

Moving Forward

by Cooper Arnold

The transition of opening Saint Raphael Academy in full is on the minds of students, teachers, and families alike. In an interview with Principal Richard, he explains what the current future looks like and what is to be expected.

First off, in the world of Covid-19, much is uncertain. The school has reevaluated not to open in full during the month of November. There is hesitancy due to the rapid rates of increase around the State of Rhode Island.

While the full-in person model is not going to happen this month, it is important to note changes that will occur when the time comes. Lunch tables in the cafeteria will be added, but social distancing is still a must. With more desks needed, there will be more cleaning and sanitiz-

ing throughout the classrooms.

Some things, however, will remain unchanged, such as being required to wear a mask. Also, the full virtual model will still be accessible to students who find that option the best for them and their families.

While the administration and teachers want to see all of their student's faces, it is imperative that the school waits until it is safe to open. Saint Raphael Academy has done a stupendous job with working with the virus and all its uncertainties.

There have only been a handful of students required to quarantine thanks to the work of the students, teachers, and cleaners at the Academy. Safety supersedes all aspects of this school year. Saints wants to make



photo by Cooper Arnold

sure that there continues to be a safe learning environment, but also a wonderful academic experience shared by more than ninety years of alumni.

While transitioning to the full-in person model is not cer-

tain as of yet, one thing is for sure. Mr. Richard is "extremely pleased with the students' mask wearing and the dedication to following the rules."

"The teachers' dedication and ability to multitask and teach a group of students in front of them and virtually, for every class, is remarkable. [Mr. Richard] appreciates all the hard work everyone is doing to make this situation work and it is because both students and teachers are working together that makes this all achievable."

During these challenging times it is important to remember that we are all one Saints' community and that, together, we can continue to handle this virus and come out stronger than ever. Let us stay Saints Strong!

Election Day 2020

by Cooper Arnold

This year's presidential election is expected to be like no other. Due to COVID-19, new forms of early voting have changed the way elections are held within America.

Usually, most people head to the polls on election day, vote, and return home. There was also the option to request a mail in ballot, so long as there was a valid reason for doing so (such as being disabled).

This year, however, 34 states are permitting anyone, regardless of need, with the ability to request a mail-in ballot. Even more extreme, nine states and

the District of Columbia are automatically mailing ballots directly to all registered voters. These new rules have created a mass influx in the number of mail-in ballots being cast within the United States.

Mailing in ballot gives more people the opportunity to vote and gives those afraid of being exposed to COVID-19 a safer alternative.

There are, however, drawbacks to the system. The biggest drawback is that the winner of the election will most likely not be declared on Election Night. This is due to the

fact that thousands of ballots will be received on the day of the election and there may not be time to count them within that twenty-four-hour period.

Also, some states only require the mail in ballots to be post marked by the third, meaning that they may not even arrive till days after the election. There is also a concern that mass voter fraud may be committed due to the automatic mailing of ballots. This issue, drawn primarily through party lines, has it warrants, but overall, it appears that this method of voting is, for the most part, safe and secure.

It is important to remember that many millions of Americans will still vote in person on November 3, enthusiastic to vote for their presidential and congressional candidates. While this election is very tense and stressful for many Americans, it is important to remember that the right to vote is an extremely important duty. It allows citizens to make their voice heard, rally against issues, and institute change.

Having the privilege to vote is immense, so regardless of which candidate you support, make sure you vote!



photos courtesy of Getty Images

Spotlight on Mr. Thibault

by Isabella Calise

The little things in life are often overlooked. Prior to the Coronavirus outbreak, a chance to breathe fresh air, give someone a hug, or live a healthy life went seemingly without notice.

Mr. Thibault, the present Vice Principal of Student life at Saint Raphael Academy, reflects on his outlook on life after conquering Covid-19 when he says, "I appreciate a blue sky, appreciate a lot of things... appreciation runs deeper now."

After a week-long trip in the Mediterranean coast during February break of 2020, Mr. Thibault's mild, cold-like, symptoms quickly skyrocketed into the life-threatening side effects of the Coronavirus. "Every day you are sick, you get more sick... you get worse," Mr. Thibault cited when he struggled to be recognized by the Rhode Island Department of Health as a victim to the virus.

At the time, the typical cold sweat, chest congestion,

and cough was not matching with the world's information that depicted the present virus as a flu-like disease.

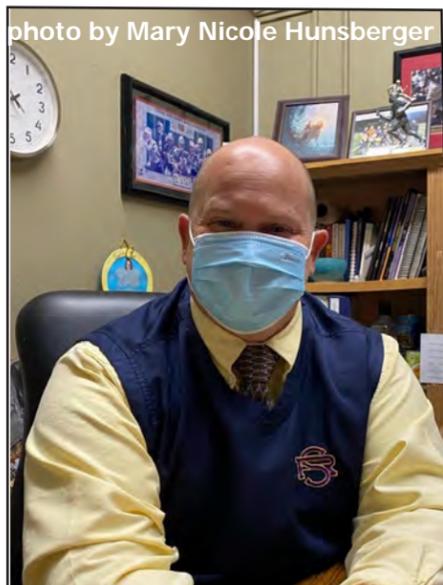
Not long later, he was advised to go to the hospital once more for testing and admittance. For days on end, Mr. Thibault laid in a hospital bed under the burden of extreme antibiotics, severe intubation, and the ever-present thought of peril.

As a natural-born fighter, Mr. Thibault described the uphill battle like "[when] fighting against the tide... you're going to tire yourself out."

Despite receiving his Last Rites (Anointing of the Sick) our Vice Principal did not lose faith in himself or God's abilities.

"I [wrote] the article to save people and raise awareness," he shares," but all my life I felt I had to do something extraordinary."

In the midst of his survival story, Mr. Thibault realized God is always listening. He believes that



God will give everyone the opportunity to be a hero in their life story when they least expect it.

Looking back on his experiences, emotions, and difficulties, Mr. Thibault remains grateful for the thoughtful letters, kind messages, and prayers people wished him.

He also could not help but emphasize the doctors and

nurses that cared for him. From rushing to his bedside to shaving his beard, Mr. Thibault is in awe of the sympathy and compassion the men and women displayed. "[They] are like, to me, angels from God," he says, "I told them [their] parents must be so proud." During his illness, Mr. Thibault turned to prayer and meditation as an outlet for hope and compassion.

As we go to school each day wearing a mask, checking our symptoms, and social distancing, it is important that we remember that anyone can get the virus.

Although the virus varies in symptoms and side effects for each person, Mr. Thibault shares that "if people wear masks, we are going to reduce [the] possibility [of infection]."

By following medical direction, staying positive, and fearlessly battling his condition, Mr. Thibault truly overcame the Coronavirus, Saints Strong.

Court Confirmation

by Olivia Costanzo

After the death of the legendary Ruth Bader Ginsburg on September 18th, there has been an opening in the Supreme Court. Despite Ginsburg's request for her position to be filled after the 2020 presidential election, President Donald Trump has nominated Amy Coney Barrett to take her place.

Barrett was a federal judge on the US Court of Appeals, a position she has held since October 31st, 2017. Barrett was



born on January 28th, 1972 and received her degree in law from Notre Dame Law School in 1997 at the top of her class. She is a devout Catholic though she says that she keeps her religious beliefs out of her decision making.

She is an originalist, meaning she interprets the Constitution as the authors intended at the time of writing, which can sometimes be considered as conservative. She has received several awards for her achievements in law

and is rather respected for her skill; however, there are some politicians who disagree with her stances on certain topics.

After four days of hearings, her vote was officially confirmed by the Senate on Monday, October 26. She was sworn in by Justice Clarence Thomas that same day. Barrett says it is "a privilege to be asked to serve my country," and looks forward to serving the American people in her new position.

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Saints Sports Stay Strong

by Mary Nicole Hunsberger

Saint Raphael Academy's fall athletes have been making moves on the field and court all month with some great wins.

Just over a month into school and a month into the athletic calendar, soccer players, tennis players, cheerleaders and cross-country runners are all happy to be in session.

School sports have been quite different for everyone, not only the players. However, Saints fans have not stopped supporting. Family members and friends of athletes have lined up along fences and finish lines to cheer on and congratulate our athletes. Most fans have been lining up along the fence, but just last weekend, some Saints fans decided to test the waters as they were allowed to sit on the bleachers.



photo by Mrs. Farrell

The supporters from the fence are not the only new norms for fall athletes. In addition to their typical half-time, girls and boys soccer players luckily receive a mask break twenty minutes into each forty minute half.

Moreover, the athletes are happy to have Saints cheerleaders to support and bring some extra school spirit to home soccer games as well as cross country meets. When it is permitted by RIIL, the athletes would love for

you to come and support, too. Stay tuned for updates on upcoming games and races, home and away, in the morning or afternoon announcements and in your email. Let's cheer these teams on to victory.

NFL During Covid-19

by Jake Knox

The Coronavirus has affected nearly every sports organization from track and field all the way to English Premier soccer in Europe. Thankfully, United States leagues such as the NBA and the NHL have had zero cases with the new "bubble" strategy which does not allow for anyone who hasn't tested negative for the virus to enter the facility.

Without the "bubble" the MLB managed to have only one scare with the Miami Marlins but still had a positive test rate of only 1.8%. The question now is why has the NFL struggled with the Coronavirus more than any other league in the US?

The Tennessee Titans were

one of the first teams to deal with a major Coronavirus issue heading into week four against the Pittsburgh Steelers. The organization came down with two dozen cases and were forced to reschedule not only in week four but later in week five against the Buffalo Bills. We now know that the reason for their outbreak is because head coach Mike Vrabel and General Manager Jon Robinson did not enforce wearing masks while inside training facilities.

Although many thought the Titans would face serious consequences, they are most likely receiving a fine.

But not all teams struggling with the virus have been lacking in following the NFL's COVID-19 protocol. The New England Patriots have struggled with the virus especially in recent weeks cancelling a practice heading into week 6 match up against the Denver Broncos as a fifth team member tests positive.

The question now is if the Patriots are following COVID guidelines how are they still struggling with the virus? Many believe the answer lies within the sport itself or that the NFL guidelines are just not strict enough.



photo courtesy of Getty Images

Playoff Season Delivers

by Jake Knox

As the NBA and NHL wrap up their seasons the MLB has just finished their "Fall Classic" in a shortened yet challenge-packed season. While the Tampa Bay Rays looked to win their first World Series in franchise history, the Los Angeles Dodgers walked away with their first World Series since 1988. But, make no mistake. Championship droughts have not plagued either of these cities.

The Laker defeated the Miami Heat to Secure the franchises seventeenth title. And in Tampa the Lightning defeated the Dallas stars in six games to secure their franchises second Stanley Cup.

This World Series, however, was an interesting one as fans around the world made predictions on who would ultimately win the pennant. Many favored the Dodgers as they posed one of the deepest rosters constructed in the sports history. Stars such as Cody Bellinger, Corey Seager and Walker Buehler are now accompanied with former MVP and World Series champ Mookie Betts who



photo courtesy of Getty Images

just inked a 12-year contract worth \$356 million dollars.

Tampa Bay was no easy matchup with the strength of their starting rotation. A three-man rotation of Tyler Glasnow, Blake Snell and Charlie Morton tried to limit the Dodgers bats in the series and rising star Randy Arozarena and company looked to defeat the imposing LA pitching staff.

Although everyone is congratulating the Dodgers, fans should tip their hats to the executives of the league for a cautious and successful 2020 season.

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Arts & Entertainment

Model Legislature Goes On

by Victoria Silva

Legislation has always played a big part in America's history from the founding of North America all the way up to present day. This explains why so many young students in high schools across America join model legislature.

This club teaches students how legislation works, and what we as the people can do to change certain laws or restrictions. In model legislature students can create their own bills on what laws they think should be implemented in the State of Rhode Island.

Of course, they also have to decide whether they are conservative or liberal, so they can discuss matters they feel strongly about

with others that think the same way. They can even share ideas or work with others to come up with bills they want to propose.

At the end of the season for model legislature there is a meeting at the Rhode Island State House where all participating high schools come together to share their ideas and vote on bills. Students are either placed in the senate or house of representatives and they will vote for each bill that comes across their committee.

In these two chambers students learn how to object as well as add on to other bills to make them more reasonable. Last year Saint Raphael Academy partici-



photo by Mr. Kirejczyk

pated in the big legislation event on February 8th, 2020 and even proposed bills on issues that were important to the students.

Saints was represented by

eight students who all participated and worked together on learning legislation. This club allows creativity as well as confidence for the students that participate in model legislature. It allows students to have a voice and speak on behalf of what they feel is justifiable in the world of government and politics.

By signing up for model legislature, you will be able to create new bonds with your classmates and even other students from high schools all across Rhode Island. If you love to debate, and learn more about how laws are made, than this club is for you. If you are interested in joining, contact Mr. Kirejczyk.

The Play's the Thing

by Chatham McCloskey

Living in a virtual world is a daily and frustrating struggle that we must overcome.

Now as we entered the new school year with so many questions on how activities will eventually happen, one concern was how our excellent drama program will continue their fall musical.

After last years, "Tuck Everlasting", the Saints' Drama Program abruptly ended. Over much consideration, as you may have guessed, the theatre is closed and will be held virtually.

Isn't it comical, and frankly sad, to have a musical online, where no one can dance, and the singing quality is poor? The

simple answer: No. The hope is to learn the songs and lines for the show over Zoom,

then record it individually. Post production will include mixing musical tracks, editing scenes and dance together, and integrating students' artwork through green screen technology.

Although it may seem challenging, this is the perfect opportunity to improve technical skills and to really focus on voice and acting techniques like the nuance of facial expressions.

The 2020 Fall Musical is... "You're A Good Man, Charlie Brown"! Make sure to watch when the musical releases.

If you would like to get involved in any way, there are still many behind the scene and technical opportunities. This is a critical and revolutionary time, why not be a part?



Keep Dancing

by Chatham McCloskey



photo by Mrs. Gaffney-Hsu

In this modern day and age, when we think of dance, we might think of it as the Hip-Hop or tik-tok dances we see on our everyday social media, but it is much more elaborate than that.

Over the years, dance has evolved from the Charleston, to the Indian kuchipudi, even the YMCA. Dance allows others to express themselves through motions instead of words.

Here at Saint Raphael Academy, dance has certainly evolved from performing at the fall pep rally to having our personal fall and spring recitals.

Moderated by Mrs. Gaffney-Hsu, the Dance Company of Saint Raphael Academy provides dance lessons to increase performance skills,

prosper in teamwork through group dances, and to individually express oneself in whichever dance one may choose.

Although they have mainly focused on lyrical, jazz, and tap in the past, Dance Company is now hoping to include a larger variety of genres, including dances from multiple cultures. They are also willing to take suggestions to incorporate the ideas of all dancers involved.

The thought of even having a virtual season may have seemed absurd at first, yet it can truly a great opportunity to learn from.

Our Dance Company is willing to take on the challenge, so they can improve and adapt to new technical skills, communication, and online teaching.

Mystery Monday

by Marietta Moore

12 years of age, young Ramiel had a mind unlike any other. Between jumbo cakes with fire-breathing, winged llamas jumping out of them and a bear randomly showing up at his school just to give him \$20 for lunch, Ramiel's brain was strangely always coming up with something new. This, however, almost never interfered with his studies. With an average grade of B+, Ramiel loved to learn. He was always reading any book or article he could find, favoring fiction and fantasy the most. Along with reading, Ramiel admired movies and various YouTube videos (specifically animation ones). With all creativity at hand, Ramiel was never, and could never feel bored.

After school, Ramiel headed straight to volleyball practice. About 27 spikes, 8 receives and dives, and 15 laps around the gym later, Ramiel was beat. 2 hours of practice was hard work, but he enjoyed every minute of it. Finally getting home, he threw his bag under the desk in his room and headed straight to the shower. Once finished showering, Ramiel threw on a black hoodie and light grey sweat joggers and went to his room to watch some YouTube videos. Laying on his stomach, cuddling his pillow, Ramiel turned his TV on and selected the red and white triangle icon. Three videos later, he felt his eyes grow heavy. He tried his best to stay alert to finish the video, but the weight on his eyes subconsciously took over.

With what felt like hours later, Ramiel woke up confused. Last time he checked, he was alone on his bed watching animation videos on YouTube, not laying on a (seemingly) deserted island with small, white Labrador Retriever licking his cheek. Sitting up, Ramiel pushed the pup away from him, whipping his head around trying to figure what was going on. The island was flushed with orange trees and warm, pink sand. The dusty red and pale-yellow sky reflected over the lavender water. Lilac clouds swayed to and fro as a couple flying...baby tigers? Before he could process anything else, Ramiel felt a sharp pain on the right side of his head. Grabbing his forehead, he put his head down in his lap. The Lab sensed his discomfort, placing its paw on Ramiel's knee. Ramiel lifted his head up, smiling at the pup. His smile faded when he noticed the scenery in front of him.

"Wasn't I just on an island? What is thi- where am I?" his questioned bewilderedly. Raising an eyebrow, Ramiel eyed the pastel pomegranate sky, with pale-turquoise, blocky clouds, the giant pandas made of multi-grey rocks and boulders, the large, rosy comforter, with blindingly white eyes and hands and feet at its corners, jogging past him, and the enormous pale-pink piggy bank that poured out small, thin, black chains onto the burnt brick road. Nothing made sense to Ramiel as he looked at the Lab that now had a wagging, cobalt blue tail, and alternating periwinkle paws (front right and back left).

"Weird...I could've sworn you were all white." Ramiel stared at the Lab before him, wondering why and how it was the only thing that managed to stay by him. His mild astonishment withered as the pup barked furiously at something behind his newfound human companion.

"WHERE DID THAT COME FROM?!" shouted the middle schooler as his eyes almost popped out seeing, in the distance, a huge centaur charging towards them. Ramiel's legs moved on their own and before he knew it, he was tangled in the piggy bank's chains. Struggling to get out, Ramiel panicked seeing how the centaur was now half-way to where he was. Again, the Lab sensed distress and ran over to the boy, lightly pouncing over the chains beneath his paws. Suddenly, the chains started retracting back into the piggy bank, dragging Ramiel along with them. The Lab somehow managed to do a long jump and landed directly on Ramiel's head, with its paws resting calmly over the frightened boy's forehead. Desperately clawing at the black metal, the chains only retracted faster. Soon enough, Ramiel and



his furry friend were inside of the piggy bank...or so they thought.

"What the...? Is this what the inside of piggy banks usually look like?" pondered Ramiel. The ground was coated in lush green grass. There were a couple chew toys sprawled across the ground accompanied by semi-empty food and water bowls. A tall, (seemingly) white fence stood about 10 ft across from where Ramiel was standing. The Lab hopped off Ramiel's head and walked over to the fence. Skeptical about the last scenery he experienced, Ramiel stood petrified that if he moved, even a mere centimeter, something strange would happen again. Stopping a fourth of the way, the Lab turned around and barked at the fossilized boy, knocking him out of his trance.

"You want me to follow you, huh?" Ramiel questioned pensively. To which the dog barked back, wagging its periwinkle tail as its tongue hung out of its mouth.

"Are you sure?" Ramiel had his mind set on staying put, but the puppy had other plans. Strutting over to him, the periwinkle pawed pup stood up, placed its front paws on Ramiel's knees, and leaned its body against them. With its big, royal blue orbs, the pup looked up to Ramiel's eyes. Ramiel felt a wave of serenity wash over him as he stared back at the dog.

"Okay," Ramiel chimed with a smile, "let's go". Side by side, the pair walked over to the fence. Once in front of the towering, now pastel blue, wall, the pup lifted its right paw, pushed it against the door, and opened it. A gasp escaped the dumbfounded middle schooler's lips as he noticed dogs and puppies all over the place. The puppies gently ran over to the only human in the room, leaving the adult dogs alone as they napped. A few exchanges of light growling later, the periwinkle pawed pup let the other pups surround its friend. Bending down to pet them, Ramiel noticed the black collar with a silver pendent that said "Chief, 6/27/20."

"So you're almost 5 months, huh? Hopefully, my mom will let you stay with us, seeing how you've grown quite attached to me," Ramiel laughed. "Well, Chief," he paused and looked around, "and other pups. Wanna play?" suggested Ramiel. They all barked in delight as they pounced on the beaming boy. Trapped under a mountain of puppies, Ramiel chuckled lightly to himself.

Suddenly, he reminded himself of the centaur from earlier. Did he have my dinosaur blanket as a cape?" he thought. A soft, distant voice pulled him out of his thoughts. Gently pushing the puppies off of his chest, Ramiel sat up and looked around. He did not see anyone. The voice called out to him again. It sounded so familiar, so warm, so comforting. Wait a second... "Mom?"

Mystery's Question: Why did Ramiel keep ending up in such random scenarios?

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Arts & Entertainment

Things to Do in November

by Meryem Oldro

As the time of ghouls, candy, costumes, and spooky activities falls behind us, this new month ushers in a question: what's there to do now?

Well, I'm here to tell you there are tons of things for you to do, both alone and with others! Here are some starters and ideas on what to do in your free time:

Bake something! November is one of the best months for preparing for and bringing out new dishes for Thanksgiving.

Try something in your comfort

zone, like maple cookies, or go out of your comfort zone and try to bake something more complicated, like pumpkin macarons.

Whatever you decide to bake, you will always be left with a fun experience and, if everything goes well, a yummy snack!

Plan your family's Thanksgiving dinner. Maybe your cooking and baking skills are not the best, but you can always take that stress off whomever normally plans it and try planning out all the components



photo courtesy of Johnson's Roadside Market

of that Thursday night meal.

Go to a pumpkin patch and find that perfect pumpkin! There are many local farms you can support around Southern New England. Find one and spend a few hours frolicking with the squash.

Do a fall photoshoot! Go to a park, find a trail, or wherever you think is best. Get out into nature, witness the falling leaves, and take tons of pictures while enjoying the New England Autumn.

Visit a farm stand! Support-

ing small businesses is crucial right now, so why not do so while also getting to pick out some fresh fruits, veggies, and bakery delights? A personal favorite of mine is Johnson's Roadside Market in Swansea with their blueberry scones.

Last of all, make sure you are having fun while staying safe! Wear a mask if you go out, and check the specific requirements for wherever you end up going. Have a Happy Harvest Season.

Coming To the Small Screen

by Emily Ryder

This is the way! The highly anticipated 2nd season of the hit Disney + show, *The Mandalorian*, returned on October 30th. To recap, the titular character, the Mandalorian ("Mando" for short), is a ruthless bounty hunter traveling the outer rim of the galaxy.

Last season, the Mandalorian discovers "The Child", or as he is affectionately named by fans: "Baby Yoda". He was supposed to turn the child over for a bounty but ended up betraying his employees to save the innocent baby.

Mando goes on many riveting adventures with his new companion across the galaxy. In the finale, Mando ventures off with The Child to find his home and his family.

The second season is set to kick off to an exciting start. In the trailer, the main villain of season one is revealed to be alive and in pursuit of the dynamic duo.

The pair are reunited with some old friends and possibly find new enemy in the legendary Clone Wars character, Ahsoka Tano. She is a Jedi which may prove problematic for our protagonist



photos courtesy of Getty Images

as Mandalorians and the Jedi are on opposite sides of the law.

How will this all play out? Will we finally find out if The Child is related at all to Yoda? The only one way to find out... new episodes of *The Mandalorian* are out every Friday.

The Haunting of Bly Manor was released on October 9th on Netflix. It is the second anthology installment of the award-winning show *The Haunting of Hill House*.

tery, and bone chilling horror.

The Haunting of Bly Manor is a "perfectly splendid" must watch for anyone who enjoyed *The Haunting of Hill House*, is looking for a thrill,

While the entire season of *The Haunting of Bly Manor* dropped on October 9th, fans of *The Mandalorian* will have to be a little more patient. Episode 2 is set to be released on November 6th.



Cultural Connection

by Isaac Arbelaez-Venagas

¡Hola soy Isaac! Soy un estudiante extranjero de Colombia que está en estos momentos en grado 12.

Yo llegue a la Academia de Saint Raphael el 27 de enero de 2020 con el propósito de completar mis estudios en el bachillerato y poder presentarme a las universidades en este país, pues en general cuentan con un nivel académico mejor que el de mi país.

Desde el comienzo mi llegada al país ha sido muy distinta e interesante; pues esta era mi primera vez como estudiante nuevo y aún peor, mi primera vez en una secundaria donde todos hablaban en un idioma que no es mi lengua materna.

Para complicar mi camino y deseos, por casualidad del destino un mes después de que tuve mi primera clase el colegio cerro por culpa de la pandemia, yo simplemente estaba devastado por dentro. Solo imaginense, estar en una ciudad donde no hablan tu idioma, estando con una familia que no es tu propia

familia y aparte no tener una gran cantidad de amigos con los que estar porque el colegio cerro al poco tiempo de que entraste. Es simplemente desalentador.

A pesar de ello y todos los miedos de todo lo que vino y vendrá, me siento feliz aquí.

Es posible que no tenga todos los amigos, familia, ni muchas otras comodidades que tenía en Colombia, pero aquí puedo seguir forjando mi camino para convertirme en lo que yo siempre he soñado.

Este año puedo decir que he perdido bastante, incluyendo a mi abuela quien falleció tan solo 1 semana atrás y no pude ni visitar por la pandemia, pero a pesar de todo creo que me es un año que no solamente voy a recordar por lo malo sino también por cosas buenas como el hecho de que estoy en Estados Unidos y de poder poco a poco de contar con más amigos.

Ese soy yo, un muchacho tímido y reservado pero que no dudara en saludarte o ayudarte cuando necesites.

Hi, I'm Isaac! I am a foreign-exchange student from Colombia and a current senior. I arrived at Saint Raphael Academy on January 27, 2020 in order to complete my studies for high school in America. I hope to learn more about the universities in America since they are of higher academic standing than the ones in my home country.

From the beginning, my arrival in this country has been very different but interesting. After all, this is my first time as a new student.

Additionally, this is my first time in a high school where everyone speaks a language that is not my native language. To complicate my goal here - a month after I had my first class - Saint Rays closed because of the pandemic.

I was simply devastated inside. Just imagine being in a city where they don't speak your language, being with a family that is not your own family, and not having many friends to be with because school closed shortly after you've entered. It's daunting.

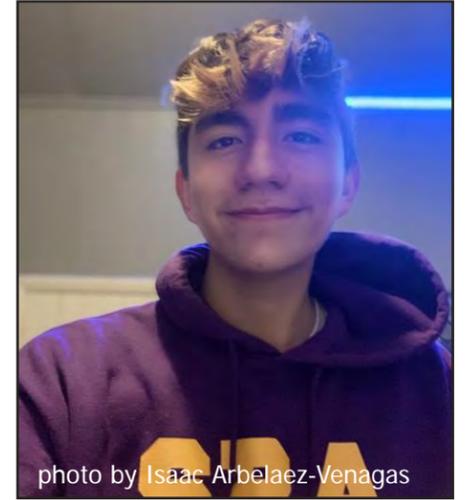


photo by Isaac Arbelaez-Venagas

Despite this and the uncertainty of everything to come, I feel happy here. I may not have many friends, family, or other amenities I had in Colombia, but here I can find how to become what I have always dreamed.

This year has had challenges, like losing my grandmother one week ago and being unable to attend funeral because of the pandemic. Yet, despite everything, I will remember this year for good things like being in a new country and making more friends as I go.

So that's me: a shy and reserved person who won't hesitate to say hello or help when needed!

If you have an idea for a story that you would like to see in Spanish and English, contact saintssentinel@saintrays.org

Saints Survival Guide

by Hadiya Pfeiffer

Hello again Saints! This year may feel out of control, and freshmen, you may be terrified right about now. Adjusting to a new school environment may be challenging, but here are a few things that can help you survive Saints.

First and foremost, when you are walking out on Walcott Street make sure you are walking down the correct side of the street. When a herd of hormones and stressed out teens comes barreling toward you it can be scary. DO NOT PANIC, just simply head to the nearest crosswalk and cross safely to the other side of the street. Do not beat yourself up if you go the wrong way.

Secondly, make sure you are going to the right lunch. If you are completely confused and unsure, just shoot your teacher an email or ask another student. They will be glad to help point you in the right direction.



photo courtesy of SRA

Last, but probably the most important, do not compare yourself to others. When you take that big history test, do not ask what others got. Be proud of the grade you earned.

If it is not something you are proud of, ask your teacher

for help. That is their job. They want to help you understand.

Whether you are questioning your walk to West, confused about lunch, or just need a little boost, talk to a teacher or guidance counselor.

If all else fails, you can always

ask an upperclassman for help. Whether you are struggling with a class, looking for a club to join, hoping to join a sport, we can help. Remember, we have all been in your shoes before and had someone else help us. We are all Saints' Family.

Letter from the Editor

by Isabella Calise

My name is Isabella, and I am applying to college. Like nearly every seventeen-year-old or eighteen-year-old around the globe, I am filling out my application, composing essays, and looking back on my activities and accomplishments each day. Alongside these requirements, for decades, seniors have fulfilled one crucial aspect of their application: the standardized test. Originally titled the Standard Aptitude Test, the world renowned SAT has been heavily considered alongside students' GPA in order to assess their "college potential." If you think like me, college potential sounds pretty vague. Wouldn't an indicator of communication skills and work ethic represent a student's ability to succeed in college over advanced mathematics and complex literature?

If someone chooses a career path in social sciences or the performing arts, how much English and math is studied beyond their general education requirements?

With each passing year, the integrity of the SAT is challenged as an assessment that benefits those fortunate enough to spend hundreds of dollars on study-guides, personal tutoring, or test retakes.

Under the present Covid-19 crisis, colleges around the world have decided to loosen their grip on such an evaluation by becoming test-optional since it is practically impossible to take the test due to the lack of test centers willing to administer the SAT. Phew! What does this mean for students?

For some, this lifts a weight

off their shoulders and allows them to skip the test and prioritize other components of their application. If you're like me, test-optional doesn't mean much of a difference.

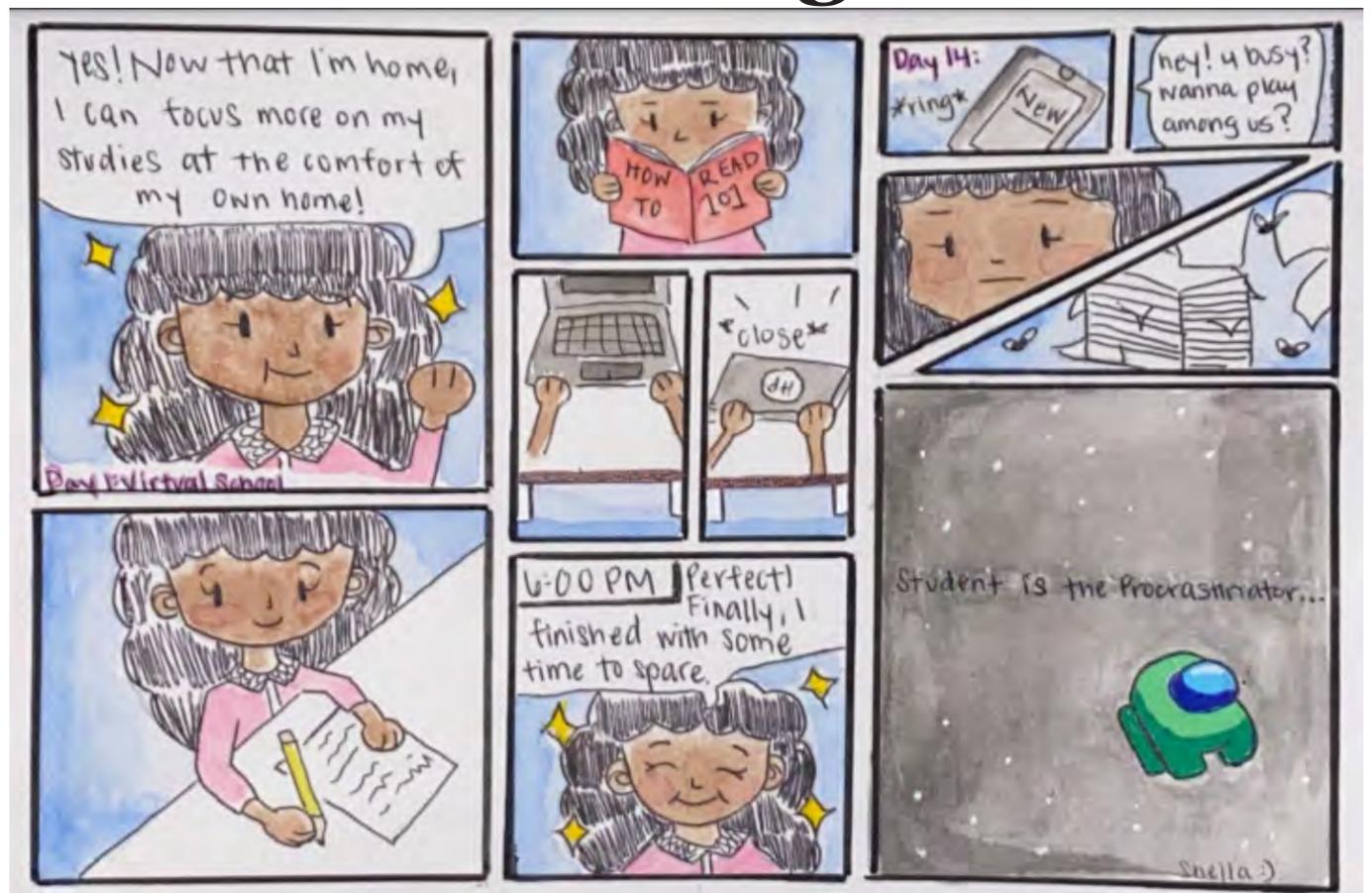
I still feel compelled to satisfy admission counselors by devoting my free time to practice tests and preparation in order to achieve an optimal score.

I don't blame students for not taking it. I've been preparing for the SAT for over six months and the test centers have canceled on me four times. I should've given up. Although my friends tell me to rely on my community involvement and overall GPA to stand apart, I know that just be-



cause something is considered "optional," doesn't mean it is. With that in mind, on the morning of Saturday, November 7, I will be sitting at a school-desk in Connecticut. Where will you be?

Students Among Us by Sheila Tu



Glitch by Katherine Baxter

