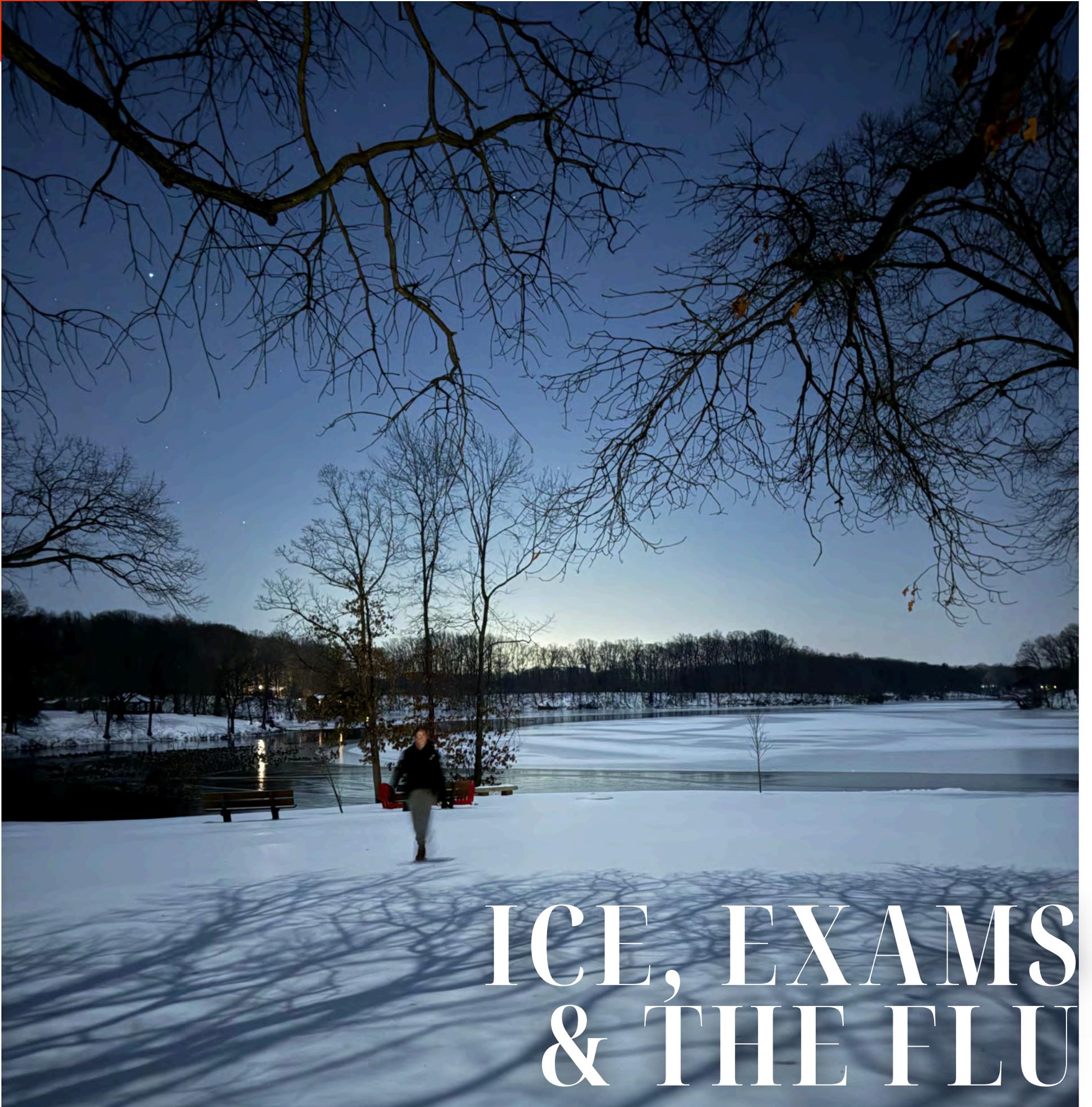




THE CARDINAL

St. Andrew's School | Middletown, Delaware



ICE, EXAMS & THE FLU

Letter from the Editor

As we move through winter at St. Andrew's in all its glory (record cold tundra-like temperatures, sickness reminding us of Flucation 2025, nights chatting in the dining hall until 7:45, intense games of SAISL, and winter boredom) I am hopeful this winter issue of the *Cardinal* will bring some warmth to everyone's hearts.

Often it feels like the New Year comes and goes, the trees are barren and the grass has turned yellow, the days get shorter, and life at SAS is extremely monotonous. Most of us probably agree winter is not our favorite season—it certainly isn't mine. I am hopeful, however, that this issue will help us see what is happening behind what most of us consider to be "boring SAS winter."

This issue shows the heart of St. Andrew's, just in time for Valentine's Day. We begin by exploring what relationships look like at SAS in "Can You Really Date at SAS?" by Phoebe Fairbanks '27 and receive suggestions for the best rom-coms from Alice Oswald '28. Our hearts are warmed as we learn how to get out of our simple daily greetings in "How Are You - Really?" by Ellen Chen '29 and look at the upsides of living across the gully with Brookie Barry '27.

Whether it be a reflection on the Levinson Lecture by Dr. Sophia Rosenfeld, a look at the impacts of winter sports coaches Doug Whittaker and Steve Cacciavillano, or an introduction to a new AI program, this issue discovers that much is going on at SAS, even in the coldest months. Other articles that might pique your interest include a plea from Bradley Cook '26 to the slow walkers of our community, a fictional short story, and a question from Lawson Meyer '26: "Why is Today's Music so Bad?"

This winter I have come to understand the value of the simply mundane. Especially considering the Class of 2026, I am reminded that much of our time together is during winter, and that the SAISL games, long conversations in the dining hall until check-in, and too long tuck-ins on Moss are all impermanent. I am not an enjoyer of the cold, the cloudy grey skies, or seasonal depression, but remembering change is coming makes me relish in the little moments of joy and connection winter has brought. I implore everyone to consider the ways that winter's seeming monotony may be a gift, and to enjoy the gift of this issue. Happy reading, see y'all in the spring!

With Love,
Sophie Hansen '26

MASTHEAD

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Can You Really Date at St. Andrew's?

by Phoebe Fairbanks '27

A typical night on campus ushers in the comfort of screaming freshman sprinting down hallways, and a sea of frozen juniors flooding in from the gully, all heading to join spirited dining hall conversations. However, if you stay past 6:45, you can track that familiar trickle of students wandering out of the dining hall to the laughter of their friends. Watch the blinds on the windows drop in the Language hall-

way, or hear the door slam to the Drawing Studio.

In theory, dating is supposed to involve nice dinners, trips to the movies, maybe a slightly awkward meet-the-parents conversation. At St. Andrew's, however, dating looks more like a half-hour walk around campus and a brisk drop-off at dorm at 7:42. (*continued on page 3 . . .*)

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(. . . *continued from page 2*) So does our version of ‘dating’ really qualify, or does our lack of privacy and jam-packed schedule prevent students from experiencing the quintessential high-school relationship?

The biggest obstacle to dating here is geography. We cannot leave the grounds without faculty, and campus, as lovely as it is, is limited in its array of romantic destinations. Your options are essentially the woods (mildly ominous after sunset and a non-starter in the depths of winter) or classrooms (fluorescent lighting, stray underclassmen, and teachers whose jangling keys seem to materialize out of thin air). Candlelit dinners are replaced by whispering over the flashing lights of the printers during Study Hall. It’s less “When Harry Met Sally” and more “When Harry Met . . . You Again, Because You Live Here.”

Time, too, is a luxury item. Our schedules are packed to the brim—classes, sports, meetings, complaining about classes and meetings, form programming. Everyone here is ambitious, and ambition does not leave much room for lingering conversations or spontaneous plans. Dating becomes something you squeeze in between obligations, like a sadly untoasted PB&J or your Spanish vocab. It’s not that people don’t want relationships; it’s that they barely have time to maintain their six hours of sleep as it is.

And yet, there’s pressure—lots of it. When it feels like everyone around you suddenly disappears every Friday night, being single can feel less like a choice and more like a social condition. As the dining hall tables empty out, you’re suddenly hyper-aware of your relationship status, mind still caught on how you’re finishing that Modern Africa paper before lights-out. The irony is that while dating here is logistically near-impossible, the emotional isolation of not dating can feel just as taxing.

Still, there’s something uniquely St. Andrew’s about romance on campus. Relationships grow out of shared routines rather than grand gestures—walking to Amos every B-block morning, sharing a sit-down meal table, knowing exactly how someone makes their Earl Gray because you’ve seen them in the servery every day. It’s less about dates and more about proximity, that feeling of growing unintentionally familiar with someone. So can you really date here, in the classical sense? Probably not. But as far as I know, St. Andrew’s students keep the art of writing love letters alive and kicking, and we basically sponsor the flower section of the local ACME. The love we have here isn’t about escaping from the world. Rather, it’s woven into the one we’ve created. They say romance is built in little moments, and luckily, it seems that’s all we’ve got at St. Andrew’s.

SAS’s Favorite Rom-Coms

by Alice Oswald ’28

With Valentine’s Day around the corner, people around the globe are getting ready to watch their favorite rom-coms. Whether it’s grand gestures or meet-cutes, rom-coms are often the best kind of “feel good” movie. Here’s a look into SAS’s favorite rom-coms and why.

Margaret Taylor & Vivian Snow - *Love Actually*

“Because it portrays all different kinds of love and follows the stories of different people throughout the movie. It feels very real/accurate and I also love its Christmas vibe.”

John Heaney - *10 Things I Hate About You*

“Heath Ledger. Can’t get better than that hair.”

Alex Kernisant - *Think Like a Man*

“It’s a very feel good movie.”

Maggie Adle - *The Princess Bride*

“A beautiful love story and it’s funny. It also has platonic love and romantic love.”

Kent Como - *Joe Black*

“It’s about death.”

Eli Meier - *Love Actually*

“It combines holiday spirit, good morality, funny laughs, and a great ending.”

Katherine Smith - *How to Lose a Guy in 10 Days*

“It’s relatable. Although it’s an old movie, it’s still relatable and is a fun, interesting watch. Because you know the plot it focuses more on the characters which is cool.”

Alex Merriman - *Wedding Crashers*

“Sort of a stretch on the category, but it’s hilarious.”

Jacob Smith - *500 Days of Summer*

“The cinematography.”

Frances Fischer - *How to Lose a Guy in 10 Days*

“Because it’s not as typical as other rom-coms. It starts out as the opposite of falling in love, because they’re both tricking each other, but then has a really nice love story.”

Grey Stewart - *To All the Boys I’ve Loved Before*

“All three movies are some of my all time favorites. They are perfect movies. The beautiful cinematography. The highs and lows of their relationship depict a true rollercoaster of emotions one may experience in a high school relationship.”

Marion Lindsay - *We Live in Time*

“I watched it with my roommates and I love it. It’s so sad but it’s so cute. It really depicts a real relationship.”

Clara Toole - *Silver Linings Playbook*

“Because it’s really funny but also heartwarming in a funny way.”

Katie Mo - *Wild Child*

“Because they’re British and I really vibe with the main character.”

(continued on page 4 . . .)

(. . . continued from page 3)

Lulu Parkinson - *Just Friends*

“It is . . . I can’t even express it. He starts fat and he has a transformation and becomes not fat and in his not-fatness he becomes a jerk. He goes back to his hometown for Christmas where he sees the girl he was best friends with in high school and tried to kiss his senior year. I like it because it’s funny, and I find that there are characters that make me laugh. Has sharp humor. There is a festive atmosphere because it’s set at Christmas time. It’s very rewatchable. It has an underdog arc, you like him at the beginning, lose him in the middle and then you like him at the end. And Ryan Reynolds is hot.”

Daphne Sturges-Moyne - *Anyone but You*

“Because it gives me relief from my life.”

Amelia Collins - *She’s the Man*

“It has Channing Tatum. It’s super funny and many of the quotes are still quoted today which means it’s timeless.”

Mila Butler - *How to Lose a Guy in 10 Days*

“The plot moves along fast where sometimes other rom-coms the plot moves slower. It’s very interesting how you get to see the perspective of both the guy and the girl.”

Cormac Lake - *10 Things I Hate About You*

“I like it because it’s like a typical stoner being turned soft by love even though it wasn’t supposed to happen in the first place. Two people who should’ve never been together were drawn together by a bribe and they end up falling in love. And I love Heath Ledger.”

“Flucation”: Health Center’s Response & Potential Second Wave?

by Charlotte Green ’27 & Amelia New ’27

Last winter, the St. Andrew’s community experienced an Influenza A outbreak so severe that students were sent home for several days. While among students this break became known as the “Flucation,” it was a severe epidemic that left several community members seriously ill. After interviewing Ms. Annette Rickolt early in the school year, we gathered data regarding this epidemic and its implications for this upcoming flu season. However, in early January, SAS experienced another sudden spike in flu cases, this time being Influenza B. This leaves students and staff wondering: How is the Health Center approaching this second flu season? Are there any measures that can be taken to prevent such a severe outbreak from happening again? What are the limits of the Health Center, and what does it take for the decision to close the school to be made? Through our initial and second interview with Ms. Rickolt, we aim to answer some of these questions.

Ms. Rickolt, Director of Health Services, reflected on last winter’s flu season in an interview in September. At the peak of the outbreak, the Health Center was being visited between 148-167 times per day, prompting them to run out of tests, as wholesale suppliers were backordered. From February 1st to the 20th, there were 67 confirmed cases of Influenza A, with 45 others with flu-like illnesses, often roommates of positive testers that were too early to test positive. High fevers and other intense symptoms indicated that the variant affecting SAS was severe. The severity and intensity of this variant was a driving factor in the decision to close the school. Of the students who tested positive, 68% of students who experienced secondary symptoms were unvaccinated. These secondary symptoms include pneumonia, sinus and ear infections, and bronchitis. Additionally, Tamiflu, a medication used to decrease length and severity of symptoms, was prescribed to some students. However, pharmacies in Middletown struggled to supply Tamiflu to the high demand of patients, causing a shortage.

In addition to Ms. Rickolt, Ms. Trish Carrico, who has served the role of Health Center Coordinator for the past seventeen years, shared a more administrative perspective on last year’s flu outbreak, highlighting

the logistical struggles experienced by staff. Ms. Carrico revealed that due to the flu, administrative work was put on the back burner, as she was forced into the role of a caregiver and aide to the nurses due to the high number of students staying in the health center. Ms. Carrico was responsible for keeping up with laundry, picking up prescriptions and medications for ill students, and coordinating meals and snacks. When the health center ran out of beds, other housing options were explored. Some students were quarantined in Ms. McGrath’s house, Ms. Ramirez’s house, and empty faculty apartments or dorm rooms. Ms. Carrico added that, in order to combat a future outbreak of a similar magnitude, the health center is hosting multiple vaccine clinics to protect students, faculty, and staff from more severe symptoms. According to the Infectious Disease Society of America, the vaccine can turn symptoms from “wild to mild.” (continued on page 5 . . .)



From the Archive: the Health Center, 2006

(. . . *continued from page 4*) In January, Ms. Rickolt informed us that her view regarding this flu season had changed and requested a second interview. She explained that outside of St. Andrew's, in the world right now, Influenza A is spreading, however, at St. Andrew's the Health Center has noted that the majority of cases are Influenza B, which shows a sharp increase since last year. Of the many confirmed Influenza A cases last year, there were only 5 confirmed cases of Influenza B, while this year there have been 7 confirmed cases of Influenza B in one week. This led to the question of what the difference is between Influenza A and Influenza B. Ms. Rickolt noted that symptoms of Influenza B are the same as Influenza A but generally more mild. Genetically, Influenza A changes much faster than Influenza B, allowing it to spread faster. However, according to Scripps Affiliated Medical Groups, Influenza B primarily affects humans, which causes it to change more slowly and produce seasonal outbreaks rather than epidemics. Ms. Rickolt told us that the national numbers of Influenza A are high, but beginning to decrease in many areas. In order to prepare in the circumstance that the Health Center reaches maximum capacity again this year, the Health Center has predetermined two presentations of symptoms that may isolate on dorm if necessary: Stage 1 includes milder and almost asymptomatic students, while stage 2 includes students with fevers and more moderate symptoms. With less overflow

housing available this year, students with stage 1 Influenza B would potentially be able to stay on dorm, visiting the Health Center twice a day for vitals checks. These students would be required to wear a mask in bathrooms, which would be sanitized more frequently.

With the recent outbreak, the Health Center has encouraged buffet style meals, as it limits cross-cohort contact within the student body. Additionally, this allows SAGE to have more control over the frequency with which serving utensils are changed and helps them protect their workers as well. Last year, the most pediatric deaths within any non-pandemic outbreak occurred. This horrifying statistic revealed the severity with which this disease affected the entire nation, not only SAS. This year, Xofluza, a new flu medication not entirely covered by insurance, has hit the market. This one-time dose is appealing to customers, and it could potentially be offered to SAS students in addition to Tamiflu, upon parental request. In conclusion, the flu has affected the St. Andrew's community greatly and carries the possibility of a school-wide shut down, prompting a proactive response from the Health Center. We would like to thank the Health Center, SAGE, Facilities, the faculty and staff, students, and parents for their flexibility and teamwork during the flu season!

When the Snowflake Falls

by Meg Vongkitbuncha '29

When the snowflake falls,
Do you admire it, its angles and edges so refined,
Or does it pierce your skin with cold so unkind?
Do you marvel at its beauty,
Or does it fill you with jealousy
And make you wish its beauty was your reality,
As the world screams at you to surrender to its brutality?
Or do you wonder instead:
Was it meant to land in your hand,
Or was its landing entirely unplanned?
Are we meant to land somewhere too,

Or is life's unpredictability the only truth we ever knew?
When the snowflake falls, and you look closer—
Its edges are not perfectly symmetrical,
Its angles all flawed.
What if the true beauty is that no one snowflake is the same,
That one may never be good enough for some,
Yet is the best possible version it became?
Or when the snowflake falls,
What if it didn't mean anything at all?
Maybe it was only meant to slip through your fingers—
Just another small ornament of winter.

Lecture Leisure

by Alice Fitts '28

It is that time of year, in the throes of winter, when we as a school funnel into Engelhard Hall for a variety of lectures with varying levels of excitement and interest. From the Levinson Lecture on history to the McLean science lecture to programming on relationships at St. Andrew's, administration is trying their best to fill our cold Friday nights. This year the Levinson Lecture was graced with the presence of Dr. Sophia Rosenfeld. Dr. Rosenfeld is a professor of 'taken for granted' history at the University of Pennsylvania, and in my opinion, a pretty enlightening speaker.

Anyone who went to her talk knows that she focused on the history of voting, framed by the lens of the history of choice, and in a particularly chaotic political landscape her talk felt uniquely relevant. In the area of relevance, Rosenfeld outshone most of her predecessors. If anyone

remembers Roy Foster from 2024 and his somewhat monotone speech on Irish poets you would understand that a focus on American politics hits home in a more poignant way. Even Dr. Keisha Blane's 2025 talk on Fannie Lou Hamer did not have the clear-cut tie to our lives as American citizens and residents in a world of turmoil. Rosenfeld was inherently interesting because her topic was important and unexplored.

We have established that her topic was interesting, but was that enough to capture the attention of 150 teenagers who are used to watching thirty second clips on 2x speed? I would say: not entirely. As a speaker she stayed a little stuck behind the podium; movement, if there was any, was made by her hands. The ten tips of public speaking from Harvard's Professional and Executive Development departments says that "nonverbal communication carries most (*continued on page 6 . . .*)

(. . . *continued from page 5*) of the message,” and she was not really communicating in such a way. I could do with a little more dynamic interaction with the audience; while I always got drawn back in, it was inevitable that I spaced out in moments. As a generation that is entertained and sustained by constant physical media, switching up the slides more often would also probably be useful.

Dr. Rosenfeld held her own in the questions section and demonstrated a vast, yet humble understanding of her own topic. The questions started rolling in slowly, as seems to be the trend here at St. Andrew’s. It always takes us a couple of people and moments to break the ice, but once the audience woke up a little they asked careful, considerate questions about the nature of voting and what could solve the voting

crisis facing the country at this moment. Eventually, more people had their hands raised than there was time to answer all the questions; another good sign for Rosenfeld and her talk. Students actually wanted to learn more, and had enough of an understanding of the topic discussed to dive in further.

I do not know if making the lecture optional was the direct cause, or if Rosenfeld was simply really interesting but overall, the people in the audience seemed to be interested and content at the end of the night. All in all, I would say Rosenfeld was a success and making the lecture optional enriched the experience for everyone in attendance; no one felt they had lost a Friday night, simply that they had chosen to spend it learning about choice.

Squashing the Rumors: An Inside Look at Coach Whittaker’s Impact on Saints Squash

by Izzy Fu '28

The St. Andrew’s squash program is exceptional. With over seventy athletes on the team, squash has a huge impact on the student body, as players take on challenging practices, far-away matches, and finally the US Junior Squash Championships. Who is behind the scenes in developing nationals-bound players, diverse practices, and an incredible program? Although he may not be a familiar face in the SAS community, he is a big one in the squash world. He was a Canadian Men’s Squash Champion in 1981 and 1982, represented Team Canada in three World Championships, and ranked 22nd in singles and 11th in doubles on the WPSA tour. Coach Doug Whittaker has had an immense impact on the squash program since his arrival in 2022.

Born and raised in Canada, Coach Whittaker started playing squash at thirteen because it was a sport where size wasn’t a factor, and he knew he could succeed, even though he was a small kid. Throughout his professional years and as the Director of Squash at Germantown Cricket Club, he has collected wisdom he directly implements at the SAS squash program. In his continuous years of coaching, he has sent over one hundred players to play squash at the college level. One of his favorite memories as a player was winning the deciding match between Team Sweden and Team Canada for 3rd place in the Junior World Championships. Although he was faced with extreme pressure, he forged an incredible lesson from his eight years as a player, lessons which he continues to foster in SAS players. “I learned that hard work led to success and that the other team is always working harder,” Whittaker says. “You can never expect the other team to be worse than you, just the same or better.”

At SAS, Whittaker is the Director of the Squash Program. When living at SAS during squash season, he spends his days going to the gym, planning Founders and Constellation practices, and working on administration for the teams. Whittaker emphasizes incorporating meaningful coaching on all levels, and he strives to “keep the instructional part simple in order to help the 1st seed to the 30th seed find the same success.” He believes that developing the best squash players requires determination and discipline, the same traits he saw in

himself as a national player. After years of coaching squash, and sending a player to the Junior U.S. World Team for sixteen years, he continues to channel his passions into Saints squash. He strives to “show kids what they can do, even when they don’t believe it in themselves” and believes that sometimes all kids need is to apply themselves to prove themselves wrong in the sport. His goal is for the squash program at SAS to become a destination for squash players and for more players to come to train for college squash. Because squash is a lifelong sport that can be played every season and does not require a team, Whittaker encourages any player who is on the fence about squash to try it out, since it could become a new passion for a lifetime.

Whittaker is an excellent coach and an even more genuine person. If one sees a man who is Canadian, holding a squash racquet, and says CHEWSday instead of Tuesday, do not be shy to wave or strike up a conversation about squash. That man is definitely Doug Whittaker, an important member of the community who strengthens the Saints one squash practice at a time. Whittaker is the glue of Saints Squash.



Saints Varsity Squash 2024-25

“Day Students” at a Boarding School

by Lindsey Liu '28

My home has never existed in the same realm as St. Andrew's. Thirty-hour travel days warp my sense of time as I wrestle with a feeling of displacement whenever I re-acclimate to life back home for a break that is never long enough. Yet for faculty kids at St. Andrew's, proximity recalibrates the way they engage with their homes on campus. The overlap they experience is more subtle than what boarders feel: while we generate camaraderie through shared separation, they deal with inconspicuous gaps between selfhood, family, independence and school.

For Eli Meier '28, whose father teaches photography, home is less a structure than a fleeting sensation. “When I think of home,” he told me, “it's usually like a feeling . . . I think of the pond in summer.” During the school year, when campus is crowded and “totally alive,” that version of home vanishes. Distance, for Eli, is seasonal rather than geographic. He added that his friends have “gone different ways in life,” addressing a social distance that has accumulated even as physical separation remains a hurdle. Brian Walsh '28, whose father teaches Classics, bluntly acknowledged that “I can't say I really miss home much because it's so accessible.” Despite being conveniently close to his house, he makes an intentional effort not to intertwine the two, though both are “very comfortable to come back to.” If he minimizes that distance between his house and school, he said, “it would just stress me out.” Eli echoed this sentiment: “I have to be present here and give [this place] the same amount of time as any other student would.” For both, distance presents itself as a versatile, dynamic component of the complexity they experience at St. Andrew's.

Eli's choice to invest in this community was a source of turmoil. He described feeling an early obligation to attend St. Andrew's: “You kind of assume that you're going to try and go here. It was my entire life already,” he recalled, imagining four more years of the same and thinking to himself, *Oh God*. Over time, that hesitation distilled into a capacity to earnestly cherish St. Andrew's. “How do you not stick by the one place you know best?” he asked, reflecting on the opportunities and relationships he maintains. “You have to say, this is my home.” Brian's experience, on the other hand, was different. He affirmed that this decision was entirely his own. “I was allowed to go to any school

of my choice. This is the one I chose because I wanted to come here.” In retrospect, Abe '26, whose mother taught English until last year, is grateful for “learning the patterns and culture here,” which compelled him to become more “extroverted and vocal.” For Abe, there was initially a discrepancy between the image of an “all-enriching” St. Andrew's and the version he perceived. However, he conceded that living with his peers now “really does feel like being in one big family. It's great having this brotherhood here.”

Growing up on campus also complicates the cultivation of individuality and independence. Abe juggled a sense of alienation alongside immense perfectionist expectations before grasping that “[he] can excel at other things,” and that “there are so many other things to try out here.” He appreciates his mother's unwavering support but notes that “there was a bigger part of me that wanted to try things out for myself more.” Eli attributed his “love for the outdoors” to growing up on “such a beautiful campus, where I'm always with my family.” He added that his curious nature has matured into a desire to “always want to try new things and seek a deeper understanding of something,” shaped by the consistency between his parents' outlook on life and the ideals that St. Andrew's preaches. Though tentative, Eli believes he is not “ill-prepared to live in the ‘real world.’” He articulated, “I have faith in myself and my capabilities.”

Leaving carries particular weight. For students who have observed the transience of youth and change in tradition through generations of graduating classes, departure can be disorienting. Yet, Eli, Brian, and Abe confront this imminent reality with courage and sincerity: “I never want to stand still in life,” Eli told me. Brian knew he would “be aware of everything [he's] learned from the people around [him].” Abe called this “good growth” because “change is necessary in life.” As they relish the present, they express gratitude for the goodness that St. Andrew's is brimming with. These faculty kids insist that the only difference between them and boarders is “having a home to go to at the end of the day,” as Brian put it. Despite the variation in our experiences at St. Andrew's, I agree with him on this: “I knew that I was gonna have fun here, but I'm having a great time.”

How Big Is The Divide?

by Brookie Barry '27

There is no question that the gully trek invites many complaints from the junior constellation members. Whether during the depths of winter, or in those beginning weeks of fall, the adjustment is heavily pronounced by that less than five minute walk to Founders. During these short minutes you might hear a very out-of-breath expression of gratitude amidst the trudge up those final stairs. Often it is as simple and repetitive as “I am grateful for you all.” Underneath, however, a bond is forged through these seemingly infinite steps. This bond produces a variation of feelings, depicted by the range of responses to the question “If you could sum up your experience across the gully, what ONE word would you use?” One of the responses simply said “ew.” Another described the experience as: “GIRLHOOD!”

As junior constellation members reflected on the nights spent laughing with senior girls in their dorm in opposition to the separation from their sophomore and freshman counterparts, 48.1% of people said that being across the gully was isolating. This isolation, however, produced both pros and cons, as over 60% of constellation members across the gully said that the distance helped them “feel more productive because they have a lock-in space.” A variety of reasons could play into this. For me there is an element of physical removal to living across the gully that is incredibly vital junior year. Once the high pressure feeling of hallways and proximity to class is removed, many junior constellation members can connect authentically with people in their dorm, whether that be through the pre-exam scream on the (*continued on page 8 . . .*)

(. . . *continued from page 7*) football fields or walks to the health center with a speaker in hand. The workload and expectations cease to hold that same gravity once put into a setting that resembles a house. The face to face connection on KLM dorms cannot be ignored. There are constant emotional checkpoints for each junior, whether that be through senior RLs, dorm parents, or even peers. An example of this on K is Gratitude Thursdays, where Mary Margaret Hall '26 writes a gratitude card per room every week. This kind of support and dedication is possible through the closeness of the dorm.

Over 85% of constellation members across the gully said they participated in these classic traditions and habits. The comfort experienced through routine on KLM dorms is a core piece of what makes this experience unique. At St. Andrew's, communities within the school have a choice of "opting in" to such micro moments, deepening connections to each other and allowing for work-life balance.

However, this is not to say that there are not a significant number of people who find it harder to connect with the other half of school through this living experience. In some ways it's even more important to highlight this discomfort. Shifting from being only a hallway away from the grade below to a completely different location on campus has the potential to uproot cross-grade connections. Holding this balance is key, which is work junior constellation members continue to put forth as the year progresses.

In this way, the bubble fostered across the gully can be both a lowlight and a highlight that fills junior year with important shifts and understandings. Inevitably, constellation members must meet this question before senior year, and upon reflecting back, these many nuances can be understood. Looking ahead to the spring, the spaces behind the gully will soon be introduced to junior constellation members. Until then, snowy walks and movie nights will persist!

From Scraps to Soil: Composting at St. Andrew's by Carine Leon Rosenfield '28

This fall, you may have noticed five green plastic buckets sitting in the corner of the MCR. These buckets belonged to a food waste-composting experiment led by Coordinator for Environmental Responsibility, Ms. Buxbaum. Since arriving at St. Andrew's, Ms. Buxbaum has been transforming the underutilized composting system. Her process involves "seeing value in the things that we have a lot of, and figuring out ways to turn that into something that is useful." Food scraps, for example, can be collected from various sit-down meals to add into compost. Faculty including Mr. Perla, Dr. Hammond, Ms. Saliba Hill, and Mr. Rehrig helped Ms. Buxbaum gather rough data for future compost systems by collecting at their respective tables.

From the experiment, Ms. Buxbaum realized it was difficult to collect more than 1.5 gallons at each table due to the lack of compostable foods in our meals. Nonetheless, the collected scraps were added to the first of three composting bays in the Organic Garden. The composting pile then had to be turned frequently to promote necessary airflow. Ms. Buxbaum explained that composting creates a micro-ecosystem made up of fungi, bacteria, and a mixture of "greens and browns." The

"greens," or nitrogen-rich materials, include moist plants, manure, grass clippings, and food leftovers. The "browns" include bulky materials such as dry wood chips and leaves. This mixture creates space for oxygen, and supports the microbiota that break down organic matter. Depending on management and temperature conditions, this matter can take anywhere from a few months to over a year to break down into healthy compost.

The composting process is very labor-intensive for a single person to manage. But, without proper care, compost becomes unbalanced and unusable. This can lead to an unpleasant odor many people associate with the nutrient-rich matter. Meanwhile, well-maintained compost does not produce an odor, and serves as a major aid to carbon sequestration in soil. The U.S. Department of Agriculture found that "soils store more carbon than the atmosphere and vegetation combined" and that 50% of the organic matter in compost is made up of organic carbon. Additionally, the entire food web relies on organisms like bacteria and fungi, which thrive in compost micro-ecosystems. Without decomposers, plants wouldn't be able to grow, herbivores wouldn't have food, and the energy sources of carnivores would be depleted. In short, the entire energy pyramid would collapse without healthy soil supported by compost.

With this information, Ms. Buxbaum hopes that more people can understand the benefits of a balanced, well-managed compost system. In the future, she aims to introduce a sustainable composting system that would blend seamlessly into campus life, in spaces such as the dining hall or the forest. Ms. Buxbaum appreciates and always seeks help from students and other members of the community in the Organic Garden. If you are curious about composting and sustainability at St. Andrew's, Mrs. Buxbaum welcomes your questions!



SAGE preparing a sit-down meal

Slow Walkers Are the Real Problem

by Bradley Cook '26

Emerging from the dining hall into a sea of disarray, St. Andrew's veterans cannot help but notice the growing chaos and slowing efficiency of our hallways. The width of our paths and size of our student body remain unchanged, so there is only one culprit to blame: untrained walkers. Highly respected and widely esteemed, the ideal hallway traveler possesses three traits acting in perfect symbiosis: speed, spatial awareness, and a sense of urgency. Together, these qualities embody a person who helps others arrive at their destination without delay or newly formed enemies.

To achieve this status, an aspiring walker must discern the very important “do's and don'ts” of hallway etiquette. First, an efficient walker stays to the right, maintains a brisk pace, and never walks side-by-side with a partner. Conversely, slow walkers ignore these principles and therefore, to quote Margaret Gilheany '26, “have no ambition in life.” Slow walkers can typically be found chatting with a friend across hallway lanes, standing in the middle of important entryways, and gazing aimlessly into the abyss. For the sake of St. Andrew's, I hope slow walkers abide by my code, and reduce my daily, spontaneous rage.

Would You Win a Snowball Fight?

by Esther Lin '29

1. What is your favorite thing to do on a snowy winter day? (besides engaging in a snowball fight, the obvious answer)

- A. Sipping hot chocolate while reading in my comfy bed.
- B. Trying to catch a single, perfect snowflake on my tongue.
- C. Building the biggest snowman in town.
- D. Shovelling the driveway and walk—mine and the neighbor's—in clean, efficient lines.

2. When you and your friends build a snowman, what is your role?

- A. Being the only one that brings a carrot.
- B. Looking up aesthetic designs of snowmen on Pinterest.
- C. Trying to build the biggest snowman in a cool and difficult pose.
- D. Packing the snowballs dense and thick, and ending up building a whole family of snowmen perfectly.

3. What is the most important to stock up on before a blizzard?

- A. The best books and hot cocoa mix.
- B. A new puzzle, specialty popcorn, and ingredients for that one complicated recipe you've never had time to try.
- C. A massive generator, a new snowblower, and enough supplies to provide for the whole neighborhood.
- D. Water, batteries, pet food, a manual can opener, and a plan for when the primary system fails.

4. What type of wintry music do you listen to?

- A. Instrumental music that makes me feel warm.
- B. Christmas songs the entire season!
- C. Dramatic songs with a loud chorus.
- D. The SAS Winter Playlist—obviously!

5. What do you like the most about SAS winters?

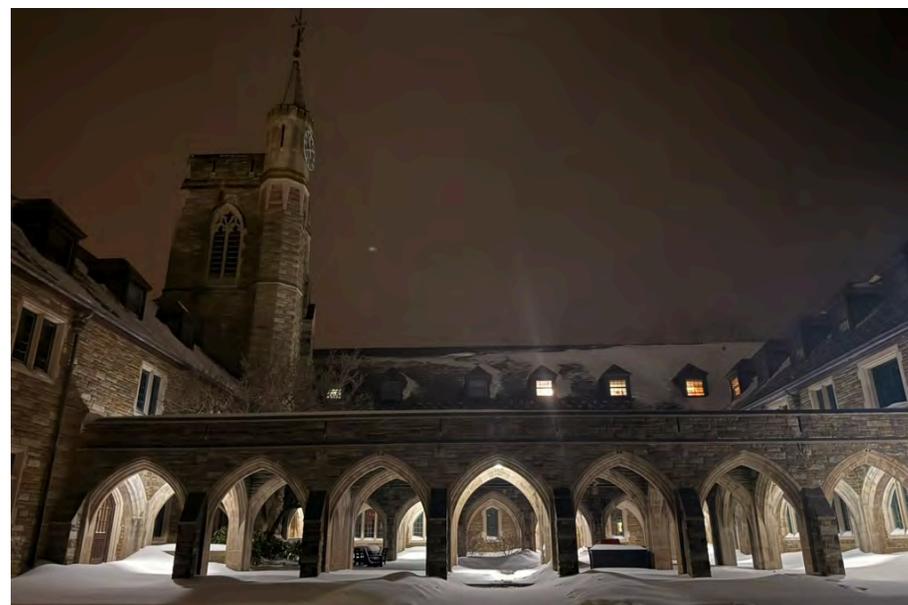
- A. Taking pictures with my friends in the snow!
- B. FREE DAYS FOR THE SNOW
- C. Sledding down the gully!
- D. All of the above !!!

Mostly A's: The Harmonist. You seek peace and harmony above all. In a snowball fight, you'd be trying to stop the intense fighting while everyone else is sneaking up on each other. Victory is less important to you than everyone having a pleasant day.

Mostly B's: The Distraction. You're focused on the experience, not the objective. You'd be marveling at the snow's texture, or building a single, perfect snowball while the fight rages around you. You might end up being on the winning team, but as an accidental mascot.

Mostly C's: The Ambitious Storm. You are all passion and big plays! You would lead a brave, chaotic charge that becomes legendary . . . for how spectacularly it failed. You have the heart of a winner, but your tactics are just pure improvisation without thinking twice.

Mostly D's: The MVP. You think in systems, patterns, and quiet efficiency. You'd have stockpiled snowballs before anyone arrived, positioned allies without them realizing it, and secured victory through foresight, not fury. The true, undeniable MVP.



The Garth and clock tower under a fresh layer of snow

Why is Today's Music so Bad?

by Lawson Meyer '26

Most people know Clairo as a modern pop staple: a cultural phenomenon whose songs like “Sofia” and “Juna” have dominated playlists and TikTok feeds alike. What’s less often emphasized, however, is that Clairo rose to fame in an unusual manner: from her bedroom-produced track, “Pretty Girl,” which went viral almost overnight, launching her career without the traditional industry gatekeepers once crucial to success. In the “Golden Era” of music (the 1960s through 1980s), artists typically needed the endorsement of a major record label to enter the industry, and were expected to spend years refining their craft. Recording required access to expensive studios, engineers, and high-end equipment. This system, although restrictive, acted as a powerful filter, separating hobbyists from highly skilled artists. When we look at the figures that emerged from that era, we find legends like Elvis Presley and Mick Jagger: artists whose works remain culturally significant generations later. Today, all an artist really needs is a laptop, a Digital Audio Workstation like Garageband, a mic, and a Digital Service Provider like Spotify. Sure, today’s system has allowed for some notable artists and songs, but it has also lowered the industry’s quality threshold, and thus, fewer lasting classics emerge—not because talent no longer exists, but simply because it is increasingly difficult to separate the exceptional from the endless.

Aside from the influx of music production, another issue in contemporary music arises from a platform that I’m sure you are all familiar with: TikTok. Before you stop reading, roll your eyes, or write me off as another technophobe who makes you feel crummy for your habits, let me explain where I’m coming from. When I first heard the song “Espresso”, I was sitting in the car with my sister, who claimed she had found the “song of the summer.” If this is the song of the summer, I thought, I’m in for a pretty bad one. And yet, within the span of a week, I found that the chorus had, quite sneakily, infiltrated my everyday thoughts. However, after repeatedly replaying the song’s chorus in my head, I noticed something interesting: I had absolutely no idea what the lyrics were that followed it. How did this song recover from its initial impression on me? I spent days searching for the source, trying to understand where it had first taken hold in my mind. And soon enough, I found the answer: the song was running rampant on my TikTok and Reels feeds. And this was no coincidence. Today, music is increasingly shaped around a single, clippable moment designed for lip-syncing, dancing, or overlaying in short-form videos. Once a song rises

to the top of an algorithm, record labels chase the sound, clone the structure, and push their artists towards a similar aesthetic. Contemporary media consumption, characterized by short-form content, strips songs of their essential components, sacrificing structural cohesion for short, instantly recognizable moments. Why do you think every song on TikTok is sped up to an annoyingly high-pitched chipmunk-like speed? Why have you never heard “Stairway to Heaven” or “Brothers in Arms” on TikTok? Because the impact of these songs lies in a gradual, instrumental buildup, not a 10 or 15 second loop. People’s attention is increasingly valuable, and modern technology has given consumers greater autonomy over the media they consume, and in turn, more power to determine which artists gain relevance: which, in the era of short-range content, is not ideal for truly thoughtful, inspiring, or original music.

Throughout history, artists have reflected popular culture, and, to some extent, yielded to its whims: a phenomenon that has not changed today. What has changed, however, is the nature of these cultural trends. In my opinion, today’s trends are not a conducive environment for lasting classics to emerge. You may read this article and interpret my stance as a Victorian aversion to modernization, or an exhaustingly analytical approach to music. After all, if “Espresso” truly inspires joy and happiness for its listeners, my critiques are irrelevant. Still, for the sake of my own enjoyment, I hope that leaders in media production will one day return to thorough forms of artistic expression: like a thoughtfully constructed novel or song. In many ways, the collective return to complete artistic forms is already underway. Today’s generation enjoys near-total access to music from a vast range of time periods, and many listeners are turning towards older music. However, for the most part, today’s contemporary music and short-range methods of media consumption are inextricably linked. So, I invite you to consider this: is the music you listen to truly inspiring, or merely familiar? Do the novels you read provoke thought, or do they simply avoid demanding your full attention? I urge you to seek out the imperfect outputs of artistic expression rather than a collection of isolated moments. While separating what is merely familiar from what is genuinely exceptional requires conscious effort, moving beyond familiarity allows you to discover your innate preferences, likes and dislikes, which extend past the narrow realm of algorithm-driven media, and gives you a thorough, authentic understanding of who you truly are.

*From the Archive:
Winter 2003 -
“Playing After the Storm”*



*From the Archive:
Winter 1961 -
"Ice Hockey
on the Pond"*



A Conversation with Mr. Steve Cacciavillano

by Smith Ragsdale '28

Whether he's doing duty on Baum or screaming on the sideline of a football game, Mr. Cacciavillano is already an active member of our St. Andrew's community only halfway through his first year. But Mr. Cacciavillano's role is much greater than meets the eye. Likewise, most people don't know his life story: one of service, family, and dedication.

Mr. Cacciavillano grew up in Clarksboro, New Jersey and attended Kingsway Regional Middle and High school. Later, he studied biology at Ursinus College, graduating *cum laude*. He continued his education at St. Joseph's University in Philadelphia and finished his Masters of Biology at Clemson. Cacciavillano then took a job at Northfield Mount Hermon School in Massachusetts, where he taught biology, was a dorm head, and coached football, wrestling, and lacrosse.

After briefly returning to Kingsway regional for a year, Cacciavillano joined Tower Hill School. During his eight-year tenure, he "was a biology teacher for the first four years, before transitioning into the role of athletic director. And during [his] eight years there, [he] coached wrestling for two, and coached football for eight."



Coach Cacciavillano at a wrestling match

The Cacciavillano family had planned to leave Tower Hill earlier, but "COVID extended their stay." COVID "was also kind of a blessing in disguise in many ways, because that allowed [him] to become AD there and have that professional opportunity." After being AD for four years, "it was a good time for a change, personally and professionally." Teaching at Northfield Mount Hermon had introduced him to boarding school life, which he enjoyed. Cacciavillano was already familiar with St. Andrew's, being at Tower Hill, and could stay in the area while returning to boarding school. "It was a perfect match," Cacciavillano noted.

From 2017 to 2019, when Cacciavillano coached wrestling at Tower Hill, he had an outsider view of the St. Andrew's program. In his words, "It was trying to kind of rebuild again; there was a lower involvement. The number of wrestlers that the program had was back on the rise again and growing. They were competing more in a junior varsity, mat-time type level."

At St. Andrew's, Cacciavillano is assistant AD, head of auxiliary programs, head wrestling coach, and assistant football coach. When describing an average day in his life, he said, "every single day involves aspects of all three of those roles, particularly when I'm in season."

Cacciavillano takes pride in being a coach, his impact demonstrated by the passion and drive instilled in all of his players and wrestlers from day one. "Every day, for the most part, there is either practice or competition taking place. There's a particular level of focus that's going into the practice plan, when it comes to football, scouting, game plan, things of that nature."

Off the field and mat, Cacciavillano says "Mr. C has me focused on a couple of big picture projects; things like our live streaming capabilities here on campus, focusing on some of the ways that we represent our history here in our athletic spaces." Regarding the Auxiliary programs, Cacciavillano deals with "how we can begin to develop and grow here on campus in terms of summer programming (*continued on page 12 ...*)"

(... continued from page 11) offerings.” Currently, St. Andrew’s does not offer summer programming. The upcoming change shows the role Cacciavillano already plays at St. Andrew’s. He also focuses on “ways in which we could use this campus not just during the summer, but when school is in session.”

Cacciavillano is motivated daily by accomplishing tasks: “If I have a particular job or a particular set of tasks that I have to do I’m going to strive to do them to the best of my ability, as perfect as possible. And so it’s just sort of the way I was kind of taught and raised, and just the way I act as a professional.”

The highlight of his life so far is his kids. Cacciavillano has three children: “I have my oldest daughter, Shaelyn, [who] will be 12 in two months. My youngest daughter, Hadley, will be 7 in two months. And then my son, Stephen, turned 10 in August. They’ve been pretty awesome, we’re super busy with them and that in and of itself can take up a huge portion of what I do on a daily basis. They’ve been the best.”

In his free time, Cacciavillano likes to watch a lot of sports, especially with his kids. He is a self-described “sports fanatic.” He also spends a lot of time “sitting in gyms, sitting at pools, and sitting at fields” watching his kids play sports.

When asked what Cacciavillano likes about St. Andrew’s and boarding schools in general, he adds, “I really like the residential side of boarding school. I mean, I think that’s obviously what makes boarding school unique. You get to develop deeper relationships, you get to develop more consistency in terms of how and when you’re interacting with the students.” Additionally, “Residential life can be the most genuine at times. You don’t get that at a day school, so I enjoy that quite a bit.”

Looking forward, Cacciavillano is “obviously excited and eager to continue to accomplish more.” As a wrestler, I’m excited to see the work Coach Cacciavillano has done and will do for our school, and I know we as a community are grateful for his presence.

Students’ Favorite Places to Study on Campus

by Stacy Zou ’29

In interviews with several SAS students, I asked the following questions to understand more about the best places to study on campus, and what makes them so great:

- What is your favorite place on campus to study?
- What about the environment helps you focus (quiet, background noise, lighting, seating, etc)?
- If you had to describe this spot in 3 words, what would they be?

Here are your fellow students’ answers!

Olivia Ike

- “My favorite study space is any of the study rooms by the entrance to the library, specifically the third study room that has a window. It’s behind the other two bigger study rooms. I like the warm artificial light it has. It makes the room really calming to study in. I also like the fact that there’s a lot of table space to put my things.”
- “calm, comfortable, quiet”

Eli Meier

- “My favorite place to study is definitely my dorm room. It has cozy warm lighting, fresh air, and white noise. It is far away from the common room so there aren’t many distractions and the couch is a great place to crash after a long study session.”
- “quiet, cozy, de-stressful”

Austin Macalintal

- “My favorite place to study would be the library. I enjoy studying there because it is typically quiet, distraction-free, and there are a variety of spaces to choose from.”
- “focused, silent, calm”

Daniel Zhu

- “Ms. Pressman’s classroom. It’s usually occupied by people who are really locked-in on work, so an attentive, productive atmosphere is guaranteed. Turning the big light off and the little lamps on creates a cozy evening vibe that I find soothing (initially

Ms. Pressman’s was the only classroom with the lamps but Mr. G bought more for the other classrooms recently.)”

- “sequestered, amber, warm”

Caitlin Hwong

- “My favorite place to study on campus is probably that one room in the library that has the giant whiteboard in it. The big table with chairs on the side and smaller tables nearby help me stay close to my friends but not too close and the way the sunlight trickles in through the window is so magical, especially during a fall sunset and you can look out onto the glittering lake. I feel like I can relax in that room and spread my work out across the tables, a bit like the way I can open up and sort through my brain in that room.”
- “tranquil, languid, golden”

Lila Lunsford

- “My favorite place to study on campus is the upstairs table in the library. I like the lamp up there and like being able to switch to one of the green comfy chairs if the table becomes uncomfortable. I love that there is also a lot of natural light and find that I work better when surrounded by natural light. I also enjoy how you can hear the wind whistling in the trees.”
- “ambient, sunlight, overlook”

Billy Petrone

- “My favorite study place on campus is definitely the physics classrooms on the second floor of Amos, particularly in front of the windows. It is always very quiet in those rooms and around that part of Amos in general. The trees sway as you look outside, and the slight view of the pond by the boathouse makes it all worthwhile, and sometimes a tad bit distracting! The ability to work at the tables in the classroom with the nature view is definitely my forte in terms of focus and locking in.”
- “silenced, cozy, productive!”



Students in the Library Reference Room

Understanding Seasonal Depression

by Eliza Berry '28

In the spring and fall, St. Andrew's students enjoy cool, sunny front lawn nights, Maui Wau, the Square Dance, and afternoon sports and activities sprawled across the beautiful campus. In winter, when suddenly everyone retracts from public spaces and we lose the sense of togetherness, students can feel increasingly isolated and lonely.

Seasonal depression, or scientifically SAD (Seasonal Affective Disorder), is a type of depression related to changes in season. Most commonly, symptoms such as moodiness, lack of motivation, oversleeping, or social withdrawal will start in the fall and continue into the winter. SAD is a diagnosable condition, however it is common for people to self-diagnose in communities where everyone has shared experiences and emotions, such as St. Andrew's. A common misconception is that feeling an increase of sadness in the winter means having depression. If you have SAD it does not mean you are depressed, it means you experience sadness or depression in darker, colder months caused by lack of UV rays / sunlight.

When a student poll was taken, 73% of students reported experiencing seasonal depression at St. Andrew's. 79% of students reported that they did not experience seasonal depression before coming to St. Andrew's. It is safe to assume that a boarding school environment enhances seasonal depression rates, with our little sun exposure (vitamin D intake) and separation from families and homes. SAS does a great job

of creating family feeling within the community, but when all is said and done and the dark days are over, we are going back to dorm rooms, not our bedrooms.

It is difficult to simulate the "cozy" environments of a home: fireplaces, family dinners, hot baths, etc. School counselor Ms. Cunniffe shared that one of her coping mechanisms is bird-watching. "I started feeding the birds," she said. "I would get my book and watch them and identify them to distract myself. It pulled me out of the lethargy I would feel every winter. And I started looking forward to it." She recommends students acknowledge their seasonal depression without falling into it and letting themselves hibernate through the weather.

Loneliness was a highly reported symptom of seasonal depression among SAS students. The weather and scarce daylight urges us to be alone in the warmth of our beds, when it is necessary for students' mental health to do the opposite. Having a routine of getting outside to face the fleeting sun, spend time with friends, and exercise is an effective way to boost moods and serotonin levels.

For students struggling with SAD: Remember winter is not forever—it is a season, a temporary period that is meant to end. The days are already getting longer. Take advantage of every blissful sunlit moment. Talk to someone about how you feel. Chances are you're not alone.

St. Andrew's Winter Playlist (Top 15 Most-Voted Songs)

by Esther Lin '29 & Anna Glenn McCready '29

Walking down the dorm hallway before chapel as everyone is getting ready, speakers are blasting music from different genres and in different languages. Coming from different places all over the world, students in the SAS community share different cultural backgrounds, values, and of course, music tastes. Music is something that brings people together, especially in a community like St. Andrew's where everyone is different. Take a look at the 15 Most-Voted Songs in the SAS community below!

1. "Purple Rain" by Prince
2. "Sweater Weather" by The Neighbourhood
3. "Northern Attitude" by Noah Kahan
4. "White Winter Hymnal" by Fleet Foxes

5. "California Dreamin'" by The Mamas & The Papas
6. "Escapism." by RAYE, 070 Shake
7. "Do You Want to Build a Snowman? - From "Frozen"/Soundtrack Version" by Kristen Bell, Agatha Lee Monn, Katie Lopez
8. "cardigan" by Taylor Swift
9. "Snow On The Beach" by Taylor Swift, Lana Del Ray
10. "Let It Snow! Let It Snow! Let It Snow!" by Dean Martin
11. "Landslide" by Fleetwood Mac
12. "Exit Music (For A Film)" by Radiohead
13. "Heather" by Conan Gray
14. "Ditto" by NewJeans
15. "Snowman" by Sia

How Are You—Really?

by Ellen Chen '29

Hi, how are you doing today? Every day, people come and go. But some stop and take the time to ask how you are doing. This question is often used to start a conversation or to check in with someone after a long day. A response of “I’m good, how are you?” or something like these words is almost expected. The question’s repetitive appearance in our lives makes our response almost instinctive and fixed. Through a survey of 93 people in our community, 65% of the responses were “I am good+how are you?” and about 7% of the responses were “I’m fine+how are you?” or “I’m okay+how are you?” By using words like “good”, “great”, “fine” or “well,” we condense multitudes of emotions into vague and generalized words to swat away the pressure of really answering the question. When we resort to the easy options, these words no longer truly exhibit our state of being. The question “how are you?” loses its genuine meaning. It no longer is asked with the intent of caring but for the tradition of talking. The response given leads the mood of the following conversation or is completely disregarded depending on the situation.

Despite a fellow freshman’s claim that “people genuinely care when they ask this question,” nine times out of ten, the question is only used as a courtesy. The response often passes through our minds faster than we think. Therefore, the next time you ask “how are you doing?” don’t use it simply as a conversation starter. Use it when you genuinely care about the other person. In our community, every individual is given freedom of “character, mind and spirit.” We should strive to create a

difference through small and seemingly unimportant moments, such as how we greet people. Enlighten your friends with interesting responses and ask with intent. Some great responses are:

- Excuse me? Who do you think you are? (*side-eye*, just kidding), today was a tad brisk but other than that, amazing. How are you?
- I’m phenomenal, how are you?
- Doing adequately
- Living in a dream!
- Terrible (cue emo music)

How do you respond when someone asks: "How are you doing? How was your day?"
93 responses



The History and Conspiracies of St. Andrew’s

by Ellis Rattray '28

With a school that has a vibrant and rich history, it can be assumed that the school and its culture have developed with the years. What was seen as “regular” in the early years of the St. Andrew’s community now seems unbelievable from our current perspective. Though many of these instances and stories have slipped through the cracks and been forgotten, or flipped and misunderstood, some stories have been passed along, and survived to this day.

In the 1950s, there was an active rifle range on the top floor of the field house, above the old gym. A rifle range is an area to practice shooting at targets with varying distances. Students, under supervision, would be allowed to practice shooting, and even learn how to shoot. There was even once a Rifle Club, all of which has understandably since been removed. The room that was once the rifle range has now become a faculty apartment. Still within the Field Hhouse (and long before Baum Barbershop) a legitimate Barber Shop existed. The shop had classic black and white checker tile flooring that is still visible today in the spot where the shop once stood.

Similar to the rifle range, the main common room did not always hold books on the shelves, but rather once displayed a collection of firearms.

The guns were from the founder A. Felix duPont’s antique gun collection. As mentioned in the archives, they were donated shortly after his death in 1948. Often students and members of the adult community of St. Andrew’s would comment on the oddity of displaying guns within the setting of a school, leading to the removal of the collection in 2020. The guns were donated and now are shown at the Hagley museum in Wilmington with many other DuPont artifacts.

If you have ever walked past the Hive, most likely you have seen the two mossy stone bunkers with the locked green doors. These two structures have been subject to various rumors and conspiracy theories, with the leading theory being a bomb shelter that was built during World War Two. For such a common question, the actual answer is generally unknown. The two bunkers are not a bomb shelter, and not storage rooms, but rather are part of the school’s retired sewage system.

Before Blackbaud and computers, the entire system of student marks would be tracked and tallied in a giant book in the Dean of Students office. As a prank, a student decided to steal the book. The book was not found after being taken, and since there was no backup copy, every student reverted back to zero marks. (*continued on page 15 . . .*)

(. . . *continued from page 14*) The resounding peal of bells that can be heard every half hour do not actually come from a person slamming the giant bell within the tower, but rather are the product of large speakers in the tower, set to a clock, playing the tune. Underneath the speakers lies a single room that, Mr. David Myers says, contained “a ton of trash, empty cigarette packages, and a bed frame with no mattress” which he saw the last time he was in the room over a decade ago.

The recent closing of the Dining Hall outside of meal times is not the first time in St. Andrews history that it has been off limits for certain students. At one time, only seniors could be in the dining hall when it

was not a meal, and if underformers were caught inside during that time, they would receive marks.

Unlike current day, seniors were once permitted to have their cars on campus, with permission to use them whenever they pleased. This practice was short lived though, because seniors would repeatedly skip class to take a trip to the McDonald’s in Smyrna.

Perhaps our current practices will one day be looked on with curiosity and a bit of judgment, but for now let’s appreciate the rich and somewhat strange history our school carries.

The Unseen Shield: the Team Behind the SAS Safety Rating

by Josephine Xie '27

If you’ve ever glanced further at St. Andrew’s Niche profile online, you will see that more than 90% of students report feeling safe on campus. This number is one of the highest among all boarding high schools. This exceptional sense of security isn’t an accident, it’s a daily reality protected by our Security team. This professional force works tirelessly, often behind the scenes, to maintain our campus as a protected harbor.

As Mr. Thompson, the Director of Security, explained, the team is a blend of sworn Constables and Security Officers. “Constables are like myself. We are armed and we have the powers of arrest . . . Most constables are former police officers.” With team members boasting over thirty years in law enforcement, their experience forms a formidable first line of defense. Their mission is clear: “Our main purpose is to keep you safe . . . we’re kind of like a fence to keep everything out and to keep all you safe in here.”

Unknown to most students, our “fence” is constantly tested. “We get a lot [of trespassers] at the main gate,” Mr. Thompson noted, estimating up to ten on a typical weekend. From curious visitors to contractors, every entry is logged and monitored. The security guards’ shifts extend

around the clock, with patrols checking fence lines, and walking around checking locked buildings at night. “Even when you guys aren’t here on breaks, we’re still on premise.” Most importantly, their focus is external. “We’re not here to police you. We’re here to keep you safe,” Mr. Thompson emphasized. The team sees its role as supporting the student community. They render aid for injuries, manage fire alarms, and provide a visible, reassuring presence at major events like Special Olympics and sports games.

The system, however, is a partnership. The team extends a crucial invitation to all students and faculty with the message: “See something, say something.” They urge anyone who observes something that feels out of place to immediately call extension 3000. “There’s never a call that we won’t take. I’d rather hear about it than not hear about it.” The system is a partnership.

So the next time you see an officer at the gate or on patrol, know they are the proven professionals safeguarding our community. That near perfect safety score is only one side of the reflection to their quiet, constant watch, a shield that allows our campus to feel like home.

New Program brings AI to St. Andrew’s

by Annie Davenport '28

It’s well known that students can’t use ChatGPT or other AI tools for school work. But that doesn’t mean teachers can’t use AI as a tool.

The SAS honor code makes it clear that “Students are not permitted to use generative AI independently in their coursework at St. Andrew’s. The independent use of generative AI tools to assist a student in the work of an assignment is a violation of St. Andrew’s Honor Code.” However, there is a lesser known provision in the code that states “there are times when a teacher may allow for the use of generative AI in a guided, focused, and very limited capacity to aid in a student’s learning.” This year Mr. Will Scully, a new physics teacher, has taken full advantage of this provision.

He does this by introducing an AI tool called MagicSchool. Mr. Scully

describes it as “an AI model that is specifically tailored towards teachers.” Teachers can program the platform to serve students in a way broadens their understanding of the material which they are learning. Unlike ChatGPT, which would spit out an answer if asked, MagicSchool automatically answers, “any question with another question.” This allows the AI tool to break down the problem and walk through the steps with the student. In one recent example, Magic School was asked a question, and its response forced the student to think thoroughly through the problem. It then ended the statement with, “take your time to think through each part, and then we can work on setting up the equations we’ll need.”

MagicSchool is used in both physics and astronomy classes, but since both fields are so vast, there may be a concern that an AI device would use tools and vocabulary unknown to high (*continued on page 16 . . .*)

(. . . continued from page 15) high school students. However, MagicSchool is created specifically for schools in the sense that teachers are in full control. They are able to prearrange the settings they desire and input curriculum.

Now that some students have been using MagicSchool in classes, there is a question of whether AI may be implemented more widely. Mrs. Hurtt, Associate Head of School for Academic Affairs, explains that teachers can decide whether they want to implement AI into their classes or not. She says that, "some teachers will be really excited about some of these AI tools." Others, however, may determine that for their class it is not helping the students understand the material.

Mr. Scully was introduced to MagicSchool by his past work and initiated it at St. Andrew's. Other teachers may follow suit in exploring more available AI tools. Mrs. Hurtt believes it will be a gradual

integration. She says that, "St. Andrew's will not go all in" on one specific AI tool; however, teachers may have "creative and effective ways [to] understand this tool and integrate it into the learning."

This all comes at a time when high schools across the country are facing similar questions. The NEA, one of the nation's largest teacher unions, claims that they envision, "AI-enhanced technology as an aid to public educators and education, not as a replacement for meaningful and necessary human connection." St. Andrew's may have the same thought process. The goal of having an AI tool is not to do the work for the students but rather to help them understand the "core goals" of what they are learning, according to Mrs. Hurtt. Therefore, if a teacher comes across a tool they consider worthwhile, they may implement it into their own classroom. In the future, we will be sure to see St. Andrew's continue to revise and update the AI policy while staying cautious and thoughtful. As AI gradually becomes more prominent in the world, it is likely to become more prominent at St. Andrew's.

Winter Moments from the Archives



Above: Winter 1983 | "Piling up Shoveled Snow"



Above: December 1932 | "Frozen Noxontown Pond"



Left: Winter 1980s | "Sledding"



Above: Winter 1960 | "Sledding the Hill"