The Gata Data

ST. AMANT HIGH SCHOOL ● 12035 HIGHWAY 431, ST. AMANT, LA 70774 ● ISSUE 11 ● NOVEMBER 2024

STA beats Prairieville in 21-0 shutout

BY: SAVANANAH MATLOCK, AVERY LAMBERT
Gata Data Reporters

At the very first PVHS v. STA football game, the Prairieville Hurricanes suffered a 0-21 shutout. At this game, the Hurricanes brought more of light drizzle to the Gators on Friday, November 1.

Just five minutes into the first quarter, the Gators scored the first passing touchdown of the night, with wide receiver Quinten Elisar catching the pass from junior quarterback Cooper Babin. This set the precedent for the rest of the game as the Gators stole every touchdown of the night.

Though there was an almost constant drizzle over the field throughout the game, the Gators still fought hard. In fact, the rain that the Gators had to face brought more of a challenge than the Hurricane did.

With five minus left in the second quarter, Babin passed the ball to senior wide receiver Reid Mayers who ran it 21 yards into the end zone, giving the Gators their second touchdown of the game.

Following the winning pattern, the Gators took the third and final touchdown of the night. In a 77 yard play, the Gators pushed the Hurricanes into the endzone, ending with a 22 yard pass from Babin to Elisar.

The Gators did not let the Canes receive any points in the fourth quarter, ending the game with a 21 point lead for the Gators.

PHOTO CONTRIBUTED BY SAVANNAH MATLOCK

St. Amant community to welcome new APL library in 2025

BY: MICHEAL MUMPHREY
Gata Data Reporter

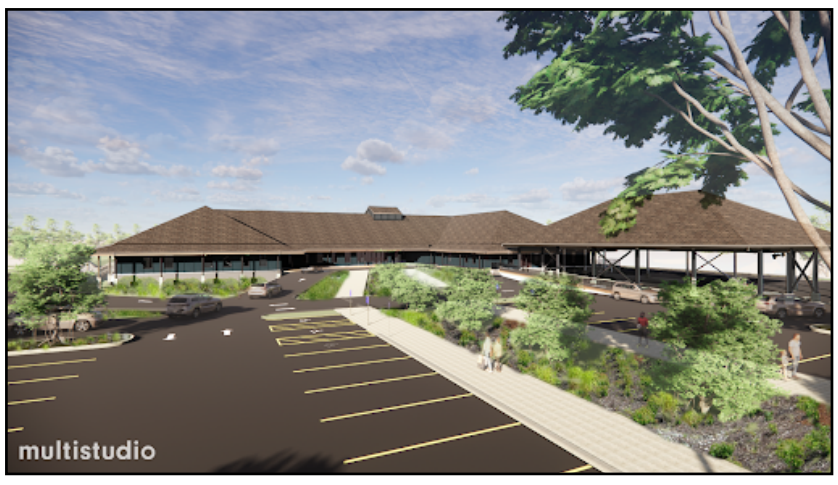
Since September 2023, the Ascension Parish Library organization has been constructing a new branch in St. Amant. It rests at Highway 431 sandwiched between Cannon and Bayou Narcisse Road, one block away from STA. APL director John Stelly said that the location was chosen for its convenience. “St. Amant seemed like an ideal location since no library was both north of Airline Highway and east of Highway 44,” Stelly said.

The new library, according to Stelly, will bring libraries into the next generation as they aim to offer more services that don’t just involve checking out books, but also introduce technology. “In addition to the traditional library services people expect (books, study rooms, programs, etc.),” Stelly explained, “the library will have a Digital Lab & Makerspace with a mixture of creative technology (3D printers, laser cutters, etc.), an audiovisual recording studio, and virtual reality equipment.” Stelly envisions the new library as a hub where creativity and innovation will thrive. It is also being constructed jointly with the Ascension Parish Government to make the building safe. “ The building is being constructed on piers and includes a retention pond that will help reduce drainage from the site by 15% compared to the unimproved land.”

PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED FROM APL

Despite the vision, it is undeniable that there is a negative stigma surrounding libraries and their purpose, especially in the general public, and Head Principal Christina Carter thinks that students should give it a chance.“I know that if you think about a library, there is probably a stereotypical idea of what that is, but like what I was saying with all of the different opportunities such as a book club.” The media could be partially to blame: in visual media, libraries are stereotypically perceived as oppressive and restrictive environments. Because of this, only 40% of people in America will be regular visitors to libraries in 2024, the other 60% flat out do not care about libraries. People who do not care about libraries are likely ignorant to the multiple opportunities they make available. (Phillips)

The truth is, that libraries are important for a community, especially for STA students. “Our community often turns to the library for access to learning resources, connections, friendships, and new opportunities.” Stelly explained, “Libraries change lives.” He believes libraries provide attendees with valuable skills and inspiration for hobbies and careers. The library



offers many activities that appeal to all age groups. It can also serve as a space for after-school meetings and student hang-out spots. Senior Fresno Swindle affirms Stelly’s statement. “If you are immediately sent home after school, you are going to rest in your free time.” Swindle explained when asked about why people should attend libraries more often.“ But if you choose to go to a library, free time becomes a time to educate the mind and to spend time with friends and to build connections within your community because these libraries essentially become our community centers.”

The library will be completed in late 2025. This gives us as a community ample time to change our mindsets on how we choose to acknowledge the role libraries play. Opportunity is knocking at our doorstep, and the St. Amant community should take advantage of it. The library offers many activities that people of all backgrounds can enjoy, but only if people are willing to end the stigma and give them a try. If you would like to hear more about these opportunities, go to https://www.myapl.org/, or visit your local library to pick up the monthly newsletter.

STA celebrates The Day of the Dead

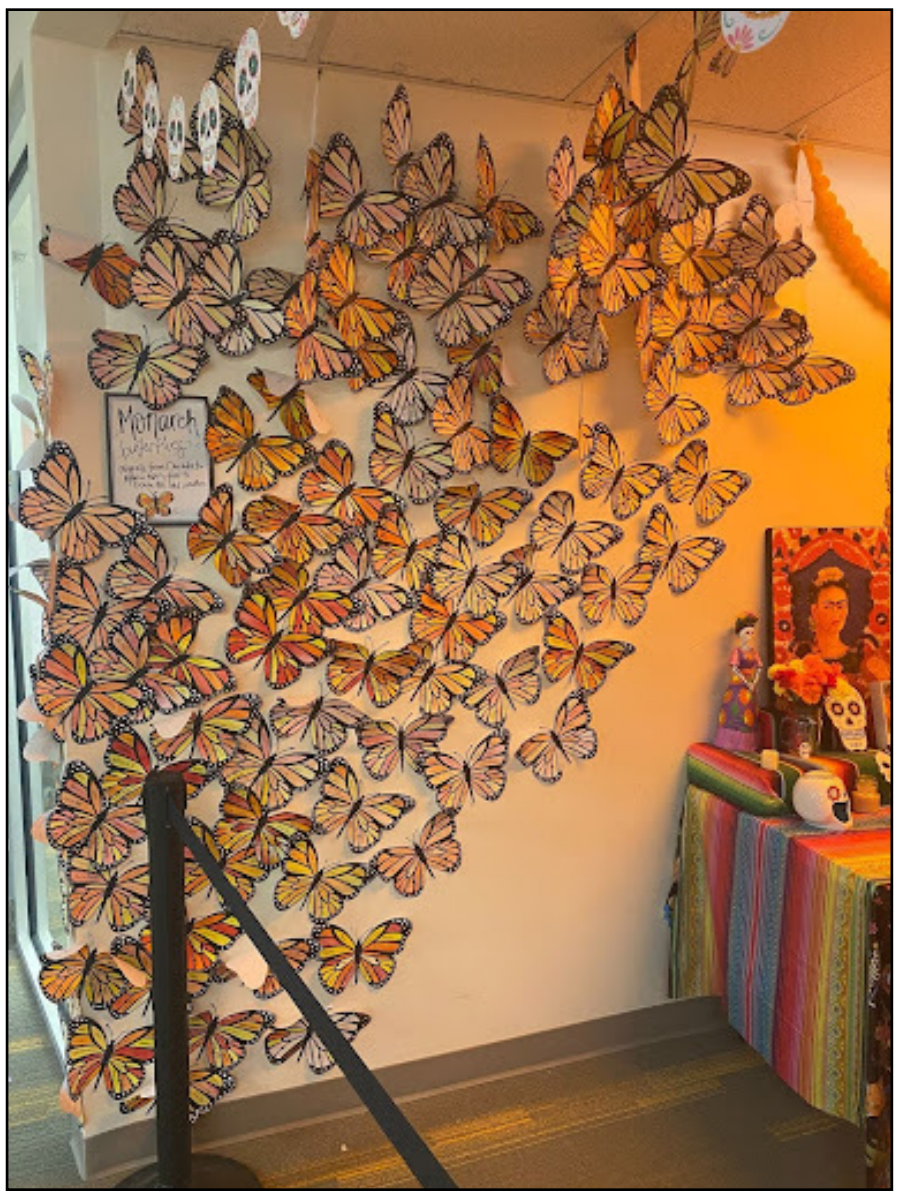
BY: SANIYA SMITH
Gata Data Reporter

This year the Spanish class had the opportunity to celebrate and learn about a unique holiday, The Day of the Dead, properly known as Dia De Las Muertos. St. Amant Teacher Jessica Jones has boldly expressed the importance of educating scholars about the unique and vast variants of religion.

"The Day of the Dead is a two-day holiday that coincides with a Catholic holiday known as All Saints Day and All Souls Day. This shows how people creatively use different aspects of certain cultures to create something special," Mrs. Jones declares. Culture is so sacred and profound that it should be shared and explored for many reasons. As people start sharing and respecting different traditions, students can grasp the true meaning of diversity.

The Day of the Dead is a celebration of life, acceptance, and healing. Celebrated from November 1 through November 2, families can connect with their ancestors' spirits whilst accepting the security and embracing the peculiarity of life. Often in American culture, death has a negative connotation as an abrupt and upsetting revelation that someone has perished. The Day of the Dead shatters this stereotype. Participants rejoice and find a happy median when it comes to death.

One of Jones's students stated, "I feel like it is important to learn about different cultures and religions because you can integrate and collaborate with them. It is an opportunity for two different cultures to broaden their horizons and further educate themselves about the uniqueness of humanity." Building the ofrenda and understanding the symbolism and the ability to connect to the spirtual realm is something so unique, that it should be learned.



PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED BY JESSICA JONES

Gator Swim has a record breaking City meet Championship

BY: LIBBY WILKINSON
Gata Data Reporter

This past Friday and Saturday, the Gators swim team wrapped up with a phenomenal Capital City Swim League Championship. The girls finished third, remaining as the top public school in the Baton Rouge and Ascension areas, while the boys finished seventh place overall.

Junior SarahJane Edmonston said, “I cut out processed foods and made sure to drink lots of water leading up to the meet.” In order to perform your best you must take care of your body. Edmonston was able to make a state cut in the 50 yard freestyle.

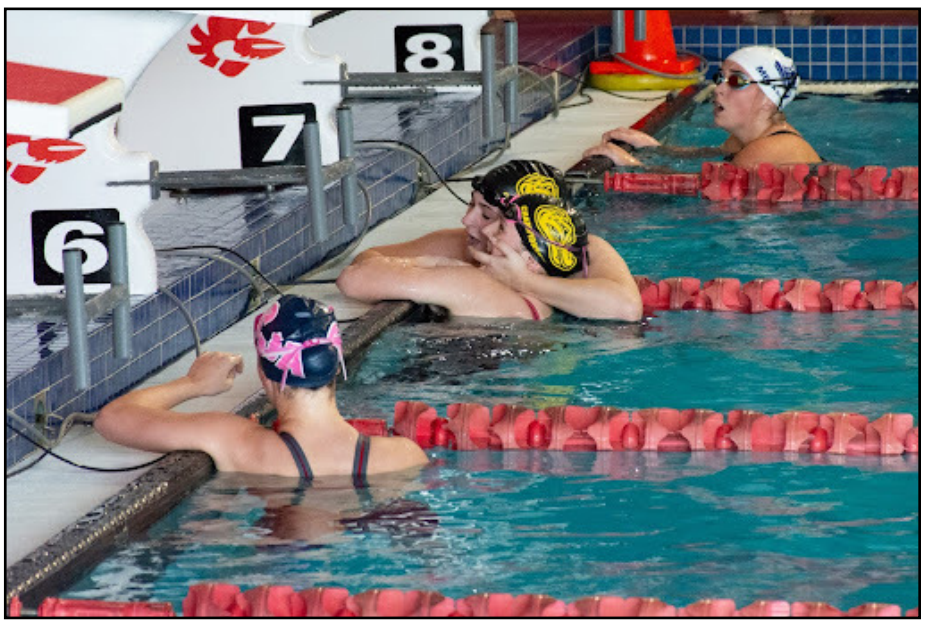
During the success of the meet, three team records were broken. Senior Ava Ostendorf broke the 100 breaststroke record with a time of 1:06.10. Senior Sean Baudion broke the 200 freestyle record with a time of 1:51.92. Lastly, senior Libby Wilkinson broke the 100 backstroke with a time of 1:02.87.

Senior captain Emmy Wilkinson believes that hard work pays off and said, “my favorite memory from city was the captain's walk because it felt like a full circle moment.” She expressed that she has always wanted to help others on the team.

The atmosphere is always positive during swim meets because “we are always supporting each other on the team, whether it's from the side of the pool or the warm up pool,” said senior captain Ben Poche.

Overall, the meet was very successful for the Gators. The swim team is now preparing for the LHSAA State Championship which will take place in Sulphur, Louisiana at Sulphur Parks and Recreation on November 22-23.

Following the meet on Monday, November 4, the seniors held their annual Cap Off My Head practice. This is when the seniors chose any teacher on campus to give their “Cap off my Head” plaque to because they felt that teacher helped them feel at home during their high school career.



STAFF PHOTOS

St. Amant area welcomes new Chick-fil-A restaurant

BY: HAYDEN LOUPE

Gata Data Reporter

Expected to open in 2025 on Airline Highway, Gonzales is receiving a brand new Chick-fil-A. The building will bring many opportunities for students at St. Amant. Whether they are looking for a job or a place to hang out after school events, like football games, pep rallies and early dismissals.

Many students are starting to look for jobs but do not want to travel far from home or school. The opening of a new restaurant, like Chick-fil-A, will allow students in need of a job to easily find one close to home.

Photo by Brandon Bell/Getty Images

The opening of a new Chick-fil-A will also bring students a new place to go to after school events. A long standing tradition for students will attend football games and then go to Canes to eat dinner and hang out with friends. Chick-fil-A will now also become an option for students to go to after events like early dismissals. Students travel to the Chick-fil-A on Highway 30 after school, a Chick-fil-A right around the corner, will cut traffic down due to the other many options right here.

The new location of Chick-fil-A is safer and easier to access. Highway 30 is an already busy Highway, with a Chick-fil-A being right there and the closest one to St. Amant causes for a dangerous and high traffic area especially around dinner and work hours. Access to a new Chick-fil-a right around the corner will allow for less traffic and a safer location causing less stress on new drivers and parents.

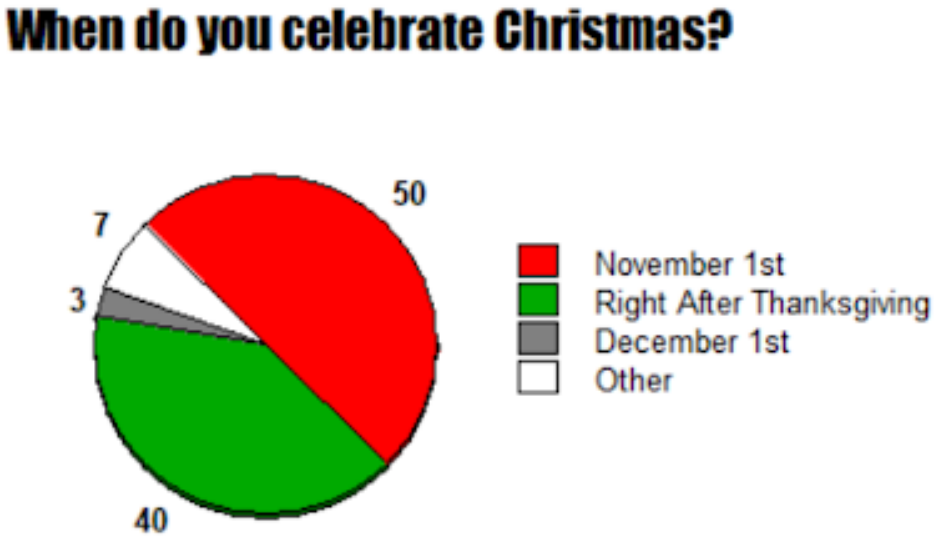
The construction of the new Chick-fil-A has begun in place of the old Piccadilly on Airline Highway. While some people were not very happy with the destruction of the Piccadilly building or tree, many are excited about the new opportunities the Chick-fil-A will bring. Construction and the grand opening is expected to be in early 2025.

When does STA start celebrating Christmas?

BY: OLIVE CARROLL AND JAILYN MARTIN

Gata Data Reporters

St. Amant's student body has a variety of different opinions on when to start celebrating Christmas. When being asked the question, “When do you start celebrating Christmas?” and being given four options of November 1, right after Thanksgiving, December 1 or any other dates, the answers vary. “I celebrate Christmas all year round. I have a jack skeleton in my house,” says sophomore Molly Porter.



Ask Allie

Dear Allie,

I'm a student at St. Amant High School, and I am struggling with my classes and I'm struggling to focus. I feel like I'm not getting enough help with any of my subjects. Is there any way I can get extra help outside of class or during class?

Sincerely,

A Struggling Gator

Dear Struggling Student,

There are many ways to help with school work, both inside and outside class time. You aren’t the only student who is struggling and needs extra help. Everyone struggles with learning new things, understanding a topic, figuring out a certain material, and having concentration and comprehension skills.

Concentration more specifically is a very common issue among high schoolers. I struggle with concentration in school as well. What do I do to help myself concentrate on my work and classes? I sit up and look right in the direction of my teacher and make sure that I do not lose focus on the subject and listen closely, that way I stay on task. My comprehension skills are also weak at certain points, so what I do in English is I will ask my teacher to put in my AirPods and pull up an audio recording of the text so I can listen and get a better understanding of the passage that I am learning about. This idea also gives me a much better chance of staying concentrated on the reading.

When I'm struggling with these areas or any others, I just contact my teacher as soon as I can, either by emailing them to ask a question or email them to ask if I can talk privately to let them know that you are struggling and ask them what would be the best thing for you to do. The teachers here at STA high school are always happy to help their students, if you need to then you can pair with another student who can assist you.

As for outside of class, there are several tutoring sessions after school that can give you individual guidance as well. Algebra 2 and 3 tutoring is offered every Wednesday after school from 2:45 to 3:45 in room 605, free ACT tutoring is held every Wednesday in room 105 of the Freshman Academy, geometry tutoring is offered after school from 2:45 to 3:45 Monday in room 605 and Wednesday in room 602. Freshman biology on Mondays math on Wednesdays and English on Thursdays in the freshman academy. If these tutoring sessions don't cover the help you are searching for, email your teachers and ask them if you could schedule tutoring after school with them, take extra notes, or visit them on their off blocks or at lunch for more individual help.

In the end, if you put your best effort and your best work into school and try to get all the help you can whenever you need it, just remember to keep a strong and positive attitude and take one step at a time.