

# **The SJC Gazette**



**Christmas 2018**



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## The SJC Gazette

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## Job Skills Class Raises Money for Angel Cam- paign

Deirdre Finnigan

The job skills class recently helped raise money for the Angel Campaign by selling handmade Christmas cards and jewelry. The class made twenty cards for each of the six types, totaling 120 cards. Every single card sold, but the class did not stop there. In addition to Christmas cards, they sold jewelry handmade by Ann Foley. Between these two initiatives, the jobs skills class raised about \$570 for the Angel Campaign!

In total, the school raised over \$10,000 to help fourteen families on the Angel Campaign list.



Credit: Deirdre Finnegan

## It's Okay

Morgan Hayes

There are many things that school does not teach us. Important values such as responsibility and organization we are taught. However, essential foundations that we rely on to pass through our days such as taking risks and stepping out from our comfort zones we must teach ourselves. People are chastised for exceeding expectations and improving themselves. What standards are we supposed to set? Born to overwork in a society that pits children against each other from early ages set in a rigid educational system that only teaches basic lessons which eventually become a hindrance if we try to do anything spontaneous? The teachers who mark our essays and evaluate us

will wave us goodbye as we part from one stage to the next. But have we made our own mark? Will a good house, car and job, bring happiness? Our dreams disappear as we lose our days to restlessness stuck in the cycle of school and work. Does anyone recall the last time they closed their laptop, shut off their phone, and sat outside and looked up at the sky and breathed in fresh air? We are pressured to be the best in everything we do, even if we don't enjoy it. The only conversations we have in the classroom now are about studying and to endure the school days until the next break. What we need to discuss is mindfulness and putting everything down for just one moment and to appreciate where we are.

## SJC Students: In Their Own Words

Mr. Saliccioli & Mr. Heida

The act of writing (when distilled down to its most basic form) is an attempt at communicating ideas, thoughts, and feelings by using a series of signs and symbols. A skilled writer learns to use these signs and symbols in ways that offer more clarity and meaning than others that may be less skilled. As human beings, we use words as means to make meaning; we fill our lives with communication (sometimes complex), but it all comes back in the end, to using words. This is because words are important. Words give us a way to

express how we view the world, to communicate our experiences, give rise to our ideas, ask for forgiveness for our faults, and offer hope and love to others.

We are very proud of our student contributors who have crafted and shaped their words into fantastic stories, opinions, insights, and poetry. These are your words, St. John's College. We hope that you enjoy reading them and that you will continue having something to say.

## Exciting Things Ahead for SJC's SHAC

Deirdre Finnigan

The Student Health Awareness Committee (SHAC) at St. John's College has started this year off with a bang! From its presentation at the fall pep rally to its new health initiative, SHAC is surely garnering attention from all.

For those who do not know, Mrs. O'Sullivan describes SHAC as "a group of amazing SJC students that work hard at promoting health through many creative ways. With the guidance of our Public Health Nurse, this committee is successful in making student health a priority here at SJC."

SHAC aims to improve the overall health of St. John's College students and staff through such initiatives as handing out healthy smoothies, welcoming a Jack Talk at SJC to discuss mental wellness, promoting #SJCHHealthyHabits, and introducing health tips every Thursday on the announcements. SHAC has grown from only a handful of senior students to about twenty students – and they are always welcoming new members!

According to SHAC President, Zoe Zuidema, SHAC "is a great way for us to educate the student body about health while assuming leadership roles."

SHAC recently introduced a new health initiative to encourage healthy habits among staff and students. Students were encouraged to post a picture of themselves engaging in a healthy habit on Instagram, tag @sjc\_shac in

the picture and use the hashtag #SJCHHealthyHabits. Students who post a healthy habit will be entered into a draw to win one of three prizes: a Nutri Ninja Blender, a Fitbit, and a basket full of health-related goodies. The blender prize has already been drawn, and was awarded to grade ten student Aspen Williams. The Fitbit and basket are still to be drawn, and the contests for those prizes will begin after the New Year.

Zuidema commented on the #SJCHHealthyHabits initiative, saying that "The #SJCHHealthyHabits initiative has been a great way to get students engaged in their well-being. The prizes serve as a great motivation, and I am very pleased with the results thus far."

In the words of Mrs. O'Sullivan, "This school year is well planned and there will be lots of fun learning about student health!"

Join SHAC every Thursday during senior lunch to help take part in making St. John's College healthier!



Credit: Deirdre Finnegan

## Epiphany Amongst the Crystals

A Poem, by Harshdeep Dhaliwal

I glance towards the frosty land  
Seeing the crystal snow build upon the sill  
Wondering why the present seems so bland  
Yet, I recall the times of joy, naivety, and thrill

Spontaneous trips, fireplaces, and laughs around the tree  
These beautiful moments were never noticed in the present  
Yet I long to experience these once again with thee  
Never mind that now, thinking back will only make the memories unpleasant

It is now midday and I remain like a sloth  
Unmoving, only waiting for a solution to arise  
Although it would be better to take an oath  
An oath promising growth and moments to revise

I focus on my myself rather than glancing at the snow around  
As it only reduces my time and ambition, despite its attraction  
The snow melts and fades from my vision  
Marking the start of my journey alongside the icy flakes to whom I am no longer bound

## Want to Be

A Poem, by  
Samantha.M.Dolcine

The world tells us that  
this is this and that is  
that

Roses are Red and  
Violets are Blue  
Oranges are Orange  
I'm me and you're  
you

But what if what they  
say we are is not what  
we want to be

What if Roses want to  
be Blue and Violets  
want to be Red

What if Oranges don't  
want their names to be  
the color you identify  
them as?

What if I don't want  
to be just me and you  
don't want to be just  
you. What if we want  
to be more than what  
we are?

What if Earth changed  
What if God told the  
Earth it could be any  
shape

What if it decided to  
be a square?

Wouldn't you change  
your thoughts and say  
it's a square because it  
is

Do we have to be-  
come what we want to  
be for you to accept it  
can't we just hope to  
be

Whatever we  
WANT TO BE

## Update from Council

Nathan DeGoey, SJC Student  
Council Co-President

Hey Eagles, welcome to the first ever Council Column! We are super excited to be a part of the new Eagles Newspaper and keep you updated on all of our in-school and after-school events, dances, pep rallies and any other initiatives that we are planning throughout the year.

This year, Council is making some changes to our presence in the school life of SJC. We are your center of school spirit, and we're ramping it up to a new level this year. With a bigger group, our goal is to be more spirited, inclusive, and just plain better than previous councils, both with our traditional events such as pep rallies and dances, and with many exciting new things that we are planning. So far, we've started the year off right with an unforgettable Grade 9 Colour Night. Last year's Grade 9's brought their A-Game to Colour Night 2017, so this year's group had a tough bar to reach. The spirit was incredible, as the teams battled throughout the night with Yellow Colour House eventually reigning victorious. Council also received two new family members on Colour Night as we welcomed Maddy Elliott and Owen Portelli as our brand-new Grade 9 reps.

In October, we worked with the students of SJC to put on an awesome fall pep rally filled with cheering, huckle-buckle, Grade 11 Ryan Higgins' beautiful vocals, and Grade 12 Justin Carr's thrilling dance moves. Led and orga-

nized by Council's senior Kaiya Daly, it was by far the best opening pep rally we've seen at SJC in years!

The pep rally wasn't the only thing keeping Council busy in the month of October. We started off with our annual Friday Night Lights game, led by Council senior Monique Fletcher, which brought a huge crowd from both SJC and ACS to cheer on the junior and senior boys in two great (and cold) games of football. We finished the month off in the gym of SJC with our annual Halloween Dance, organized by Grade 12 Council member Austin Parsons. A new twist on an old dance, Council's Grade 10 Catherine Rocchi took the lead on an awesome and scary haunted house, which, mashed with good music, candy, and Grade 9's Estaban on the mic, became a Halloween Dance to remember.

Missed out on any events that have passed by in September and October? Don't worry! Council has got plenty of exciting things in the works for upcoming months, including semi-formal, the twelve days of Christmas, and many other new events that are in the planning stages. Stay tuned with us as we head through the 2018/2019 school year, and if you ever have any ideas that you want to see happening while you're at SJC, don't hesitate to talk to us!

Thanks Eagles, back to the desk...

# SJC Puts the “Pep” in Pep Rally

Harshdeep Dhaliwal

“It was great to see so many students involved within the school community, along with the enthusiasm from the crowd,” said grade 12 student Jennifer Vu. This is one of the many positive opinions regarding student council’s first pep rally of the year on October 19th. This rally provided a chance for council to introduce new members, including grade 9 representatives Owen Portelli and Maddy Elliot.

Featured at the rally was OSAID (Ontario Students Against Impaired Driving) which spread awareness of the hazards involved with impaired driving through an interactive game. OSAID’s president Liam Culp described the event as “a definite success. The students seemed focused on winning the game while enjoying the obstacles, which is what the pep rally is about OSAID was very prepared and demonstrated its professionalism as a school organization during this rally, making me feel that we got our message of not driving while impaired across!” Participants from each grade rushed to complete the course as soon as possible with grade 12 student Benjhon Madula the victor.

After this game, student council gathered a student from each grade to compete in the Halloween sing-along where grade 11 student Ryan Higgins demonstrated an excellent performance by recognizing the songs quickly and singing them accurately, earning his grade 50 points. Student council also introduced its new point system, as the grade with the most points by the end of the year will earn a dress down day. These points are earned based on each grade’s participation in school activities, for example, cheering at pep rallies, attending dances and so

on.

The pep rally was announced as a success by co-prime minister Jaden Giles who said, “The pep rally was a huge success from the minute the lights went off, the students were engaged. Fun pep rallies are something that student council has always strived for, so this year we went above and beyond to try and gain some SJC pride. We added lights, a fog machine, and a new sound system to support our new pep rally approach. Starting the year off with a “bang” has such importance, as the student body will now be more inclined to come to our student council events, while also becoming excited for future pep rallies. Asking any senior student, I think many would say that they had fun at the pep rally and that this was probably one the best pep rallies since grade nine. I can’t wait for future events since we - student council - have tons of ideas we want to use!”

In other news, SHAC leader Zoe Zuidema, along with the other SHAC (Student Health and Awareness Committee) members, promoted a new initiative called “SJC Healthy Habits,” where students can win one of three prizes. Currently, the grade 12s are in first place with 125 points, while the grade 11s are in second place with 100 points. I wonder which grade will win the dress down day at the end of the year!



## SHAC Smoothies

### The Green Grinch

- 1 cup orange juice
- 1 banana
- 1 cup frozen peaches
- 1 1/2-2 cups kale

### The Fruity Frosty

- 3/4 cup orange juice
- 1 cup frozen berries
- 1/2 cup yogurt

### Method

1. Add orange juice
2. Add other ingredients
3. Blend until smooth



# South Africa: An Eye-Opening Experience

Jacob Papp

Early in 11th grade, my Dad offered to take me on a trip to Africa with him on the following March Break. He was going there for a hunting trip through African Field Sports, an organization which is well known for their great hospitality and safaris. Although I wasn't hunting on this trip, I used the opportunity to help broaden my world-view and experience a different culture, as well as take some amazing pictures. The experience my father and I had in South Africa is one I will never forget.

When my Dad told me about the trip I was unsure at first as to whether I wanted to go, especially since it would take almost two days to get there. The total amount of flight time was about 19 hours and almost 16 hours in layover time. I am not getting on another flight for a long time. In the end I decided to go because I thought I could use some time with my Dad, especially since I don't spend much time with him.



When we arrived, we were greeted by a man named John, he looked quite old, having gray hair and wrinkles. Despite this, he was the liveliest member of the staff that we met. He picked us up at the airport and drove us to the hunting lodge (which honestly was more of a resort than a lodge). We got our own room with two beds, a bathroom, and a shower. We didn't use the shower very often due to the drought that the

area was experiencing at the time.

The feeling and sensations of Africa are something I'll never forget. It was easy to tell that the air was much cleaner, and so were the skies. The winds were very powerful and yet very nice on your skin. You couldn't escape the vastness of the mountains, when you summited one, there were always more on the horizon. It was very easy to relax in that atmosphere as it was very quiet, except when the monkeys spotted you and started screeching nonstop.

Once we got all settled in, it was time to go out and look for animals. We saw an incredible amount and variety of animals there, everything from Rhinos to snakes. The one animal that my Dad really wanted to get was a Kudu, sadly, that was the only animal on his list that he never ended up getting. He ended up getting a Blue Wildebeest, Springbok, Gemsbok and a few other animals. Overall, for what we got out of it, the trip didn't end up being very pricey.

While we looked for animals, we did a lot of driving and walking, so much that the moment I hit the bed every night I instantly fell asleep. When you think of Africa you think of plains and long straight meadows there is a lot more to Africa than that. We scaled mountains and hills galore, it was the most exercise that I've done in my entire life, somehow I kept up with the rest of the group throughout the adventures and I was very surprised by that.



Photo Credits: Jacob Papp

# Defeating Cancer, One Basket at a Time

Zoe Oliveira

Thursday October 25th, 2018 the St. John's College girl's Junior and Senior basketball teams participated in the annual basketball game fundraiser to help support Cancer research in the SJC gymnasium.

There was a vast amount of community support for the cause, and both games had a great turnout in the stands. Spectators were encouraged to donate money at the door, regardless what team they were supporting. All donations are to be given by the school to McMaster Children's Hospital Foundation in support of the Pediatric Hematology and Oncology Program.

This specific program oversees the care needed for children and their families suffering from blood related diseases, or cancers. They average 65 new patients a year, and with growing awareness of the long- and short-term health effects of such illnesses, will greatly benefit from the generosity of fundraiser's like this.

A coordinator at Pauline-Johnson High School originally started the initiative to fundraise

for cancer research through the basketball game and extended his idea to all high schools in the Brantford league. As SJC senior team coach, Matthew Lynch, said during a brief pregame interview, "I think it's a great event, I think that having all high schools involved...it's a great initiative, and [St. John's College] [is] happy to be a part of it".

His high opinion of the school's participation was a common one amongst parents. A Paris District High School Parent, when asked his opinion on his daughter's involvement in the community effort, was quick to agree that "It's a wonderful event that's being put on there by the schools, and [we're] happy to be a part of it."

The SJC community stands firmly behind our schools' participation in the event, as well as the other High Schools in the Brantford and Brant County area, and thanks those that participated- either as a player, part of a coaching staff, referee, volunteer, or spectator.



Credit: SJC Twitter

# Flying to Canada

**Angela Yousef**

As much as the trip was tiring, it was very exciting too. I remember every moment of that day. The day we came to Canada on October 10, 2016. It was a dream come true after a tough year in Lebanon waiting for it. My mom, Hadyf and my dad, Wael, decided to go to Canada as immigrants after we suffered in Syria with the war and the bad influences that are still happening and affecting people. It was also the best option for us to build a future for me and my brother Christian. When we went to Lebanon, we thought we can go Canada immediately. However, we were not expecting that we had to wait in Lebanon that long. We waited for over a year and I still can't believe we got over it and we are now in Canada.

On September 14, 2016, the embassy called us to move to Canada. "They called us!" I said while screaming and jumping. "That's impossible!" However, in that moment I knew that God would always make things possible for us.

October 10, 2016 was our time to leave Lebanon and to finally move to Canada. We went to the Beirut-Rafic Hariri International Airport. It looked very nice, but it was very busy. Our first flight departure was at six in the morning. Therefore, we had to arrive at the airport at two a.m. because of all the papers and departure procedures. When we finished them, we had to wait. Usually I don't like waiting, but at that moment I had no problem because I didn't feel the time. It seemed like 5:30 arrived quickly, at which time we had to get onto the airplane. The airplane looked very nice and big from the inside but all I could see were people. Our first flight was from Lebanon and it was two hours in the airplane to fly to Istanbul, Turkey. They fed us Turkish food which was very delicious and something new for us to try. The clouds beside me looked amazing. A

quote came to my mind while enjoying the view over the clouds. I wrote it down so I wouldn't forget it: "Clouds, I am above you, who knew a person could be above the clouds?" I saw the sky beside me and I said, "I am flying with your beauty! Who knew a person could fly in the sky?"

We landed in Turkey and had to wait for six hours as my parents had to do paper work and to wait for the second airplane to arrive. I slept for two hours there but I was too excited to continue sleeping. The second and final departure connecting to Canada from Turkey soon arrived and would be eleven hours long. The second plane was twice the size of the first one, and there were many people. I sat with my brother and my parents sat with their friend in the three-seat section. It was somewhat boring especially when we had two hours of no light when everyone was given time to sleep. I only slept for an hour.

Finally, the plane landed at the Toronto Pearson International Airport. We were very happy to land safe after a year of waiting. "Finally in Canada!" was the only thing I said with a very big smile. The plane landed in Canada at six p.m. Eastern Standard time.

There was a complicated process and many papers to sign. At nine p.m., our sponsor came to take us to our new home, which was very beautiful!

It was a tough experience in Lebanon and Syria, but I learned so many things that inspire me still today. However, all I know now is that Canada is my new home and dreaming about it was worth it.

# Advertisements

WANTED

Male vocalist for rock, blues, and contemporary style genres

Do you write songs? Even better!

Don't play an instrument? Doesn't matter!

There is an entire band waiting for you (electric/acoustic guitar, bass, drums)

The band is completely compiled of grade 12 SJC Students

Interested? Email Nathan ([natedegoey@icloud.com](mailto:natedegoey@icloud.com)) to set up an audition



## *Last Look...*



Chap Andy makes yet another Angel Campaign run, December 18

Credit: SJC Twitter