread aerosols further than the average student, but despite the added difficulties, both programs threaded the needle and allowed students to experience music together.

For senior Michael Krausz, the whole experience has

opened his eyes to what he’s always taken for granted.

“Online we had to do playing assignments every day. And there really wasn’t as much joy in that because you’re just playing by yourself,” said Krausz. “That really makes me value playing in an ensemble a lot more, simply seeing everyone every day and talking with them in your section and things like that.”

Krausz, more than anything, feels that his experiences in the pandemic have taught him about appreciating every day and not falling into the routine of ignoring the small things.

“Things are going to get back to what we call quote unquote normal at some point. But, you know, certain things have changed,” said Krausz. “Just live every day. Live every day because you won’t know when stuff like this is gonna happen.”

Unlike the band and choir programs, whose problem was far-reaching aerosols, the dance program’s core problem was the lack of wriggle room, both literally and figuratively. With the six-foot guideline in place, dancers were confined to a personal ‘dance box’, which was taped on the floor of the dance studio.

However, undeterred by the restrictions, dance teacher Simonie Anzalone used the opportunity to focus more on the basics of dance and thought creatively to choreograph dances that were still interesting while maintaining a safe distance.

“The focus has been more on the process of learning a dance, the elements of dance,

and understanding the craft of choreography and not so much on the performance,” said Anzalone. “I’m also very grateful to the technology team for coming up with a way to project virtual students on the large screen in front of the room so that we can really feel like a community dancing together.”

For Anzalone, 2020 has shed light on what’s important and allowed her to restructure both her class and other things in her life to make sure her priorities are straight.

“For me, personally, 2020 has been a year of reprioritization—a year that has been focused on the people in my life instead of the things, wants, or desires. The opportunity is to live in the present because the future is so unpredictable,” said Anzalone.

All three programs have taken advantage of the new digital platform to perform and record virtual concerts to be edited and sent out for the SLUH community to enjoy.

At the dance concert, which took place this past Saturday, Dec. 12, Anzalone felt that the students were finally able to experience a feeling of togetherness.

“The dress rehearsal and concert recording day were one of great solidarity,” said Anzalone. “It was touching to hear that one of the highlights of that day for the freshmen was meeting their classmates in person for the first time. They noted that it was incredibly energizing to get to dance together, especially knowing that the community would appreciate and enjoy watching their recorded performance

January 3

U.S. airstrike outside of Baghdad kills second most important leader in Iran, Gen. Qassem Assem Solemani.

February 5

After becoming the third U.S. President to be impeached, Trump is acquitted in the Senate.

March 8

The first Covid case reaches St. Louis.

April 3-4

Cashbah happens online.

February 8

The first American dies of the coronavirus.

March 9

Stock market sees its worst single day point drop ever.

January 26

Basketball legend Kobe Bryant dies in helicopter crash.

February 21

The Dauphin Players premiere their final production before Covid-19, *Chicago*.

March 15

SLUH announces a fully online school until April 3.

March 26

The first online school day begins for SLUH.

April 9

SLUH announcess the rest of the 2019-20 school year will be online.

May 4

Driving of the Bills Celebraes senior’s last day.

May-July 2020

Protests erupt demanding justice for Breonna Taylor, George Floyd (who died May 25th), and Ahmaud Arbery.

January


February

March

April

May

June



ART | CHARLIE BRIG

before Christmas.”

A common sentiment among the fine arts teachers was a sense that they had grown in some way, ready to take their newfound knowledge and apply it to future classes.

“While incredibly stress inducing along the way, I’m excited to have been pushed to reimagine the dance curriculum at SLUH,” said Anzalone. “It will only make me a better teacher.”

Freshman class shines their light

Out of all the classes at SLUH this year, the freshman class has overcome the most adversity. From trying to meet new people in a hybrid schedule to tackling their rigorous course load, the freshmen have been challenged, but like Odysseus in Homer’s *Odyssey*, they have faced these difficulties head-on.

“They only saw each other in Zoom,” said Campus Minister Stephen Deves. “They had to find a couple classmates and sit at a table for lunch behind plexiglass, and it just didn’t feel like an easy way to make friends.”

Despite these initial challenges, the freshman class has bonded through Freshman Formation day, Freshman Retreat, and Direction Days. They have also come together through their classes and the clubs that they are actively involved in.

“They have found some friendships, and they have fun with each other. They’ll hang out after school, as they’re waiting for the ride,” said Deves. “It took them a while, but they seem to really be, in some sense, making the most

of it.”

While the hybrid schedule is often seen as an obstacle for unifying the freshman class, Deves sees it in a different light, believing that it allows the freshmen to develop more personal relationships with the smaller number of students they have in class.

“I really like the freshman pastoral team. It’s weird because we only have half the group at one time. But those half group meetings, they really love, and they really enjoy being there once a week and getting to be with each other. It’s become a very small group kind of community where they get to know each other, bond, and grow closer.”

Deves, who teaches Juniors for math but occasionally substitutes to teach freshmen, has noticed a difference in the energy and participation that the freshmen bring in comparison to his junior students.

“(The freshmen) are energized. They are excited to be in class. They’re excited to answer and to participate and to be with each other,” said Deves. “Those are the kinds of things that have impressed me—that they are enthusiastic even when they are struggling.”

While it is easy to be pessimistic this year, Deves and the freshman class are looking on the bright side, living each day in the moment and not allowing it to go to waste.

“I think that’s what in general this year has been about. This is our only freshman year, and we’re gonna take advantage of what we have and get to know these people in our lives at the moment,” said Deves. “It might change next year, but this is where we’re at.”

Clubs find a way

The quintessence of the “U High experience” revolves around clubs. For many students, the classroom is only half of their time at SLUH, with clubs and extracurricular activities filling the rest. While the pandemic has made the logistics of clubs difficult, the extracurriculars have persevered, many organizations thinking creatively to continue from and expand on the stuff that they have done in a normal year.

Many clubs have been able to host more speakers this year, albeit via Zoom. The Men for Life club had a mini speaker series, inviting Aimee Murphy of Rehumanize International and Jacinta Florence of Students for Life of America. The One World club was able to invite Juan Pablo Villalobos, author from SLUH’s summer reading book, and Luz Rooney from the United Nations Association. All of these speakers have brought new life and energy to these clubs.

“It was tough to get meetings off the ground this year, and speakers gave us a great chance to get attendance up and get people excited,” said senior Daniel Hogan.

Clubs were also able to take advantage of the excess time that came out of the crazy scheduling. During the Spring, the SLUH Energy team, a subset of the SLUH sustainability club, made their very own energy model of the Danis Field House. SLUH Student Media was able to take the excess time to set up their club, which has taken off this year (read the SLUH student media article on page 9).

Yet, for many clubs, just being able to meet has been a huge highlight. When being able to gather has been a luxury, clubs offer an invaluable opportunity for students to hang out.

“People are all over. We really get to actually develop connections because, since we are all hurting, we get to strengthen our bonds and people,” said Bollini. “It’s like when you break a bone, you know, the spot where your bone fractured is weaker, but the rest of the bonds are strong.”

For senior Brendan McLaughlin, Smash club has been vital in providing a place for students to relax in a year where there are very few places to connect.

“It’s mostly just a good way to chill out with people and just relax after school and take the edge off,” said McLaughlin. “Everyone is a bit on edge with this pandemic, so it is good to give them a space to blow off some steam and connect with others.”

Fighting for the good in this world

As we continue into the Christmas season, students and teachers alike have started to look back on this year and reflect on everything they went through—the long nights, the stressful weekdays, the demoralizing defeats, but also the good times with friends, the breakthroughs after being met with a brick wall, the uplifting successes.

To SLUH President Alan Carruthers, it’s inspiring to look back on all the rough situations SLUH has had to brave and note the hard work and innovation that has arisen

to face the challenges.

“We’re not sending rockets to the moon, but you know what, we’re going to school in a pandemic,” said Carruthers. “We’re the only school at this size that’s testing our athletes and keeping them safe. We’ve had no mass quarantines. We haven’t had to shut down. The story behind the scenes is that a lot of people have been doing a lot of amazing things—working longer hours, creative thinking, (people) stretching themselves outside of their comfort zones, treating others with dignity and respect when they don’t agree with them.”

Carruthers’s faith has played a big part for him in focusing on the good things and trying not to be bogged down by the negatives.

“I think sometimes perspective is a choice,” said Carruthers. “You choose to walk in darkness sometimes, or you choose to walk in the light. I think faith is a critical part of that.”

Noting the success of the virtual Cashbah, Carruthers hopes to continue innovating and learn from his good experiences in 2020 to make 2021 all the better.

“I think it’s been really nice to watch my own kids but also to watch all of you guys come to the realization that, for all the complaining that’s done about school, when it’s gone, you really miss it,” said Carruthers.

For Anzalone, it wasn’t always easy to stay optimistic, but a small sentiment written by poet Leslie Dwight helps remind her that things could be worse: “What if 2020 isn’t cancelled? What if 2020 is the year we’ve been waiting for?

A year so uncomfortable, so painful, so scary, so raw that it finally *forces* us to grow. A year that screams so loud, finally awakening us from our ignorant slumber. A year we finally accept the need for change. Declare change. Work for change. Become the change. A year we finally band together, instead of pushing each other further apart. 2020 isn’t cancelled, but rather the most important year of them all.”

“And, while many may disagree, I do not believe that what makes SLUH, SLUH is the academic rigor,” said Anzalone. “I truly believe it is this part of SLUH’s mission statement, “building Christ’s kingdom of truth, justice, love and peace” that sets us apart and ultimately matters most.”

For Akin, the words of J.R.R. Tolkien, through the character of Samwise Gamgee from *Lord of the Rings*, helped make sense of things.

“It’s like the great stories, Mr. Frodo, the ones that really mattered. Full of darkness and danger they were, and sometimes you didn’t want to know the end because how could the end be happy? How could the world go back to the way it was when so much bad has happened? But in the end, it’s only a passing thing this shadow, even darkness must pass. A new day will come, and when the sun shines, it’ll shine out the clearer. I know now folks in those stories had lots of chances of turning back, only they didn’t. They kept going because they were holding on to something. (“What’re we holding on to, Sam?” Frodo asks.) That there’s some good in this world, Mr. Frodo, and it’s worth fighting for.”

July 13

The Washington Redskins become the Washington Football Team.

August 3

SLUH announces online start to year as new H-vac units installed.

September 18

Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg died at the age of 87.

October 2

President Trump tests positive for the coronavirus.

November 3

Election Day 2020. Joe Biden would go on to win over incumbent Donald Trump.

December 13

SLUH announces a full return set for January.

July

September

November

August

October

December

July 24-25

Graduation weekend for the Class of 2020.

July 30

New Prep News website launched!

August 18

California’s governor declares a state of emergency as a heat wave worsened the fires.

September 25

President Trump announces his plans to nominate Amy Coney Barrett to replace Ruth Bader Ginsburg.

October 27

Dodgers win first World Series since 1988.



Faculty Xmas stories of magic and mayhem



Mr. Hussung and his stone friar photo | Mr. Chuck Hussung

(continued from page 6)
full, massive 7 foot tree appeared before our eyes, coming right of his coat pocket! Keep in mind, we were very young, and wiped out after two holiday gatherings. But it was, indeed, a wonderful, marvellous, magnificent feat received with joyous cheers and shouts of pure amazed glee.

Conveniently, our Uncle appeared at the house 10 or 15 minutes later, and we regaled him with our tale of the impossible Christmas tree that our heroic dad had made appear before our very eyes. We each got to select an ornament to place on the tree, firmly fastened into the base by dad and Uncle John. And miraculously, when we awoke, the tree was decorated and surrounded by piles of wrapped presents by Santa!

We unwrapped our gifts in our footed pajamas, ate a breakfast of fried savory meats and warm, sweet breads before heading off to Christmas Mass, re-telling the story to ourselves, and our Grandma Julia on the way to and from the College Church.

Chuck Hussung

As the seniors might remember, in the fall of 2017 the Dauphin Players staged *Romeo & Juliet* to celebrate the school's 200th Anniversary and Mrs. Whitaker gave me the great and abiding gift of playing Friar Lawrence. I took such delight in playing the part that my wife Marsha decided to give me a stone friar for Christmas. She went to Catholic Supply and found one that was just right. Then she began to worry that I might think the statue was cheesy. She need not have worried. The statue isn't cheesy in the least, I loved it from the moment I saw it, and I treasure it as a symbol of her abundant love and of that happy time in my life.

Jon Ott

Christmas is veiled in secrets. Take Santa Claus, for example. It was not until my eighteenth Christmas that I discovered his proclivity for profanity.

The Ott family Christmas Eve party was historically, like Santa's vocabulary, not rated G. Or PG. Or PG-13. One year the party was soiled by a kidnapping.

Nobody knew how it happened, but, at some point during the party, Uncle Mark's five-foot tall light-up Frosty the Snowman disap-

peared from his front porch. Poor Frosty didn't reappear until a Fourth of July party, when he was discovered at the bottom of Uncle Gary's swimming pool with note cursing Uncle Mark for refusing to pay the ransom.

Uncle Mark was so devastated by the incident he couldn't bring himself to host Christmas Eve the next year, so Uncle Dave stepped up to fill the spot. In retrospect, that was a mistake. Because the crime of choice that year was arson. It was the late 90s, and Uncle Dave was a big Austin Powers fan, which explains the life-sized cardboard Dr. Evil that greeted guests at the front door. At some point during the night, Uncle Dave must have taken his brotherly ribbing a bit too far. At least that's how I made sense of Dr. Evil ending up in the fireplace. Believe it or not, Uncle Dave did not volunteer to host Christmas Eve the following year.

After eighteen months of mourning Frosty, Uncle Mark was ready to retake the Christmas Eve mantle. So, I was sitting in his basement when Uncle Gary read aloud a letter addressed to the entire Ott family that he had received from Kris Kringle himself. The specific content of that letter is not fit to be printed in the pages of a high school newspaper, or any publication, for that matter. But it resembled a Comedy Central-style roast of every man, woman, and child in the family. Except, of course, Uncle Gary.

Diego Navarro

I woke up first—before



photo | courtesy of Mr. Diego Navarro
Mr. Navarro as a child on Christmas morning

my brothers, before my parents—and slowly, silently made my way over to the living room. Had Santa come? What did he bring me?!? And when I turned the corner I saw them all under the tree—gifts, unwrapped, that had been squeezed down the chimney. Each had a tag on it with the name of one of my brothers or I. But then I stopped cold: there was a gift with all three of our names on it. Space Invaders! It was a handheld standalone game, and I wanted it all for myself. As if by practice I switched the tags on two of the gifts—now Space Invaders was only for me, and my brothers and I would have to share some other random gift. But because they were from Santa, I thought, no one would ever know the difference. And then I snuck back into bed, filled with glee.

Hours later we all woke up, the gifts were removed from their packaging, and the prize was mine. I ran to my shared room with the Space Invaders only to find that my mom walked right after me. She gave me a chance: "Santa told me that Space Invaders was for you and your brothers." Caught, I suddenly felt guilty. I hadn't anticipated that level of communication with someone so far away. I fessed up and returned the precious gift tag to my mother. After she set the record straight the three of us brothers took turns playing Space Invaders and even cheering each other on. And perhaps that's when the real meaning of Christmas began to take root, to take flesh, in me.

Lynne Casey

One of my favorite memories is displayed by a picture of my sister and me with Santa Claus at the downtown Famous-Barr sometime in the 70's. Every year on the day after Thanksgiving—before there was such a thing as Black Friday—we would go downtown with my mom, aunt, cousins and grandma to see Santa Claus and start our Christmas

shopping. Back then, downtown was a magical place at Christmas time, and for this country girl, it was like stepping into a foreign land. There were Christmas lights everywhere, Famous-Barr and Styx Baer & Fuller had elaborate window displays, and every department store would be decorated to the hilt and busy and bustling. Best of all, the stores had huge toy departments where I would begin dreaming and compiling my list for Santa.

I remember often standing in long lines waiting to see Santa and passing through elaborate Santa Land displays of his workshop with animatronic elves, or some sort of winter wonderland. This was a particularly good year for Santa—we were old enough that neither of us was frightened by him and screaming, and young enough that we weren't embarrassed and rolling our eyes and scowling at our mother.

I am as grateful as anyone for online shopping—especially this year, but I miss the days of big, glittering department stores when going downtown was an event—one you might even get a little dressed up for. And I miss the wonder of visiting Santa, asking for a special toy, and being dazzled by the bright lights and displays. I was able to revisit some of those feelings with my own kids—taking them to Marshal Fields (now Macy's) in Chicago to see the windows, and visiting Santa at the mall, but none of that is happening this year, plus they've long since reached the rolling their eyes and scowling at their mother phase too.

Kim and John Walsh

I love Christmas! But I have to say that last Christmas 2019 was one that Mr. Walsh and I will cherish forever. You see our twin granddaughters, Phoebe and Frankie, (after spending 3 weeks in the NICU) had just come home to our house (their mom and dad were living with us), and for their Christmas present we told them to sleep in! With that being said, our grandbabies woke up at 4:00 a.m., we ran in the room, changed them, fed them, burped them, and then while holding the babies we looked out the window on Christmas morning, snow was falling and John and I looked at each other with tears in our eyes knowing how blessed we truly are. We thanked God for that moment. It was beautiful!

Addie Akin

When I was in college, my dad started this amazing tradition called Scott Campbell Christmas Trivia. He created an elaborate game full of Christmas trivia questions. He shopped for and wrapped gifts (some of them silly), came up with a whole set of rules, and played the role of emcee. My mom and I would take turns answering, and after a few right ques-



photos | courtesy of Mrs. Kim Walsh



Mr. and Mrs. Walsh holding their twin grandbabies for the first time

tions we'd get to pick a gift. Over the years, the game has morphed into family trivia, where the questions revolve around experiences from the past year. He's gotten pretty good at remembering random things we say or places we've been.

Since marrying my husband, the trivia questions have also involved him, and starting last year there were questions about our then-unborn baby girl. We never expect it—he always says that year could be the last—but nonetheless we look forward to it every year. Of course we're competitive (I usually win!), and it's fun to open the gifts at the end, but the real fun is reliving the year together as a family and being grateful for all the memories and laughter.

Tracy Lyons



photo | courtesy of Ms. Tracy Lyons

Lyons proudly displaying her new toy

S P O R T S

SLUH deals with untimely Covid-related issues before Lafayette, shortened lineup ends game in a tie

BY LOUIS CORNETT,
LUKE ALTIER
CORE STAFF, SPORTS EDITOR

The St. Louis U. High hockey team faced off against Lafayette at Maryville University Hockey Center last Friday. The Jr. Bills looked to add another win to the column, but the game ended in a 2-2 tie. With many starters out, substitutes made the most of their opportunities, outshooting Lafayette 27-18, earning a tie for the depleted Jr. Bills.

“I was really happy with the team effort,” said head coach Steve Walters. “We were pretty decimated concerning conflicts and Covid quarantine. We went deep into our lineup, and everyone who played gave us everything they had.”

“Guys knew a lot of the guys were playing in a role that they was unfamiliar to them,” said Walters. “Barret Grawe who has been a defenseman his whole life was put at attack, and scored a goal in the game.”

After a scoreless first period, Lafayette scored just 1:34 into the second.

SLUH scored to tie it just five minutes later. SLUH was dominating the puck, having an extended possession in Oakville’s



The team before Lafayette.

photo | courtesy of @SLUHHockey

defensive zone. SLUH’s quick puck movement on an extended possession in Oakville’s defensive zone forced Lafayette to make quick decisions which eventually led to a mistake. With the puck in the corner, two Lafayette players converged on it, leaving sophomore Barret Grawe alone in the middle of the ice for an easy goal.

The goal was well-deserved for the Jr. Bills, who had 19 shots at that point; the period ended with a 21-11 shot advantage for SLUH.

Only 2:16 minutes into the final period of play, SLUH scored again to give them a 2-1 lead. Junior Zach Petlansky dumped the puck into Lafayette’s zone from the blue line for a SLUH winger

to chase in. Finding the puck, the winger found Petlansky in front of goal who fanned on his first attempt to score. On his second attempt. However, Petlansky hit a wrap around shot between two defenders that went through the goalie’s legs to give SLUH its first lead of the night.

However, with only 5:30 remaining in regulation, Lafayette evened the score at

2. A slap shot from the blue line forced SLUH goaltender Jake Buttice to make a save, but the rebound came right to a Lafayette winger who slotted the puck in the net, an unfortunate sequence for the Jr. Bills, who outshot Lafayette 27-18 on the game and had the better performance but had to settle for a tie.

“We’ve been focusing on

pucks to the nets, shots. That means 30-40 shots a game should be our goal,” said Walters. “We really could have had a two- or three-goal lead but the Lafayette keeper just robbed us of a couple goals.”

After this tie, the Jr. Bills look ahead to this Friday night against their Jesuit Rivals, De Smet. Dec. 18 at Queeny Ice Rink, SLUH looks to get back to a winning record against an always tough opponent.

“I like where we are at this point in the season. We need to figure out a way to generate more goals but once we can figure that out we will be a hard team to beat,” said senior Matt Warnecke. “I think we owe them a nice beating after last year and I think we got the tools in our locker room to give it to them. Should be a fun game this Friday.”

“Beat De Smet,” said Walters, when asked what the team hoped to accomplish against the Spartans. “I don’t have to do much to create an atmosphere for the team. That’s going to take care of itself. I want to get an identity here of being the hardest working most disciplined team every game on the ice, and I believe if we are successful getting this done, we will win Friday night.”

Wrestling has first competition, looks forward to more mat time

BY LEO WAGNER
REPORTER

With their first competition of the 2020-21 season complete, the Saint Louis U. High wrestling team is looking to learn from and build on the mistakes that typically accompany first matches while preparing for an upcoming quad meet with Washington, Union, and Rockwood Summit this Friday.

“It was just nice to finally get back out on the mat. SLUH hasn’t wrestled any real competitions since last February, so I think everybody was ready to be back,” said junior Jack Onder.

Although Franklin County, where St. Clair High School is located, is more relaxed than St. Louis County regarding their implementation of Covid restrictions, the wrestlers still dealt with some new rule changes last Wednesday.

Both teams were asked to weigh-in and warm up with masks on. However, they were not required to wear them while wrestling. Additionally, the referee did

not hold up the hand of the winning wrestler, as is typical at the end of a match. He instead pointed in the direction of the winner.

The meet began with senior Leo Wagner, who wrestles in the 152-pound weight class, getting pinned by his opponent late in the second period. Wrestling at 160, senior Cameron Perry’s match similarly ended in a pin.

The Jr. Bills’ first win came from senior Bobby Conroy, wrestling at 170. After choosing to start the second period in referee’s position (Conroy was down on the mat while his opponent covered him), he quickly broke away and returned to neutral. Seconds later, Conroy tripped the St. Clair wrestler and pinned him.

Next, junior Alex Nance (182) and senior Leny Madalon (195) took byes.

Senior Logan Neumann wrestled a gruelling match at 220. After gaining a 20-14 lead, Neumann used an upper body throw to get his opponent down on the mat. He sealed the deal with a pin as just under 30 seconds

remained in the third period.

Concluding a series of byes, sophomore Connor Whalen, who wrestles at 132, won after his St. Clair opponent was disqualified. Following an illegal suplex by St. Clair which sent Whalen off the mat for the night, the competition was nearly concluded.

The final match of the night featured junior Jack Onder, wrestling at 145. Although in the lead all match, Onder at first struggled to pin his opponent. His opportunity came when, in the third period, Onder fought off his back and reversed the St. Clair wrestler. Forcing him onto his back, Onder pinned his opponent 40 seconds into the third period.

Although SLUH put up several impressive matches, they narrowly lost to St. Clair, who won the dual 42-36. However, many of the wrestlers were able to take key lessons away from their match, something which can prove to be invaluable over the course of a season.

“Usually, during a wrestler’s first match of the

season, they are overcome by their nerves. It can cause them to freeze up and abandon their plan for the match. They go out on the mat and don’t try any of their moves. We definitely saw some of that Wednesday night. Hopefully, with the first competition out of the way, the boys will feel more confident in themselves going forward in the season,” said coach Todd Clements.

Facing another altered week due to Monday’s delayed Covid testing, which has prevented contact-practices on Monday, Tuesday, and possibly Wednesday, the Jr. Bills must work especially hard to prepare for their competition Friday.

With the first matches of the season complete, the SLUH wrestling team is looking to build on its successes and grow from its shortcomings, both showcased at St. Clair. Continuing to display an eagerness to compete, anticipation remains high among the wrestlers for upcoming meets where they hope to display growth from last Wednesday.

Congrats Tyler Ridgway!

Congratulations to Tyler Ridgway for being awarded 2nd Team All State as a punter!

Ridgway is the first player to make an All



photo | courtesy of @TylerRidgway20

“Though the award has my name on it, I think this more of a punt team award. I rely on so many guys so that I can do my job, in particular Kyle Dulick for taking hits so I don’t have to, Mac Southern for snapping, and of course Coach Cruz for letting me do my thing.”

Rifle team places 44th at Junior Air Rifle

BY JACK RYBAK
CORE STAFF

The St. Louis U. High Rifle team now has two matches under its belt, both of which went relatively well considering the recent changes due to COVID-19. The Blue Jay Classic match was finalized with SLUH taking second place and the Junior Air Rifle National Championship gave SLUH 44th place out of 76 teams.

The Jr. Bills took home second place last weekend with a 572/600 from senior team captain Ryan Janson. Janson's score gave the top team a 2244/2400. Unfortunately, Ozark High School came in with four very

skilled shooters and beat SLUH by 53 points.

This past weekend, the Jr. Bills shot in a Junior Air Rifle National Championship. While this is not the actual National Championship that determines the best national team, it is still a big deal and typically the winners of this match have the opportunity to shoot in a military base later in the year.

On SLUH's top team of shooters was Janson, Andrew Kessler, Sam Quinlivan, Mason Wodicker and Nick Storer. This match was a decimal score, meaning the maximum score increased from 600 to 654. Janson was the top shooter on the team with a 575.9, followed by

Kessler with a 574.9, Quinlivan with a 571.6, Wodicker with a 568.7, and then Storer with a 564.6.

"I would say we had a really good turnout throughout. The varsity especially shot great stands," said junior Grant Grabowski. "Overall I think we all can walk out of the match satisfied with our scores."

The final score may not be enough to get the team to qualify for the championship, but the shooters have another match on Jan. 23 at SLUH. The match will be the NRA Jr. 3-P Air Sectional. As it stands, the majority of the next few matches will be at SLUH unless restrictions are raised allowing the team to

Racquetball sees toughest week yet

BY JARED THORNBERRY
REPORTER

Unfortunately for the St. Louis U. High School racquetball team, their match last Friday, Dec. 11 against Parkway was canceled due to team Covid-19 results not back yet. Players had their bi-weekly Covid-19 testing this past Monday and the past two trials have been a little overwhelming because it has taken several days to receive results.

"Unfortunately, it was disappointing to postpone the match on Friday," said head coach Steven Deves. "But we understood going into this the

risks that were going to happen with testing this year, but despite a little bit of waiting, I'm glad we get to continue playing."

Fortunately, the match was moved to this upcoming Friday evening. The team was able to get another practice in before facing the difficult Parkway West team. Not only does SLUH have a game this upcoming Friday, but this Wednesday, the Jr. Bills go head to head with Chaminade, always an elite challenger for the State Championship Tournament at the end of the year.

"It is clear that they

are ready for this week," said Deves. "It's a chance to have their biggest challenge of the year and at the end of this week to really shine and show the depth of the players we have on this squad."

Unfortunately, the news for racquetball this week isn't all good. This past Monday, Dan Whitley, the President of USA Racquetball, announced that the 2021 National Tournament in St. Louis will not be happening this year. This is very sad news for the senior class, because they will not get to play in another National Tournament. The Jr. Bills can still look ahead to their Mis-

More Covid-19 delays push back basketball season

BY CARTER SPENCE
WEB EDITOR

The St. Louis U. High basketball team again had its season delayed due to Covid-19 testing complications. The Jr. Bills are now set to begin their season on Dec. 15 at home vs. MICDS, who advanced to 2-0 on the season with a blowout 72-45 victory against Lutheran South.

With cases rising in St. Louis, Care STL Health suspended their testing for SLUH's winter teams in late November, which has made the bi-weekly testing mandate more difficult than anticipated. Care STL had previously tested the fall sports teams.

The team was tested on Monday, Dec. 7 and anticipated results to return before the scheduled Dec. 11 game vs. MICDS. Unfortunately, the results did not return until after the weekend, prompting both games to be postponed.

"(The test results) were revealed on Monday morning, so we are in good shape for the remainder of this week," said SLUH athletic director Chris Muskopf.

After SLUH's game vs. MICDS was postponed, the Jr. Bills will begin MCC play with a road game vs. CBC on Dec. 18. It will be the first game this season for the Cadets, who finished last season as one of the hottest teams in the state, winning 13 of its final 14 games. CBC advanced to the district semifinals before the Missouri State High School Activities Association suspended the season due to Covid-19.

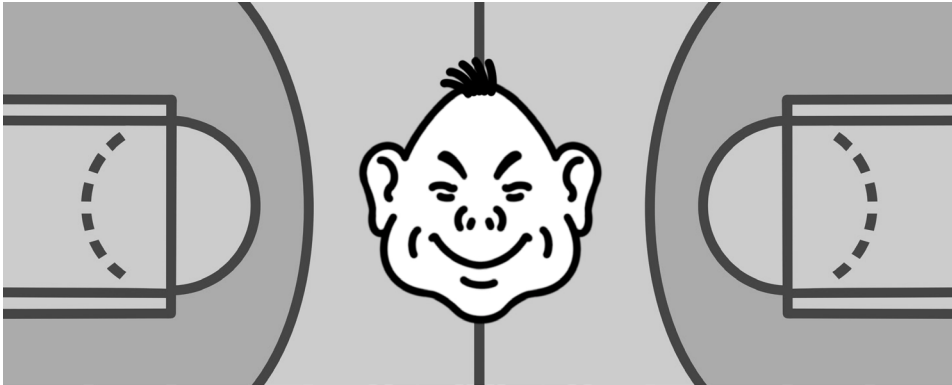
CBC returns nearly every player from last year's team with one major exception: Caleb Love, the Missouri Gatorade Player of the Year and point guard at the University of North Carolina. Love averaged 27.0 points per game and was the Cadet's leading rebounder

with 6.4 rebounds per game.

Despite Love's departure, CBC still returns a load of talent. Juniors Larry Hughes Jr., son of the 13-year NBA veteran Larry Hughes Sr., and Robert Martin will take on a much bigger role in CBC's backcourt. The two were the Cadets' second and third leading scorers last year and have interest from multiple division one programs.

CBC also returns junior Chevalier Benson, who committed to play as a wide receiver at the University of Illinois. Benson pitched in 8.4 points per game and his 6.0 rebounds per game were second among the team.

Assuming no testing delays, SLUH will face another talented MCC rival, Chaminade, on Dec. 21. The game will begin at 6:30 at Chaminade.



art | Charlie Bieg

Football Awards 2020

Honorable Mention All-MCC

RB Derrick Baker (Jr.)
S Phillip Bone (Jr.)
OL Jackson Liebrock (Sr.)
OL Mike Patritti (Sr.)
LB DonTavion Sullivan (Jr.)
DL Kyland Watson-Brown (Jr.)
K Thomas Ziegler (Jr.)

2020 MFCA Class 6, District 1 All-District:

Phillip Bone, Jr., DB
Chris Brooks, Jr., WR
Kyle Dulick, Sr. DB
Luke Ratterman, Sr. TE
Tyler Ridgway, Sr., P
Zak Stevenson, Sr., OL

Academic All-State honorees

WR Jack McClelland (Sr.)
TE Luke Ratterman (Sr.)
QB Luke Johnston (Jr.)
DB Kyle Dulick (Sr.)
WR Chris Brooks (Jr.)
DL Blake Collins (Sr.)
DL Tim Torrez (Sr.)
S Phillip Bone (Jr.)
K Tyler Ridgway (Sr.)
LB Dan O'Keefe (Sr.)



photo | courtesy of SLUH Student Media Group

New Faculty: SLUH welcomes new Alumni Relations Coordinator Chris Buerke

BY JACKSON COOPER
REPORTER

For new Alumni Relations Coordinator Chris Buerke, '09, it was never a matter of if he would return to St. Louis U. High, but when.

Hailing from St. Simon the Apostle Parish in South County, Buerke began attending SLUH in 2005 as a freshman, eventually graduating in the Class of 2009. Buerke comes from a family long-associated with SLUH, with Assistant Principal for Academics Tom Becvar being his uncle and math teacher Dan Becvar his cousin.

After graduation, Buerke attended Truman State University in Kirksville, Mo., at which point he was unsure of what path to choose in life. He initially chose to follow in his extended family's footsteps and major in math with the focus of becoming a teacher, but eventually changed his major. Buerke estimates that he changed his major five to six times throughout his time at Truman State.

Upon graduating from Truman State as a linguistics major, Buerke began working as a hall director at Rockhurst University in Kansas City, running a student residence hall

of about 200 freshmen for two years. Buerke cites his time at Rockhurst as paving the way for a future return to Jesuit schools.

"That was kind of my first taste of working for a Jesuit school," said Buerke. "I really started to see what mission-driven education looked like, and I knew at that point Jesuit education was something I wanted to go back to at some point in my life."

Since his time working at Rockhurst, Buerke has been involved in many fields, including a job working as an admissions counselor for Truman State, primarily working with prospective students in and around the St. Louis area. Through his work in that position, Buerke began to see more of what education looked like in St. Louis outside of SLUH, which only further enhanced his desire to someday work in education. With the job of admissions counselor also came free summers, which Buerke spent immersed in new experiences, including a summer spent teaching English in Belgium, and another working in an Irish coffee shop.

Following his time as an admissions counselor, and a few more years spent working

as a creative writer, Buerke finally realized his goal of working in Jesuit education when he applied for and was hired as Alumni Relations Coordinator in SLUH's Advancement Department. Returning to his alma mater always seemed in the cards for Buerke, something due in no small part to his four years spent as a Jr. Bill.

"It's always held a really special place in my heart," said Buerke. "The sense of brotherhood that was here was something that I really connected with. When you add in the faith element and the ability to be part of retreats and deeper conversations, and not just learning for the sake of learning but learning for a deeper purpose, SLUH also really just stood apart from anything else I could see myself doing in life."

The position of Alumni Relations Coordinator stood out to Buerke not only because it gave him a chance to re-enter the SLUH community, but also because it gave him the ability to meet new people and make new connections.

Said Buerke, "When this position popped up, it was really the perfect blend of getting to share stories, getting to really immerse myself in the world

of education, and getting to meet people from so many different backgrounds. So, I applied for it, went through the process, and here we are."

As SLUH's Alumni Relations Coordinator, Buerke is responsible for interacting with the school's many alumni, and planning events for those alumni. Days are often spent talking to SLUH alums over the phone, hearing stories from them and finding ways to share them with the community of SLUH alumni.

Another perhaps more unexpected part of Buerke's job is helping move SLUH forward, something which has taken on a whole new meaning dur-

ing the pandemic. Buerke also works with SLUH's Alumni Board in order to receive alumni input as it relates to the future of the school, and helps run the alumni website.

Buerke also stated an interest in involving himself with other aspects of SLUH outside of the Advancement Department.

"I would love any ability to be involved in the theatre program," said Buerke. "I also really want to root myself in campus ministry and be able to be a spiritual resource as much as possible, and to be able to take part in retreats and prayer services on campus."



photo | courtesy of sluh.org

QuestBridge provides college help to low-income students

BY JACK FIGGE
CORE STAFF

Providing top tier students from low-income households with the ability to attend top tier colleges has the lifeblood of the non-profit organization QuestBridge since its inception in 2004.

QuestBridge is a non-profit organization that provides scholarship opportunities to elite students across the nation who come from low-income families. It provides them with a means to attend top-tier colleges on a full ride scholarship for four years.

"It's a great way for students with low income situations to be able to maximize their chances for admission to a top school," said Kevin Crimmins, Director of College Counseling.

To apply for QuestBridge, students must come from a household that earns less than \$65,000 annually. On top of that, applicants must fall in the top 10 percent of their graduating class, have close to straight A's, and take a challenging course load. In the beginning of their senior year, applicants fill out a QuestBridge Match application in addition to typical college application components such as essays, ACT or SAT scores, and teacher recommendations.

If accepted to be a QuestBridge finalist, students then select around 10 of the colleges that partner with QuestBridge such as Stan-

ford and Boston College to send their QuestBridge applications. If accepted into one of those colleges, students are obligated to attend them similarly to the Early Decision College admissions program.

"(QuestBridge) is very powerful because it's a pathway, a tool that allows them to maximize their chances to get accepted," said Crimmins. "They basically do multiple early decisions, which can help admission chances."

While QuestBridge is a nonprofit organization, it is highly selective. In 2020, out of the 18,000 applicants, only 6,850 were accepted into the program.

"In the five years that I have been (at SLUH) we've had five matches and students that have earned scholarships," said Crimmins. "It is a hard program to get accepted into."

This year, two seniors were admitted to be QuestBridge finalists.

For all students interested in the QuestBridge program, Crimmins encourages them to check out the QuestBridge website to ensure they fit the criteria, then talk to their college counselor.

"We can, and are more than happy to help you work through the process, and we do that every year," said Crimmins. "We will help guide you through the whole process so if you are interested please come talk to us."

SLUH Student Media delivers dynamic virtual content to student body

BY NOAH APPRILL-SOKOL
AND JACOB SPROCK
NEWS EDITORS

Tune into the SLUH Student Media! The media group, started last year by Social Studies teacher Tom Zinselmeyer, has taken off this year, expanding Saint Louis U. High's digital media presence in the student body through funny and serious videos. The club has grown significantly through the work of its co-founders, seniors Max Chehval and Anthony Adem, who hope to provide a space for students to showcase their digital talents.

"I would say that it's almost a platform for students to project their artistic ability in a different way, not in physical art but more in a digital way," said Chehval. "In this way, they can share their digital art to the whole community, and we can actually help them develop their talents even more."

The club is as much of a production organization as it is a tutoring organization. With help from Digital Media Specialist and SLUH Student Media's moderator Ryan Doyle, Chehval, Adem, and the club's other members, through their collaboration, have learned valuable lessons about making digital production.

"When (Mr. Doyle) came to teach us, he taught lighting effects, how to do sound, setting up all different backdrops, and setting the scene so that we knew how to bet-

ter make our videos. He showed us tricks that completely transformed the way our content looks,"

Adem, who started working with digital media in middle school with his YouTube channel, has really noticed a drastic change in the quality of his content, which he credits to Doyle and the SLUH Student Media club.

"This whole club has really expanded my knowledge of videography and, if I look back at my videos from last year till now, I can see just the changes that have happened, the different types of editing I use. It's all really just been completely reformed with this edition of the club and my new learning from Mr. Doyle," said Adem.

For Chehval, being in charge of this club has given keen leadership and powerful insight on how to mentor and guide younger students.

"I've done many things that I wouldn't have thought I would do in my career, including budgeting and setting up meetings for my own club and everything like that," said Chehval. "And staying after school for three to four hours after school to work on projects. It really is teaching me about leadership and responsibility."

SLUH Student Media has published some content this first semester, including a Fall sports hype video and helping film content for the Spirit Week hype video. However, the group really has its lens on this second

semester, zooming in on two major productions: one on the 1970's football state championship and one called *1-800 Breakfast*. Both of these are completely different types of digital media and testify to the wide-range of productions that SLUH student media is working on.

The 1970's football state championship is going to be in a documentary style and is in collaboration with the *Prep News*.

"We're working to produce a documentary about the football team from *Bull in the Ring* during the 1970s state championship team," said Adem. "It's their 50th anniversary, and we've spoken with the book's author Joe Castellano, current SLUH football players, Mr. Kornfeld, and we're even trying to reach out with another player from that 1970's team, Bill Ziegler. We're hoping to have this documentary coming out close to the beginning of second semester. We're really excited for that."

1-800 Breakfast is a more traditional film and is written by SLUH junior Zach Brugnara, with the concept of a student who unknowingly finds himself in a social experiment.

If any of these events sound interesting, SLUH Student Media is looking for members. Simply reach out to their email: sluhstudent-media@sluh.org

Spence promoted, becomes Web Editor

BY NOAH APPRILL-SOKOL
NEWS EDITOR

The *Prep News* is excited to announce the newest person to their editorial staff: Carter Spence. Spence will be officially titled Web Editor and will manage the website and social media. The *Prep News* believes that he is qualified for the position and will be a great addition to the editorial staff.

"I'm very excited to become an editor and manage things online," Spence said, "I've really enjoyed being a part of *Prep News* for four years, so being able to help out in a big way now is awesome."

Spence has been writing in the *Prep News* since freshman year, beginning with his first article on freshman football. He has grown as a writer since then and has been an integral part of the *Prep News* staff this year, staying every Tuesday night to help with production of the paper and writing both sports and news articles.

"Carter has made huge contributions to the *Prep News* in his tenure here so far," said Sports Editor Luke Altier. "He's a great presence to have around and always turns in well-written articles."

Spence's new role will make the goal of expanding the *Prep News's* online presence possible with him being in charge of updating the website, making posts on Instagram and Twitter, and sending the weekly email with the electronic copy to the SLUH community.

"Knowing that I was going to lead the paper, I decided I wanted part of my legacy to be in expanding the social media and online presence of the *Prep News*," said Editor in Chief Carter Fortman. "The only catch is, I can't do everything. Spence was the perfect person to come in and steward that vision while truly making it his own as well."

Spence has already made a significant contribution to this paper since learning of his promotion to Web Editor. With the help of Director of Communications Benjamin DuMont, he has revised the *Prep News* website to be more visually appealing, and he has already started sending out tweets and Instagram posts of articles.

"He is a hard worker and has a strong work ethic," said News Editor Jacob Sprock. "It is hard to look to the future in the midst of a pandemic, but I know for certain that Carter is going to do a good job as Web Editor."

Letter to the Editor

Student expresses concern over new exam schedule

To the editors:
For as long as I can remember, exams at SLUH have been a critical part of the curriculum—administered every quarter with two to five days dedicated entirely to reviewing the material the exam would cover and shoring up subjects that proved to have been a struggle in the past several weeks. Exams are even more prevalent at SLUH—we are one of the only schools to give quarterly exams as opposed to strictly semester ones. They’re incredibly stressful and preparing for them is exhausting and tedious, but in an ideal world they present a final hurdle for students after the first quarter and before Christmas and spring break. Because of this, the implementation of exams this year, in these circumstances, doesn’t seem to be in the best interests of the students. Students have been alter-

nating between classrooms and their bedroom desk for the better part of 6 months, being expected to have 2 methods of learning and informational intake that are effective enough to be transitioned from home to classroom, and vice versa. You will be hard pressed to find one student, parent, or faculty member who will say that the current method of schooling, despite SLUH’s admirable efforts to bring us as close to “normal” as possible, has been anywhere near as conducive to their education as standard schooling that we experienced pre-Covid.
So why are we having regular exams? Why are we giving an invaluable and ungovernable advantage to students who are entirely online for what are the most important grades of the semester, and for some the entire school year? We have been assigned

all semester, at least in my own circumstances, to open-note and online exams, in addition to an exam-less first quarter. To me, it doesn’t make sense to implement a closed-note, paper exam when we’ve been acclimated to the opposite. If the problem lies within academic honesty, why have we taken open-note tests at all during the school year, let alone on the lion’s share of assessments? If the objective is to test what we’ve actually internalized over the semester, why aren’t the notes that we curated allowed?
The proposed exam week will see more than a cohort’s worth of students attend to take their exams despite us still being in hybrid scheduling. There are many questions I have with the decision to pursue these types of tests, and it seems completely logical to me to continue with open-note testing to conclude

the semester we had, and then continue with regular testing once we open up full-time again, if that’s what the administration deems appropriate. I just don’t think it’s entirely fair to students, especially hybrid ones, to encourage open-note tests over the course of the semester and switch to normal ones at the very end.
Is SLUH trying to handicap their students? Of course not. Like I said earlier, exams have been and will continue to be an integral aspect of a SLUH education, and I don’t expect that to change. All I’m asking for is a level playing field between online students and hybrid students, and an exam system that accurately reflects what students have gone through during this Covid-impacted school year.
Charlie Albus, ’21

Letter to the Editor

Grande Project: Have Mercy

To the editors:
When I learned about the Grande project, I was both disappointed and excited. I was saddened by the loss of this 50-year-old tradition—something that I was looking forward to since freshman year—but I also recognized the great potential of the project. Campus Ministry has led the Senior Project in a new direction. What had been more centered around service has now become focused on advocacy and social justice. This new Senior Project has excited me, and I am very happy with my project.
My close friend and classmate Noah Apprill-Sokol wrote an opinion piece earlier this year responding to the backlash of this project. He told us to keep an open mind about this opportunity and to really embrace these moments. But this is very difficult when considering all the factors of this project.
The senior class has been bombarded with school work and college applications and scholarships, and for many of us, we have been tasked to be

the leaders of the many different clubs at Saint Louis U. High. In the homily at our Junior Ring Mass, Fr. Gibbons said that life is unfair, but that we are going to have to rise to the challenge and be more. I have spent countless hours navigating school work and college stuff. As a Senior Advisor, I sacrificed my time to be a mentor to the freshmen, I have risen to the challenge of the pandemic in many ways this year. I have risen to the challenge of living and working in a pandemic, but I do not know how much more I can be and do. I do not know how much more energy I can muster for this Grande Project.
The second and most recent deliverable, which was due last Tuesday night, asked students to list three sources and two names of people they planned to interview. I am very excited about my topic and project, and I really want to unleash my full passion and creativity on the project. But, in the midst of preparing for exam week, it quickly became a tedious task on a checklist, much like those English essays that students cram out the night before

they are due. I, like most of my classmates, simply did a quick Google search on my topic and copied the first three internet sources that I could find. I would have loved to spend a lot of time searching for fascinating articles on my topic, but alas, I was too worried about the threat of getting a JUG or a demerit the next day because I did not turn it in on time.
My situation is not uncommon when it comes to my class. In conversations with my classmates, I heard many stories that were similar to my own. Students are excited about this project and want to put effort into it, but they are relegated to doing the project last minute and placing minimal effort. Even students who are well organized and disciplined are struggling to give this project the time and effort it deserves. In a conversation with a classmate who is a very organized and straight-A student, he said that he stayed up to 12:00 a.m. working on it because it got caught up in the other work that we have to do to prepare for the end of exams.
To Campus Ministry: I ask

for grace and mercy. Give us more time to think and process each step and give reminders a couple of days in advance. I know it is not necessarily deserved, but isn’t that what mercy and grace are all about? Hopefully, then, students, like me will be able to spend more quality time on the project and not be rushing through it in the middle of the night.
I know this sounds like a “whiny senior,” someone that does not want to put effort into his final year at SLUH. But, I hope you see me more as a student who is desperately overwhelmed by the plight of school work, college application and scholarship deadlines, and now the Grande Project. I think that I have raised some legitimate concerns that should not only be heard but addressed. I recognize all the work that has been done by Campus Ministry, in particular Ms. Anzalone and Mr. Gilmore, and I am grateful that we have at least some form of Senior Project in this crazy time.
- Cooper Dunn ’21

Editorial

PN 85 grateful for hard work of many

The saying, “tradition never graduates,” is one that rings true through the school. Most editors associate the saying mainly with the boisterous voice of theology teacher Dick Wehner, who has appeared in the paper at least twice during our tenure expressing that exact phrase. But even though the *Prep News* is one of those traditions, the *Prep News* is only 85 years old. The last pandemic happened over 100 years ago. Simply put, there was no playbook, and, because of that, we were left on our own to sail the troubled waters of this global crisis.

There are many people responsible for the paper, and thus a lot of people to thank. Firstly, we would like to thank our Staff. We recognize that the pandemic has increased their *Prep News* workload to levels that might seem more reminiscent of an Editor, not a staff member. Junior Jack Figge would have completed about six pages of this 12-page paper, an unprecedented amount for someone of his youth. Junior Nathan Rich has found himself doing a significant amount of the art in addition to his commitment as a writer. Senior Carter Spence has truly stepped up in commitment and workload, moving from novice reporter to current web editor. Similar anecdotes exist between everyone on our staff and our reporters, and, because of this commitment, we are able to make the paper as professional as it can be.

Furthermore, we would like to thank every interviewee and contributor who allowed us to write and showcase our pieces this school year. As inopportune and difficult as it can be to do interviews via phone, zoom, email, or six feet apart and through a mask, every single quote and piece of information has allowed us to fill up our papers with factual, important, and essential writings that educate and inform the SLUH community.
In particular we would like

to thank Mr. Michael Mohr, S.J., for giving Features Editor Sam Tarter amazing quotes no matter what the subject; many thanks also go to our president Alan Carruthers and our principal Fr. Ian Gibbons, S.J., for not only accepting many interviews (sometimes upwards of three per week), but for giving us the insight into what decisions are being made and what direction our student body is being taken in, and allowing us to keep the SLUH community up to date on the many changes throughout the year; the sports section of our paper would like to thank varsity soccer senior captain Adam Wolfe, and their coach Mr. Bob O’Connell for keeping them updated on their changing schedule and amazing performances throughout their season, taking time out of their busy days to assist our reporters.
We are also grateful for the support of Mr. Giuseppe Vitellaro, who, despite a pandemic and considerable workload at SLUH, has given the paper a noticeable facelift. Because of the template that he updated, our paper is more consistent and much more beautiful.

We are also grateful for Mr. Missey. Under his steady supervision we have found a way to continue the legacy and the motivation to keep chugging even when it is difficult. For those who don’t know him very well, as reiterated by former editors in the Missey feature of 85.09, Missey has given the *Prep News* the opportunity to thrive and become a professional level paper.
Finally, we would like to send a thank you to the SLUH community as a whole. Reflecting on the tumultuous 2020 year, the *Prep News* would have been useless without readers to digest the information we provided. We appreciate the time that you all have given to absorb and read the paper amid your busy lives. It is a testament to the community that the school has.

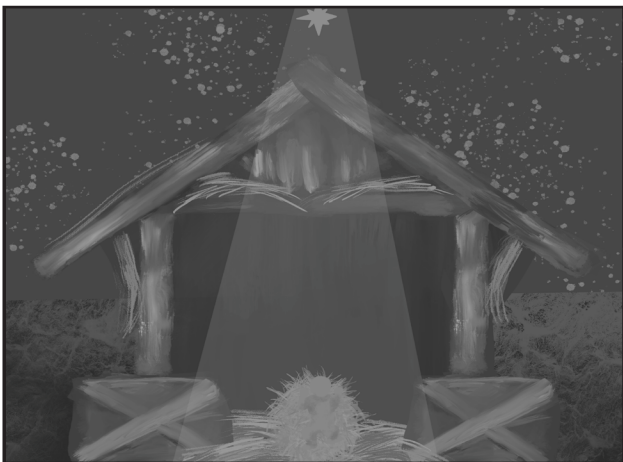
Advent gives time to reflect on true meaning of Christmas

(continued from page 10)
in our secularized world?
With the world rushing around us preparing for the coming of Santa Claus, our radio stations, and Spotify feeds filled with Mariah Carey, I think that we (including myself) often get sucked into the secularized Christmas world. It shifts our thoughts from the coming of Christ to the coming of Santa, from giving ourselves to Christ, to receiving presents.
Even in the midst of a raging pandemic, we are moving at a rapid pace in preparing for Christmas, always moving from one shop to another, hurriedly putting up decorations, or putting final touches on batch of cookies, we are so often sucked into this black hole of Christmas preparations, become blinded to what we really are celebrating at Christmas,

not presents or Santa, but God becoming human, humbling Himself to a mere child in a dark and musty stable, surrounded only by filthy animals and shepherds, all to redeem mankind.
In this Advent season and coming Christmas season, I encourage you to step away from the craziness of our world and spend some time reflecting on your own spiritual life, but also meditating on the true meaning of Christmas. Do something for somebody else, maybe write a Christmas note to a parent or a teacher. Spend five minutes every day in silent prayer just meditating or maybe read the nativity story from the Gospels in the coming days. Prepare yourself for the coming of Christ, prepare your heart.
Then on December 25,

make Christmas not a mere holiday, but a holy day. Go to Mass in person. Trust me, Churches are safe, across the Archdiocese, you must wear a mask, capacity is limited to 25 percent and social distancing is enforced, you are completely safe at Church so go if you feel safe, or maybe tune in for

a livestream Mass from your parish, celebrate Christ’s birth at or by viewing Mass. Pray a rosary with your family on Christmas, or simply meditate on all the good things you have been given. This Christmas, do something deliberate, step back from the secular world, and put Christ back in Christmas.



art | Will Blaisdell

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AMDG

Adopt-A-Family Drive provides Christmas gifts to 36 local families

(continued from page 1)

already—it’s not over yet, but we know that we have met our goal.”

In order to safely adapt to Covid, SLUH incorporated changes into the drive. This year, students were matched with their adopted families by their theology class instead of their home-room, and virtual students had the option of mailing in their donations. SLUH also made an adjustment by limiting the possible contributions to gift cards only. Donations are being collected in Campus Ministry instead of the Old Cafeteria, so gift cards are a better alternative because they take up less space. More importantly, this safe alternative enabled each family to choose what will make their Christmas a joyful one.

“We supported 34-plus families: 34 families through Southside and some other anonymous families,” said Anzalone. “The idea was that we sent each individual person in the family a \$25 gift card of their choosing and then the family got an additional \$250 gift card say to Walmart or Aldi’s or Schnucks or something like that—that they got to request—and we have fulfilled all of those.”

Organized by Campus Ministry and the Mother’s Club, the drive requested students to bring in gift cards or cash donations (and SLUH would use that money to buy gift cards). Students were also encouraged to contribute \$5 of their own money to help offset the cost of the gift cards, and students were available to give additional gift card donations to help families within the SLUH community. After signing up for their gift donations on SignUpGenius, students were tasked to

bring their items in on the day their cohort met in-person. Students had both the Mother’s Club at morning drop-off and Campus Ministry as options for turning in their donations; students placed their gift into an envelope which was then placed into boxes separated by each grade level.

“There is just so much dignity in allowing the families to purchase gifts for each other, so supplying them with a gift card for a place of their choosing really feels wonderful; I think it actually aligns with our faith in allowing people the dignity to make those choices,” said Anzalone. “I have a feeling that it will continue this way, Covid or not.”

Although the donations were made, the Adopt-A-Family Drive was not over. The gift cards had to be sorted to match each family, and the cash was then used by four members of the Mother’s Club to purchase the rest of the gift cards. The gifts will be delivered to St. Francis Community Services by the end of this week.

“Kind of the beautiful thing about the drives of the past is that the students have been able to help deliver the gifts; load them up and see the organization, and then a lot of the folks who are served by the organization, a lot of the clients actually come during that time to pick up their gifts and they help load their cars, so there’s an actual, personal interaction,” said Anzalone. “Obviously, that’s not ideal right now and that’s the part I’m most disappointed about, honestly, that the student involvement is just less with this type of drive.”

Since the junior class came up with the most donations, Campus Ministry awarded them with donuts as they were checked in the theater this past Monday and Tuesday. Although the juniors received donuts as a sign of appreciation, Campus Ministry wanted to give thanks to the whole student body for their contributions.

“We are so grateful for their generous support of the drive,” said Anzalone.



Students and parents

Pandemic forces revamping of semester exam schedule

(continued from page 1)

slot for a particular class on the exam schedule. For example, all English classes except AP English Lit., many theology classes, and many social studies classes will be giving exams ahead of time.

“Everybody had that option if they wanted to do a paper or project as their final assessment they could,” said Becvar. “So we got that list way back, so I had a pretty good idea of who was going to be able to give exams and who wasn’t.”

Finally, it is obvious that not every student will be able to come in on the designated exam days. Many students are quarantined or all-virtual right now, and more quarantines nearer to exams are inevitable. If students are unable to make it to an in person exam, they should contact their teacher

for that exam and make a plan for how they can take it. Some teachers are allowing students to take their exam from home yet synchronous with the students taking it in school. In other cases, quarantined or virtual students can plan to take a missed exam on the designated makeup day, Tuesday, Dec. 22.

While the option of all-virtual exams was considered early on in the Covid transition, the SLUH Department Chairs requested that exams be in-person. Thus, Becvar had to come up with an exam schedule that ensures six-feet distancing.

While quarter exams were canceled, semester exams had to happen no matter what, as AP and 1818 classes rely on exams for college credit, and other classes rely on exams to monitor their

students’ progress. Additionally, by having in-person exams, teachers can better prevent their students from relying on their notes instead of studying.

When it comes to actually taking the exams, exam days will be resemblant of previous years while maintaining the same protocols of this year. Students will check in with the Visitu app like a normal school day and proceed to their designated exam classrooms. Mask-wearing and social distancing will still be required.

“Nothing is normal this year so we’re gonna do the best we can,” said Becvar.

If students need further clarification about the exam day schedule, an FAQ email has been sent to everyone by Assistant Principal for Student Life Brock Kesterson.

Band makes adjustments to provide evenings of entertainment

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people to watch from home as if it were a regular concert.”

Many players like senior Alexander Unseth, noted that the lack of an audience made for quite a foreign dynamic.

“It was strange without an audience. Normally after a performance, a lot of applause ensues, but it was eerily silent afterwards,” said Unseth. “It certainly was a confusing moment.”

Other students, such as Ryan Pineda, a trombone player for the Symphonic Band, found the empty space able to ease usual pre-concert jitters.

“I liked the playing without the crowd a bit,” commented Pineda. “It brings the stress down and lets you just relax and play.”

Even before the night of the concert band performance though, school scheduling uncertainties posed other challenges. One of these, present in the minds of many students, was that due to the Hyflex schedule, neither band had played as a full group since last spring. In addition, the decision to hold the week before classes online meant Pottinger and the bands had not been able to rehearse in the two

weeks prior to the concert.

“Leading up to this (concert), we were expecting to go back to in person school. We thought it was the perfect time to run through the songs a few times before our concert,” said Pottinger, who explained the reliance on these practice times. “As a musician, when you are in the classroom, you realize things like ‘Oh, I’m out of tune,’ or ‘Everybody got louder but me.’ All of those things we listen and respond to.”

Despite all of the aforementioned challenges though, both teachers and players alike were surprised and proud of how the concert played out.

“It was fantastic and a very special moment,” said Pottinger. “Especially for those bands, to have all the instrumentation there together, it just transformed the sound.”

Many students were equally as proud of their group’s ability to come together and play.

“It felt really good,” said Pineda. “Especially having never played together, I thought it sounded great.”

Other musicians took the time to enjoy finally being able

to play with the rest of their class and to reflect on the ordeal.

“It was incredible, and playing with other musicians is always a great feeling,” commented Unseth. “Being separated by Covid and then all coming back to share the gift of music. It truly shows the resilience we have as a band, as well as the musical potential at SLUH.”

“We literally got the band back together. . . playing that first note it seemed like we had never separated,” said senior baritone sax player Tim Torrez.

The jazz concert last night was livestreamed to parents and family watching from home. The jazz groups also shared an outlook similar to that from the concert band.

“It was great to get together with the whole group and to be jazzin’ and groovin’ for the first time in a while,” said senior Franco Schmidt, the namesake of jazz combo Franco’s Congo. “As far as Covid concerts go, I thought it went really well.”

Players and staff were grateful for the ability to come together to close the semester, and are looking forward to new opportunities for next year.

Admin. announces Jan. 11 full return to in person classes

(continued from page 1)

will be virtual on January 6, 7, and 8 when students return after Christmas, similar to the week after Thanksgiving.

“We hope that families don’t do large gatherings like many of us who made serious adjustments to our Thanksgiving plans,” said Carruthers. “We hope families will again do that for Christmas. But just in case, we’re giving that a little bit more space for evolution of any cases that may be out there that are at least symptomatic. . . that’s one precaution that’s built into the return plan.”

The issue of how and where to fit everyone in is still being finalized; however, the administration is confident that they can do it safely.

“I think that if we continue to figure out and reconfigure how we’re going to utilize lunch and hallways and some of those bigger movement times I’m very confident we can do this safely,” said Carruthers.

The school currently has seven positive cases in isolation, most from the first round of athletics testing and none from campus spread. Because of St. Louis City protocols for athletics, SLUH is one of the most heavily tested schools in the whole state, due to the support of student athletes and their families, the many

coaches, and the athletic staff.

“With the testing of hundreds of athletes every fortnightly cycle, our bi-polar ionization filtration system, campus safety protocols, and community diligence, we have been very successful. It’s time to give the next phase a chance. We will carefully monitor our community and make adjustments as will best keep us safe,” said Principal Ian Gibbons, S.J. “If we find that the conditions don’t support fully reopening, we will move back to hybrid or virtual learning. Our rates have been very low and we have had no demonstrable spread on campus.”

“I am excited to see everyone, but I am a little skeptical about the transition from a hybrid schedule to a full online, especially because the length of the classes,” said senior Max Chehval. “I am also interested to see how new cases are during this time and if it will affect attendance greatly.”

Others, like junior Andrew Renaud, disagreed.

“I think that it’s in SLUH’s best interest to return to full online in light of the rising number of cases in St. Louis and the close proximity of students regardless of the masks and safety procedures to prevent an outbreak in the school,” said Renaud.

While the situation looks promising to the administration now, the administration realizes that conditions may change and are not afraid to adapt.

“Since March, we have had to repeatedly do multiple pivots on many fronts, and we’ll continue to examine what’s happening on the ground and pivot,” said Carruthers. “This comes down to personal responsibility for the collective good and I hope that people make good decisions. . . If they value the in person learning, they need to do what has been working and that is, keep your small family bubble, don’t create opportunities for exposure, that includes large family gatherings, house parties, club sports, traveling in hotels with people outside of your family grouping, etc.”

“I also just want to thank all the faculty and staff who’ve done so much work to monitor and contact trace and get activities and athletics going and keep them going. There’s been a ton of work behind the scenes to keep the school going and clean and functioning and safe, so it’s just humbling to know how much has gone into this first semester and last year’s last semester,” said Carruthers.

Grande Project Update:

Seniors will return to school Jan. 11. They will have the week of Jan. 19-22 to work on the Grande Project.

Around the Hallways

Christmas Eve Mass

Saint Louis U. High is once again hosting the annual Christmas Eve Mass this year for the entire SLUH and alumni community. Due to Covid, the Mass will be limited to 250 participants. Families will be seated in isolated pods, and can register at the link provided in the Sunday newsletter from Principal Ian Gibbons, SJ. The other Covid precautions will include mask-wearing and a temperature check at arrival to SLUH.

Mock Trial

For the first time ever, SLUH Mock Trial is preparing for a virtual Mock Trial experience in January 2021. The club is practicing under the direction of Anne Marie Lodholz along with Timothy Weeks, from the office of the Missouri Attorney General.

Financial Aid Deadline

Families applying for financial aid for the 2021-2022 school year should submit applications by the preferred deadline of Thursday, Dec. 31, 2020. Families can apply through the FACTS program, and more information is available at the SLUH website.

Iceland STEM Program and Ignatian Pilgrimage

For the summer of 2021, the SLUH Global Education program is looking into possible educational trips: a STEM trip to Reykjavik, Iceland and an Ignatian Pilgrimage to Spain. The Iceland STEM pilgrimage will be led by math teacher Frank Corley and science teacher Teresa Corley and feature visits to Vikingaheimar Museum, a Golden Circle tour, Hveragerdi Geothermal Park and Geothermal Power Plant, waterfall and



volcano tours, whale watching cruise, folk shows, and more. It will cost an estimated \$3,500 per student and is being planned for June 27, 2020 to July 3, 2020. The Ignatian Pilgrimage will be led by Fr. Joseph Hill, SJ, Mr. Mike Lally, and Mr. Michael Mohr, SJ and feature visits to Bilbao, San Sebastian, Manresa, and Barcelona. If students are interested, they

should apply via the SLUH website.

- compiled by Luke Duffy

SLUHSERS: RESTING AT LAST



Wednesday, December 16

AMDG
Faber Day

Adopt-A-Family Delivery
3:30-5:30PM JV1-2 Racquetball vs Chaminade
3:30-5:30PM JV2-1 Racquetball vs Chaminade
3:30-5:30PM Varsity I Racquetball vs Chaminade

Thursday, December 17

First Semester Exams

Friday, December 18

First Semester Exams

12:00-9:30PM Pan Pastoral Retreat
4:30-6:00PM B Team Basketball @CBC
4:30-6:00PM C-Team White Basketball vs CBC
5:00-8:00PM Varsity Wrestling Tri-Meet w/Pacific @ Washington HS
6:30-8:00PM C-Team Blue Basketball vs CBC
6:30-8:30PM Varsity Basketball @Washington HS

Saturday, December 19

2:30-4:00PM JV3 Racquetball Singles

Monday, December 21

First Semester Exams

4:30-6:00PM B Team Basketball vs Chaminade
6:30-8:00PM Varsity Basketball vs Chaminade

Tuesday, December 22

Exam Make-Up Day

4:00-5:30PM C - Team White Basketball vs Hancock Place
4:30-6:00PM C Blue Basketball vs Chaminade

Thursday, December 24

Christmas Eve

10:00 Christmas Eve Mass

Friday, December 25

Christmas Day

Saturday, December 26

Christmas Break

Varsity Basketball Christmas Round Robin

Wednesday, December 30

Christmas Break

Varsity Basketball Christmas Round Robin

Thursday, December 31

New Year's Eve

Varsity Basketball Christmas Round Robin

Friday, January 1

New Year's Day

Monday, January 4

Faculty In-Service Day

Grades Due
Second Semester Begins
C-Team Blue Basketball Tournament @Oakville

Tuesday, January 5

Faculty In-Service Day

C-Team Blue Basketball Tournament @Oakville

Wednesday, January 6

A Day

Classes Resume - all online

calendar | jack Rybak

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Jacob “Noah Apprill-Sokol” Sprock

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