

The Green & Gold



**Summer Edition,
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Vol.4

A Student
Written
Newspaper



See further in article 8

Welcome to The Green and Gold, a student newspaper written exclusively by Viking students. The journalism students created the newspaper to inform, entertain, and inspire readers, while striving to become better writers and communicators of their ideas

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The Unprecedented Year: Recap

By: Jasmine Milbourne

The 2020-2021 school year will forever and always go down as one of the most interesting school years in history. Though Saint John's will be opening up for the upcoming school year, last year was definitely one to remember. From six feet distancing to mandatory masks mandates, everything changed for the school.

In July of last year, the news broke that students and faculty would be returning for on campus instruction- at least partially. The hybrid schedule was introduced, and throughout the

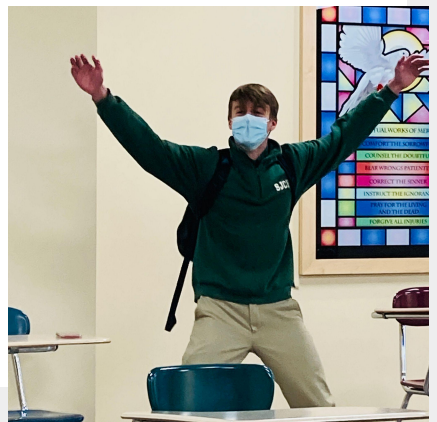
year Saint John's adapted. Tape in the hallways, masks, reminders on every wall, and screeners were some of the things our community had to overcome together.

Students did all they could to have a normal school year. In late August, the school welcomed the class of 2024 with a five-day orientation. Seniors, juniors, and sophomores were not far behind on those. In late September, some students had an at-home homecoming dance while others were able to enjoy their friend's company through a screen.

As the new schedule ensued, this became the new normal. Sports were reintroduced in October with heavy restrictions. Students and coaches did all they could to follow guidelines while still playing their best. Fall, winter, and spring sports were all able to display their commitment throughout the year. Overall, Viking sports delivered one of the best years with over half the student body participating in sports. Clubs were able to meet virtually and some new ones formed. Clubs like Science Olympiad and Mock Trial flourished in their respective competitions. In Fall, the sophomore class was able to be together for their retreat.

By December/January the talk of a vaccine was underway. Though students weren't able to receive it until April, many of the faculty acquired the earliest possible dose. In the early spring, the junior class was able to enjoy each other's company for their retreat. In May, the Vikings said goodbye to their class of 2021, held senior prom, had their last retreat together, and wrapped up sports. School wrapped in early June, leaving behind one of the most eventful school years. The mandatory mask mandate was lifted halfway through June amid the hope that the Saint John's community could get back to normal.

Overall the Viking family proved that they can get through anything.



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Advice TO FRESHMAN

Advice For Incoming Freshman

By: Nia Bedard

Dear Incoming Freshmen,

Starting high school can be very intimidating- that is a very simple observation and does not change despite the chaos of 2020. Regardless of that, the comfort of normalcy is in sight heading into the 2021-2022 school year with the hopes of the school returning to full capacity, clubs returning, and sports teams having normal seasons. Despite the return to normalcy, starting high school is still a daunting and even scary transition, so speaking as a

former freshman of SJCP, I am giving you my top seven pieces of advice to survive your freshman year.

1. Don't be nervous

I understand that this statement is a bit ridiculous. This is a big transition and of course you are going to be nervous throughout your freshman year about some things. That being said, don't become encapsulated in your nerves of starting at a new school, making new friends, learning new things, etc. The

moment you begin to let go of your nerves, start being yourself, and just live in the moment, you will proceed to get the most out of your freshman year whether that's with friends, in sports, or in academics.

2. YOUR TEACHERS ARE HERE TO HELP YOU

Notice that this statement is in all caps. This is a very important piece of advice. Your teachers want you to succeed, they don't enjoy it when you fail a test, turn something in late, or don't understand a topic. Your teachers are there to help you and support you throughout your time in school, so don't hesitate to ask a question if you don't understand something. Talk to your teachers if you need extra help or tutoring, try and make a plan with your teacher if you are falling behind on an assignment. Bottom line, your teachers are here to help you, not hurt you.

3. Organization is key

If you start out the year being organized, it will only make it much easier to find information by the end of the year. Whether you organize your information in a binder, notebook, or on your computer, being organized and knowing how to find information is key to making it through your freshman year.

4. Get involved in extracurriculars

Freshman year is a great time to get involved in extracurriculars. Whether it's a sport or a club, the options are limitless for students to get involved in activities. Sports teams include: Baseball, Basketball, Competitive Cheer, Cross Country, Football, Golf, Indoor/Outdoor Track, Lacrosse, Soccer, Softball, Tennis, and Volleyball. Clubs and Student Organizations include: Book Club, Black Student Union, Campus Ministry, Cooking, Environmental Club, International Club, National Art Honors Society, National Honors Society, Student Ambassadors, Student Government Association, and many more. It is even possible to create new clubs such as the Sign Language Club which was created by Kalia Espenlaub, Class of 2023. So with all of those options, go try out for a team, join a club, or create a club. It can be a fun way to make new friends and be involved with the school.

5. Be attentive in class

This one will be a bit difficult to do all the time, so it's okay if you zone out in the middle of class. I will warn you now that you will, especially during that 5-7 week stretch from President's Day to Spring Break, want nothing more than to be done with school. Despite that, there are ways to keep yourself from zoning out during a long lecture or a boring video.

If you are being given a lecture, start taking notes so that your brain processes the information being given to you by your teacher-- plus, writing down information helps you retain it better. If you are watching a boring video, you can take notes, but the visuals from the video will most likely distract you, rather take a tiny mental break to bring you back to focus. This can include tapping the table with your fingers ten times, taking five deep breaths, or just stepping out of the room can help reset your brain to focus on the information.

6. Take charge

If you put effort into what you are doing you will see an improvement, whether that is in academics, sports, or any other school activity. If you are not seeing improvement, then ask for help. Teachers can give you extra help or help you find a tutor from the National Honors Society. Plan a get together with friends from your sports team to run some drills or a scrimmage. You have the power to improve while at Saint John's so long as you take charge.

7. Enjoy every moment

As a senior I will tell you that these next four years will go by so fast, I still haven't processed that I'm going to start my senior year in 7 weeks. Since your time here will go by very quickly, I highly recommend that you do what you

enjoy here and make the most of your time at SJCP. Go to football games, go to dances, join a club, make a club, try out for a team, manage a team, make new friends, make new memories, take classes you are interested in, get to know your teachers, get to know members of staff, get to know your classmates, but most importantly enjoy the next four years.

I hope that all of this advice is beneficial to those of you who take it, and for those of you who decide not to, that's totally fine too. I just hope that any incoming freshman could read this and get some peace of mind about heading into next year. Good luck class of 2025!

Green & Gold Staff Highlight

Nia Bedard has been an example of excellence at The Green & Gold. She is a talented student, writer, singer, and classmate. Thank you Nia for all your hard work!



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Beat the Boredom

By: Samantha
Watkins



This summer, do not fear boredom, there are plenty of ways to stay occupied. The best way to stay physically and mentally active is to learn something new. This can be a new language, game, skill, anything you can think of. It can inspire new hobbies such as exercise, drawing, writing, cooking, and many more. You could also use this time to do something that you have been putting off, or make plans for the future. Another way to beat boredom is to read a book, watch a movie, or find a new TV series. Indulging in a good book, movie, or TV show can be a great mental vacation even if you are stuck at home.

If you would rather do something more social you, could hang out with friends or maybe use your time to volunteer. Helping others is a great way to use your time and it usually makes everyone's day a little better. Combating boredom can be as easy as listening to music or taking a step outside for some fresh air. Even if these solutions are not working out, boredom is not such a bad thing. It can inspire new thoughts or just give your brain a moment to decompress.

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Selfies VS Mirrors, Why We Look Odd in Photos

By: Josephine Leslie

Have you ever gone to an event, dressed up, and taken photos only to look at them later and think, “Wow, these are bad photos of me” no matter how hard you try to look nice? You are not alone. Many people experience discomfort and confusion over the pictures taken of them by phones and other devices with cameras. Mainly, three factors cause us to prefer our faces in the mirror to those in photos: familiarity, mirroring, and individual quirks of each camera.

When we look into the mirror, we see a reversed version of ourselves. So, whenever we look at photographs, we expect to see the reversed version of ourselves and are often surprised by what we look like.

The more asymmetrical our faces are, or when we pose

ourselves in odd ways, can further skew what we might expect to see in photographs.

Since we spend more time looking at ourselves in the mirror than in photos, we best recognize and are most familiar with that version of ourselves. Familiarity is the basis for our being attracted to something, so by seeing our face in the mirror more frequently than in images, we like the version of ourselves in the mirror better. This phenomenon is called “mere exposure” theory which states that the more one is exposed to something, the more likely they are to prefer that thing.

Similar to how a mirror distorts our face, the lenses of cameras change how we look. If we have a camera lens that is close to our face, like in a selfie, our features can be enlarged, flattened, widened, and further distorted making us look older or less attractive. The use of a camera’s flash feature also makes an image less true-to-self because of the extreme contrast drawn between lights and shadows.

So while those photos you took at the party the other night may look odd, remember that there are many factors at play for why they look different from what you see of yourself.

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The New Warner Stadium Is Coming

By: Laney Riesett



Saint John's Catholic Prep has had plans to build a stadium for quite a while, starting in 2015. With the company Gale as the architect and Warner contracting along with SCG fields as the contractors, the stadium will include a bathroom, concessions, and lights with ball tracker technology. It will consist of a turf field with metal bleachers that will seat 400 people, all being connected to the Willard Family Patio. The back parking lot will also be paved and adorned with lights to accompany the new stadium. SJCP hoped to get the stadium in sooner, however, they ran into problems along the way. In order to get the correct permits, water and sewer are required to be installed. However,

due to the area where the stadium will be located, it was not allowed. The school had to go to the state as well as the county to receive permission which took almost two years. There was a previous contract with FC Frederick to lease the fields which also had to be redone since that space was being taken away. The school has now received the permits and as of late May, the turf has arrived, waiting to be installed. The fence has also been installed, so the next step is to start the process of digging the field out.

In order to install turf, the ground must be dug up and the appropriate layers must be filled back in, with the turf as the top layer. Once digging commences,

there is an estimation of about four months before the stadium is complete, putting the estimated end date around September 15th.

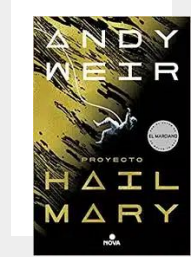
The stadium will be used by soccer, lacrosse, football, and cheerleading. To any sports that may not be able to use the stadium, there will still be a practice field behind it which will be open to use. The plans however do not stop there, Dr. Powell hopes to additionally add a baseball and softball field, a track, and perhaps even tennis courts with parking and a pavilion on the school's land by the neighboring farm. With plenty of excitement for the future, the stadium has hopes to be done for next year's fall season where the students can enjoy its new perks.

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New Books You Have to Read This Year

By: Miranda Cincotta

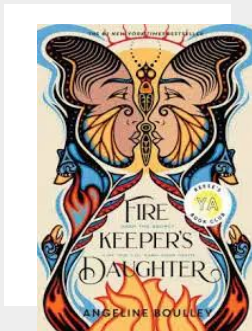
Project Hail Mary by Andy Weir



Andy Weir, author of the #1 New York Times bestselling novel, *The Martian*, recently published his new science fiction book, *Project Hail Mary*. Perfect for lovers of science, math, and astronomy, this exciting and incredibly well researched novel follows Ryland Grace, a man who wakes up light years from Earth in a spaceship, with no memory of who he is or why he is in space to begin with. What he soon discovers is that the sun is dying and he is humanity's last hope for survival. Tasked with this mission, he sets out to find a solution, finding help from something he never expected. Ryland Grace is humorous, compassionate, and imperfect which creates a main character that is easy to relate to. What also makes this book great is the fact that Andy Weir thoroughly researched all the science in this book (and let me tell you there is a lot of it), but he explains it in a way that is understandable and thrilling, then effortlessly ties the science into the story. Heart-warming, funny, and thought provoking, *Project Hail Mary* is one of the best science fiction books of this year and if you are a nerd at heart, this book is the one for you.

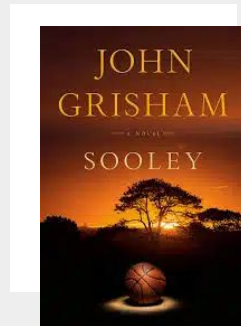
Firekeeper's Daughter by
Angeline Boulley

Angeline Boulley is a member of Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians and wrote her recently published debut novel *Firekeeper's Daughter* because, as she writes in her author's note, "there are simply too few stories told by and about Native Americans, especially from a contemporary point of view." Boulley's book is groundbreaking and includes real aspects of Native American culture including language, history, and tradition. Daunis, the main character, is an 18-year old biracial girl with a white mother and Native American father who agrees to become a confidential informant for the FBI and provide them with information about the growing drug trafficking problem within her community, taking the lives of those close to her. Daunis is a tough, smart, and powerful heroine that you root for throughout the entire story. *Firekeeper's Daughter* is layered with deep and meaningful themes of strength, perseverance, and community.



Sooley by John Grisham

John Grisham, a former attorney, is a very successful author famous for legal thrillers. His newest book, *Sooley*, is unlike many of his other novels, however, his excellent story-telling abilities shine through. Perfect for those who love basketball, this book follows a 17-year old South Sudanese basketball player, Samuel Sooleyman, who is chosen to play for an international travel team heading to the U. S. A. However, during the tournament, tragedy strikes his family back home when rebels ransack his home. Only his mother and two younger brothers escape to a refugee camp in Uganda. Throughout the entire book, Sooley's hardwork and determination stand out as he works towards going pro, the only way he can bring his family to America. A classic underdog story, Grisham creates a vivid main character who is motivated to succeed by his love of the game and his love for his family. Fans of sports and moving novels won't be disappointed with this book.



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The Importance of Community Service: an Interview with Mrs. Ryczko

By: Laura Newmark



Community service is a staple of the high school experience. A daunting number for many high school students, the eighty hour requirement can feel challenging to reach. Yet the act of service comes with benefits from enriching the community that far outweigh the effort put in. An interview with Mrs. Ryczko shows her perspective on the value of community service and her tips at finding the right service project to participate in.

With scrambling seniors trying to determine the meaning behind completing the eighty hour requirement, the importance of service is not always clear. When asked about

her take on the importance of community service, Mrs. Ryczko answered; "It is a two part thing, the first comes from helping someone in the community. Research shows that helping others actually makes you feel better". Community service allows for people to feel happier, as the joy of seeing someone else become content because of you brings internal joy. The second part Mrs. Ryczko referred to was the importance of service related work experience. Mrs. Ryczko states service; "is a great way to figure out what you are interested in by volunteering

your time". Through volunteering, people can discover their passions, and discover what they enjoy doing. The work experience gained from volunteering is a great way to determine future careers.

In fact, Mrs. Ryczko suggests that, for students less enthusiastic about fulfilling the service requirements, they look to use this opportunity to determine their career interests. Additionally, Mrs. Ryczko highly recommends group service activities; she claims "larger groups are more fun, for example the blessings of the backpack where students are laughing and working together". When asked about her favorite projects, Mrs. Ryczko once again mentioned the value of groups, saying her ideal activity was; "where students can get together". For those in need of ideas for community service or looking to enhance their experience. Mrs. Ryczko proposes you choose an activity that can be done with friends, something to work on together.

However; given times of social distancing, working with friends isn't always possible, particularly for the class of 2021 graduates. Nevertheless these seniors proved to be creative as Mrs. Ryczko described the unique ways this class sought to enhance the community. She states; "This past year several students were able to help the elderly". During a time of elderly isolation, this project is of utmost importance. While service may have proved challenging to

accomplish with restrictions, the 2021 class persevered and many helped enrich a group of elderly individuals in need of support. Given the challenges, Mrs. Ryczko encourages students to "think outside the box", much like this year's seniors.

Ultimately, community service is about assisting others and giving back to the community, and with that comes internal happiness. As Mrs. Ryczko said; "seeing joy in others raises your spirit".

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Juliana Workman's Art Highlights the Viking Spirit

By: Charlotte McKinley

The Green & Gold wants to thank Juliana Workman for her contribution of her art to the issue. Juliana's art reflects the spirit of SJCP and the Green & Gold. Her talent is sure to grow into the future and SJCP is lucky to have such a rising artist. Her latest work is highlighted on the cover of this month's issue.