



THE GAZETTE

NOVEMBER 2024

News From The Nest

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An Indelible Mark

Marks are what count. As teachers we use them to determine how much a student might know something, or students can use them as some strange scale of self-worth. However, not all marks have to do with grades. The marks that last are the ones that echo through the halls and impact generations of students. My friend Jeff DeProsperis taught me a lot about marks, when I was a young teacher, here at St. John's College – which seems like generations ago.

The best lesson that Mr. De Prosperis taught me was to leave a mark that will last. This is something that he put into practice in his life at St. John's. In fact, there are not many places in this school where I do not see "Depo's" mark. How could I not? He was a student, a teacher, a coach, and a parent – virtually every role in the life of a school. He maintained high standards and always wanted you to be the best version of yourself that you were capable of.

Time will go on, and memories will fade, but Depo, your mark will endure because it is imprinted on our hearts. So, St. John's College – be the best version of yourself; get busy and leave your mark.

- Mr. Salciccioli



In Flanders Fields

By John McCrae

In Flanders fields the poppies blow
Between the crosses, row on row,
That mark our place; and in the sky
The larks, still bravely singing, fly
Scarce heard amid the guns below.

We are the Dead. Short days ago
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,
Loved and were loved, and now we lie,
In Flanders fields.

Take up our quarrel with the foe:
To you from failing hands we throw
The torch; be yours to hold it high.
If ye break faith with us who die
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow
In Flanders fields.

AN INTERVIEW IN THE PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE

WRITTEN BY SAMANTHA WALDICK



With the beginning of a school year comes many new opportunities and faces. One of these new faces is Mrs. Dragicevic, our new principal.

When we started the 2024-2025 school year, not much was known about Mrs. Dragicevic, and so the Gazette and I took it upon ourselves to give her a warm welcome and to learn more about her and how she plans to improve the school.

Q: Can you tell us about your life growing up?

A: My parents were immigrants, but I was born in Canada and grew up in Etobicoke Rexdale, until Grade 5. We moved to Mississauga at the beginning of Grade 6, [and I lived there until] the end of my high school years at St. Joseph's.

Q: What led you to your current career path?

A: After high school, I went to Queens University and did a Bachelor of Science, majoring in Biology. I didn't know what I wanted to do. I had graduated that year, but I had a friend who wanted to go to Australia to travel and attend Teacher's College. She didn't get in, but I did and [so I] graduated with a Bachelor of Education. Coming back to Canada, I got a job right away at Dufferin Peel in Mississauga and taught for fifteen years as a Science-Biology teacher, then went on to Guidance. Later, [I became] Vice Principal for Assumption College, and now I am here.



Q: Where do you see St. John's College in five years?

A: It's hard to say in five years, but I think, overall, [an increase in] community, unity, and spirit. I believe this school has great spirit and I want to be involved in it. I want to see more collaboration with teachers, parents, and students. It's not to say there isn't any right now, but I think that would be my goal. I can see myself being here as long as they need me.



Captured by Sadie Keates

Q: What will you be doing to help with spirit and culture in the school?

A: Most people think of spirit just as athletics, which a lot of it is, but think about the Pep Rally by the Student Council, and you know it was done well, but how can we do more? It's one thing for me to say, "Yes let's do it!" and another thing to have teachers that want to be running it, so it's collaborative on all ends. But I'm open to helping any sort of organization here let it be the Student Council, Athletic Council, all of our sports teams, or Chaplaincy—I would [be willing to] pave the way to anything that builds more community.





Q: Were there any huge changes you wanted to implement?

A: Yes! So, I'm big on spirit but I'm also big on rules, so uniform has to be intact. I know we started strong and with a little pushback like, "What do you mean I can't wear these?" but I think everyone came into line and understood what the uniform is. I didn't change anything; I just read and followed the uniform policy. [And with Spirit Days], there are so many kids involved in so many aspects of this school that they want to show that they are a part of, and how do you show that you are a part of it? You do the activities, but you also invested in spirit wear, and I want to allow them to display that spirit and be proud of what they are a part of on these Fridays to show that.

Q: Were there any other facts you wanted to know about you especially since you are new to the school?

A: So, I have two kids, a son in Grade 10 and a daughter in Grade 5. Both are soccer players so I'm a soccer mom. My son also does boxing and I have a blue belt with three stripes in Brazilian Jui Jitsu. We are a big travelling family, going to Croatia every year; both my brother and sister are high school teachers as well; and I drive an electric car!

As we reach the middle of semester one, I can say with confidence that this school year will be an exciting one! I am truly grateful for the time Ms. Dragecevic provided to allow this interview and I cannot wait for the next one!



GIRL'S RUGBY: SPOOKY SEVENS

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A Tournament Retrospective by Kaila Cabral

As of this October, St. John's College has finished competing in the second annual Rugby Spooky Sevens tournament that serves to celebrate the end of the fall season before winter begins. Aside from the well-known 15s season that starts up in the spring, there is no official rugby seven season in our current school board, so the coaches took the initiative to begin an event hosted at the Harley Quinn field to let players play rugby for one last time before season ends and indulge in some festive fun.

In this all-day tournament, there were two brackets consisting of four teams each with three games for each team to compete in. The teams with two or more wins made it to semi-final.

This year, St. John's won two out of their three games, therefore qualifying to compete in the bronze medal against Holy Trinity. However, St. John's sadly lost, thus placing fourth overall... but hopefully there will be another Spooky Sevens tournament next year where our Eagles can snatch a win!



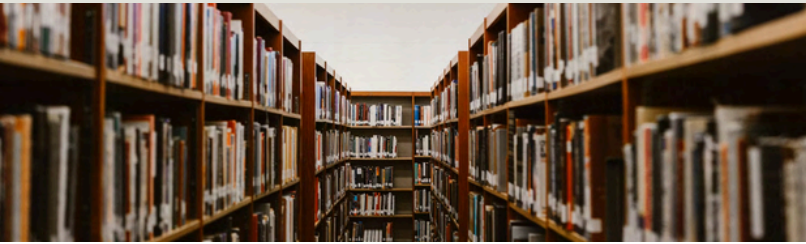
As of the 2024-2025 school year, it will be my fourth consecutive year playing both rugby 7s and 15s for St. John's. I would highly recommend anyone experienced or not to come out for the rugby 15s tryouts in the spring! I hope to see you all there.



For this year's costumes, the entire team wore shirts with their coaches' faces printed on them

LETTING THE BOOK TELL YOU HOW TO READ IT

WRITTEN BY ASHLEIGH BROOKS



“Don’t say you don’t read because you read every day.”



Mrs. O’Sullivan is no stranger to the reluctant attitude of adolescent readers. She is exposed to the biggest misconception of all time amongst high school students on a daily basis: that reading fits into one category of interests—fiction.

“You’re reading things all the time, but just find out who you are as a reader? What are you most interested in? Allow yourself to be open-minded to other people’s ideas and thoughts. It will get you far in life.”

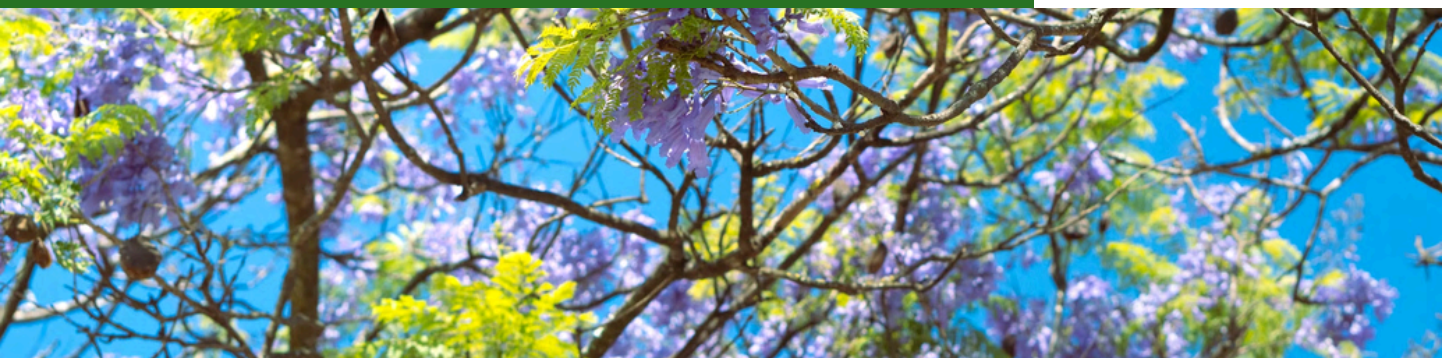
While fiction is the most popular genre to choose from with its extensive creativity and connections with course themes for each grade, it is important to choose a book that you are genuinely interested in reading. SJC’s library houses a taste for every interest, and a section that is often overlooked, especially for academic purposes, is non-fiction, alongside graphic novels, and abstract forms of reading.

“A good biography or an exploratory look at something is sometimes more engaging than a Jane Austen book—let's be honest, right,” finds O’Sullivan, “And then even [involving] some graphic novels, like *The Watchman*, or *V for Vendetta*, is good to put those in as well.” Evidently, a reader will know that they have found their piece when, as Mrs. O’Sullivan states, “It grabs you; it hooks you, and then it makes you think after,” ideally ending with the ultimate internal question, how does this impact my life?



One thing O’Sullivan is adamant about is that not everyone is called to be a reader and can often find it to be a chore, a confinement. Unfortunately for that percentage of students, English courses are required to be taken throughout all four years of high school, and, with that, students must remain dedicated to their independent study novel as it not only makes up their final grade, but also broadens their ability to learn independently. So, how should students go about reading?

“Number one is to take your time, there’s no race to it,” O’Sullivan advises. “If you’re not in the mood, don’t read it, because then you’re not retaining any of it. You know you’re retaining it when it becomes alive for you, and that is how you start seeing the connections, from what you are reading to the outside and your external [world].”





Additionally, she recommends that if you find yourself struggling to connect with the book to come visit her in the library so that you can find solutions that will meet your academic needs. “If it’s something that has been a movie, then watch the movie. I know it’s not always the best, but it helps guide you—or you can put things in your mind. Do a little research about it too. Find out more about the author.” Immersing yourself in the backstory of the final draft of a novel, an article, a graphic novel, she claims, creates a more engaging reading experience. O’Sullivan urges, “Read about reviews, read about other people’s experiences with it too because maybe you’re not engaged with it as a reader, maybe there’s something missing—you’re not experiencing it.”

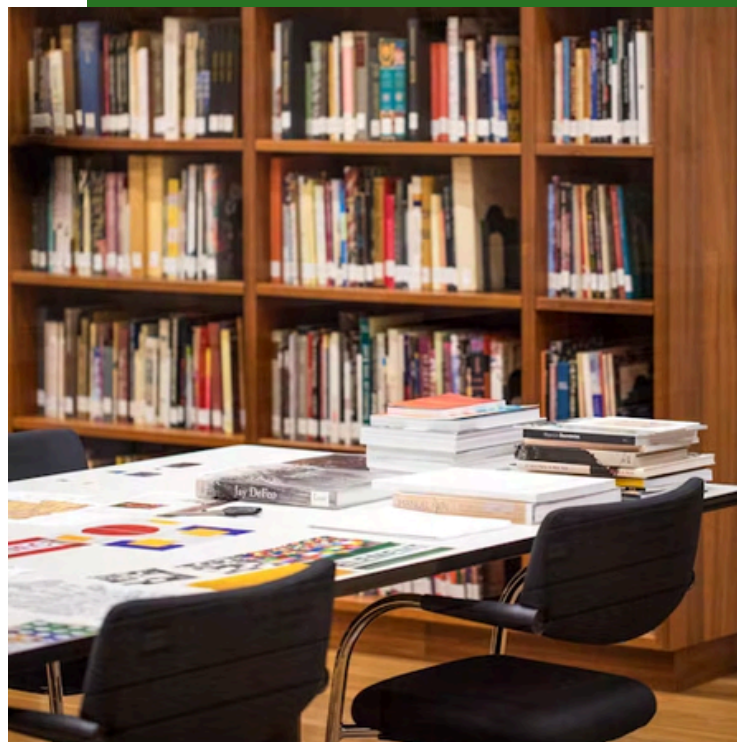
Speaking as an avid reader herself, Mrs. O’Sullivan draws insight from her own experience in reading *Lincoln in the Bardo*, a popular novel by George Saunders but one that is often given up on due to the premise that those who purchased his novel were not advised on how to read it.



“It was complicated the first little bit of reading it,” she admits, “and then [the author] said, which I loved, ‘if you give it time, the book is going to teach you how to read it.’ So, by page eight, yes, the book taught me how to read it and I think you just have to spend time with it.”

We, as readers, have a duty to give literature, fiction or non-fiction, a chance to perceive it the way it was intended, then to be followed up with a concept of individual opinion. “I’m past page thirty,” Mrs. O’Sullivan jokes, “but it’s those things that you need to give it a chance and, when [Saunders] says, ‘this is important, this is what this means’ you’re going ‘oh, I didn’t see that, now I am seeing it’.”

This serves as proof of the cliché to never judge a book by its cover. For example, “Everyone wants shorter books, but some books are small but mighty. People want to take *Animal Farm* because it’s very small—it’s a phenomenal book—but there’s a lot in there as well. So, shorter books might not always be the key to it.” If we, as readers, take the content of the book before our initial perception, we may be more successful in finding a piece that sticks with us throughout our lives and teaches us new things about ourselves that were not always apparent before—which is, ultimately, the goal for all book-enthusiasts out there, like Mrs. O’Sullivan.



In the end, reading is a skill that is encouraged to be harnessed from a very young age, but it does not have to be a forced obligation thrust onto students to earn a successful grade. Reading allows students to become open to new ideas and opinions that seemed unobtainable in the beginning of their journey, and the librarian staff at SJC are more than happy to lend a helping hand in diving into that openness. With parting words, Mrs. O’Sullivan advises:

“Don’t ever think reading is a waste of time because that is also self-care —you’re feeding another part of your brain.”

READERS CORNER

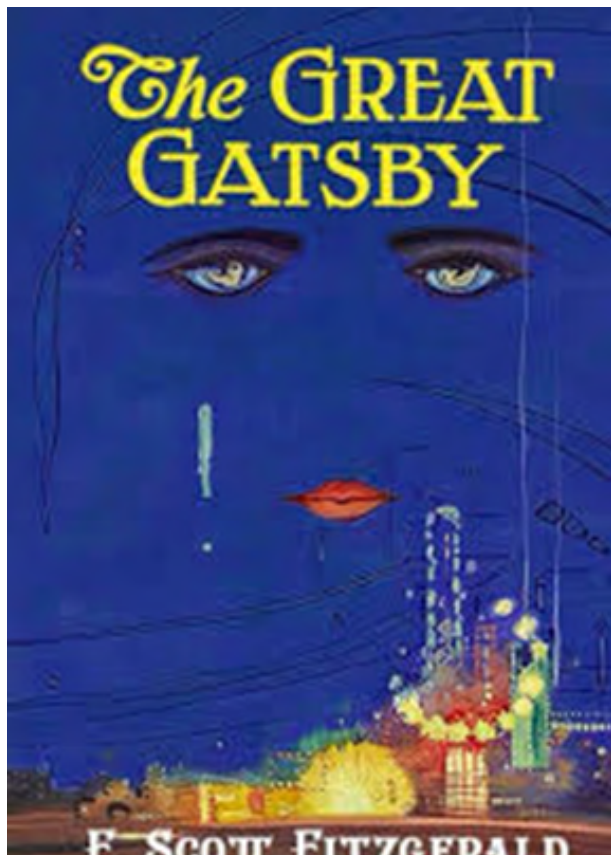
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A Book Review Column by Sydney Cooper

The Great Gatsby by F. Scott Fitzgerald invites you to step into the world of the Roaring Twenties. The novel investigates the glamorous era of jazz, bootleggers, and everything in between. Although told through the perspective of Nick Carraway, the story follows the spirited and mysteriously wealthy Gatsby trying to win back the love of his life, the beautiful and very much married Daisy Buchanan.



The GREAT GATSBY



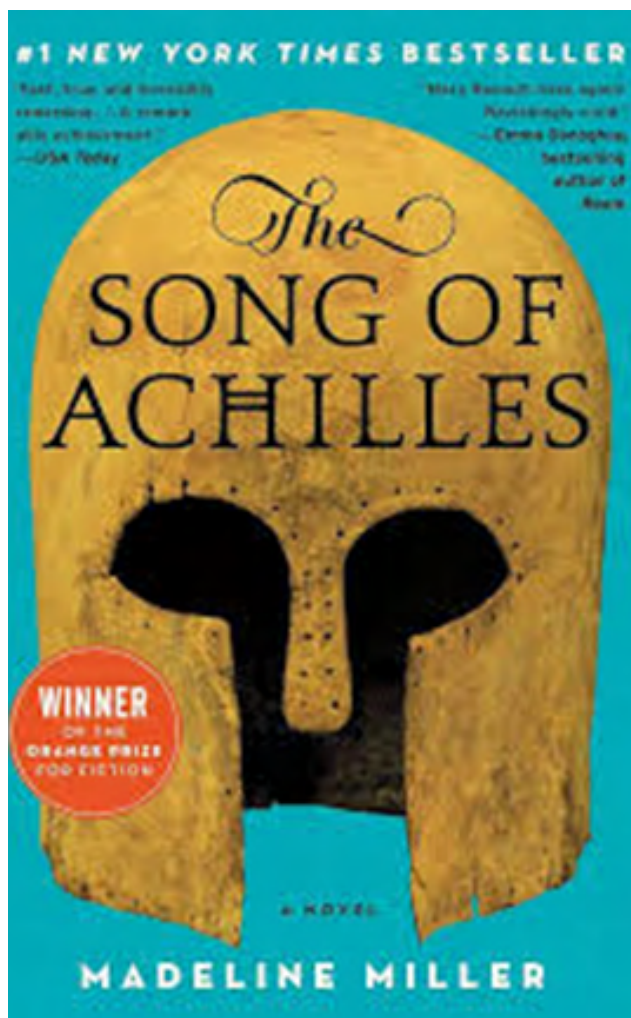
"I hope she'll be a fool -- that's the best thing a girl can be in this world, a beautiful little fool."

-Daisy Buchanan, The Great Gatsby

F. Scott Fitzgerald has created a world that invites you to understand the contrast between how people wish to appear and what actually exists beyond face value, investigate the deep divide between the families from old money and the new money, the people who made it big during the Roaring Twenties, and question the reality of the great American Dream. Is everything that Gatsby desires attainable or just an elaborate lie constructed by a hopeful dreamer?

“I could recognize him by touch alone, by smell; I would know him blind, by the way his breaths came and his feet struck the earth. I would know him in death, at the end of the world.”

-Patroclus, The Song of Achilles



The world crafted by Madeline Miller in *The Song of Achilles* pulls readers into a beautiful world of Greek myth. It is a thrilling retelling of the story of the Greek hero Achilles and his lifelong companion and love Patroclus—this book seeks to follow both the story of their love and the making of a hero.

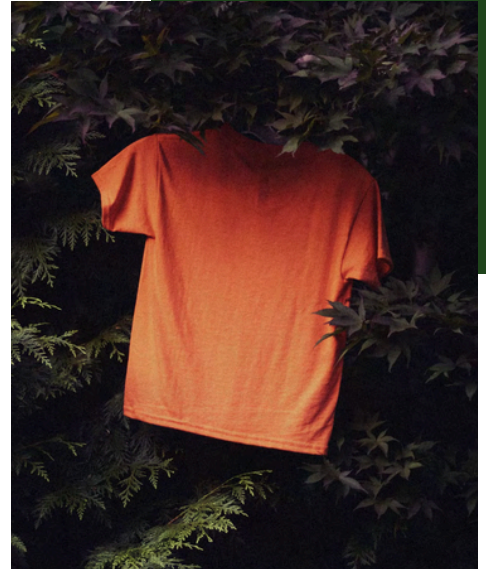
The Song of Achilles quickly becomes a book that once you start, can never put down. Brought together by a horrible loss, Achilles and Patroclus must learn what it is to truly be a hero, and if the life and loss that comes with glory is worth it all in the end. *The Song of Achilles* stunningly portrays the meaning of true friends, lovers, enemies, loyalty, betray, grief, glory, and of course pure devotion. However, the life of a hero is never one of ease, and this novel will make readers consider if one can be an epic hero, with all the eternal glory and praise, and still live out their life with the one person that means the most to them.

THE ORANGE SHIRT

WRITTEN BY DAPHNE RUTHERFORD

Orange Shirt Day was originally designed to assist the recognizing of the stories of residential school survivors. One of the more commonly noted of these stories is Phyllis Webstad's story of her orange shirt.

Webstad's story starts when she was six years old on her first day of residential school. The day before, Webstad's grandmother traded for a brand-new orange shirt for Webstad to wear on her first day. This meant immensely to Webstad as her family never had very much money to begin with.



After Webstad arrived, the teachers working there stole all the children's clothing, including her orange shirt. When sharing this story, Webstad stated, "[T]he colour orange has always reminded [her] of that and how [her] feelings didn't matter...no one cared...[she] felt like [she] was worth nothing," (Webstad).



This is one of the many stories that the residential schools have created from the cruelty and strife present at their institutions. To help heal and reconcile the survivors, wear an orange shirt and remember what happened, as we cannot move forward without knowing what we have moved past.

BEHIND THE SCENES

MUSIC IN LITURGY

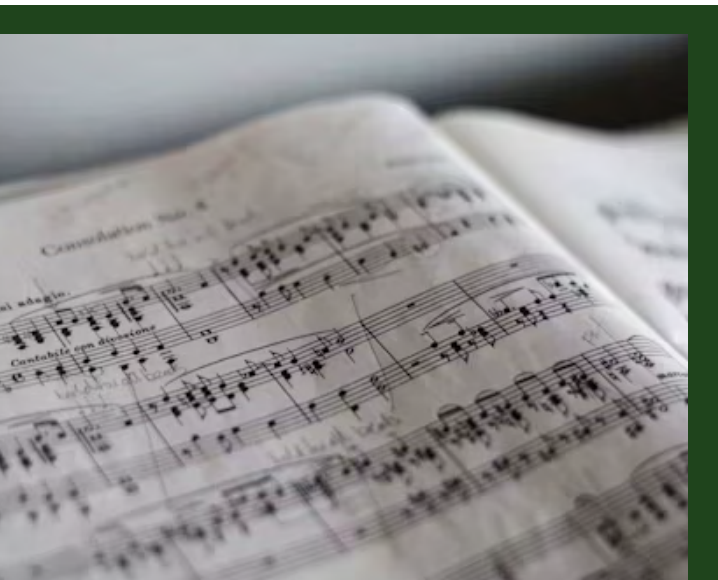
WRITTEN BY PRIYANA ROSTRON

This just in—St. John's College hosted its first Liturgy of the 2024-2025 school year on September 21 with many of the musicians in the student body working hard to provide new hits for the grand event!

Music has been a huge part of Liturgy, helping students and teachers alike to connect with God, so to further understand how exactly musicians hone their talents, we had one of our reporters, Annabelle Martin, run an interview with Dani Shebrek, who performed at the Opening Liturgy.



“I heard [Maverick City Music] and I’m like, ‘oh my gosh, if I wrote a song kind of like theirs that would be so beautiful.’”



There were many people and sources that helped inspire Dani while she was working on her song, *Pilgrims of Hope*. Listening to different bands, such as Maverick City Music, were what influenced her to write her song to begin with, and then she was motivated to continue working on it thanks to encouragement from her family and friends.



Her parents, who have helped cultivate her faith, assisted her with writing the lyrics during the two-week period she was working on *Pilgrims of Hope*, alongside Chap Andy, Mr. Vieira, and a woman who visited her church. It took a lot of time and effort to complete *Pilgrims of Hope* and finally get on stage!

“But I always enjoy doing it in the end, and it’s very rewarding afterwards.”

Dani did have some fears and anxieties prior to the event—standing in front of hundreds of people intimidated her, and it takes plenty of courage to express emotions when performing, especially when going solo—but even if her doubts tried to hold her back, she still prevailed in the end, and she was rewarded with the feeling of accomplishment.



“Hopefully I get to play that song I wrote at the Easter Mass, that would be really cool.”

Dani hopes to continue in her musical endeavors for future assemblies, already preparing new works for the events such as our upcoming Spring Mass. She works on songs during her free time and is always prepared for whenever Chap Andy may need her and her musical talents next.

Be sure to keep an ear open because Dani has a plethora of upcoming projects and there will be lots to look forward to soon!

THE 51s

FOREWORD BY MR. HEIDA

The Laurier Stedman writing contest is one of Canada's richest writing competitions for high school students. Competing against students from high schools across Brantford and Brant and Haldimand-Norfolk counties, four students from St. John's submitted stories to the contest in May and all did very well. Notably, EsterRose Enos won 3rd prize for her story, "Our Reunion" and fellow Grade 12 student Bianca Manolache was a runner-up for her story, "My Mother's Blue Dress."



This school year, the SJC Gazette will publish our student's short stories that were submitted to 2024's Laurier Stedman student writing contest. One such submission is Grade 11 student Ian Stanley's futuristic and dystopian tale, "The 51s." Readers will discover for themselves that not everything is as it seems in "The 51s." A New Year's celebration of promise and new beginnings suddenly goes wrong. And the technology that mediates our relationships gets unmasked as anything but benign.



THE 51s

Written by Ian Stanley

“5...4...3...2...1...Happy New Year!” And there it was, like the sudden boom of the universe: 2055. After a lengthy party at Paige's house, Jared, Leo, and Ellie could finally twirl their sparklers in the air, just like they had been doing since they were children. The only difference now, though, were the artificial smiles they painted on their faces. It was hard to be truly expressive these days, when times were like they were: irrational hatred, opinions, fear, sometimes not enough fear, and war just across the border.



“Turn off the lights,” said Paige. “Here's to another one!” she continued.

Everyone cheered as they watched their sparklers flare in the darkness. They smiled. They laughed. Then they looked.

“Jared?” said Paige. He was the only one without a sparkler. Like a kid, his eyes were glued to the window. Slowly, he peeled them away and turned around.

“Lights are out,” he said with a questionable look on his face. He flicked the chandelier switch up and down.

“Oh, who cares, we got a whole pack of sparklers in my purse!” Paige said through a wave of laughter, her hand still in the air, grasping a rose gold glass which awaited the touch of another.

THE 51s

“Cheers!” she exclaimed. A loud *ting* rang across the room.

Jared gave a slight smirk, but as quick as it came, it faded. Their glasses touched, and their fun juice -as Paige called it- sloshed around merely missing the luscious, Marengo gray carpet and black leather couch.

Paige’s house was exceptionally beautiful- the perfect illustration of the new year, with gray walls, black leather furniture, sharply edged seating, and one of those brand-new square-shaped chandeliers that could illuminate the entire house. Only now, the entire building was pitch black, and there were no more streetlights to beam through the windows. After all, cars didn’t need light to drive themselves.

Despite the new year ringing in with an obvious presence, 2054 still lingered in Leo’s mind.

“I sure hope this year is a better one,” he said faintly, as if to be unheard. He sat down and took another slug of beer. For months, Leo’s family was held across the border during the war. That year was one to forget for him, as for everyone else.



And so they drank. And they smoked. And they partied until their world became unrecognizable. Except for Ellie. She wasn’t much of a drinker, which oddly bothered Jared.

An hour later, their fatigue set in, and so did the alcohol. Leo stumbled around like a baby deer learning how to walk.

“I’m not letting you drive, you’re walking home,” said Paige, taking the keys from Leo. He tilted his head to the

IAN STANLEY

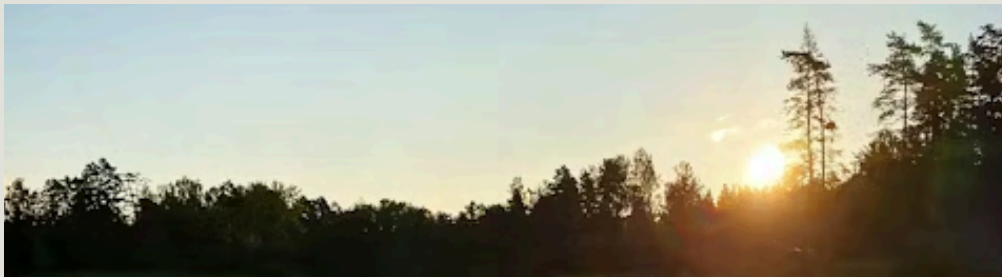
THE 51s

side in protest, yet not a word came out of his mouth.

In Paige's mudroom, Leo walked forward, and the automatic door swung open. Just before his foot stepped out onto the black, tile deck, Paige turned him around.

"How about you and I hang out tomorrow? Some friendship could cheer you up," she said drunkenly.

He gave a slight nod in acceptance and stepped out the door. Soon later, the house was lonely again and the power rebooted, allowing Paige to rest her pounding head for the night.



The next day, Paige woke up with the same pulsing in her head that she had felt the night before. Despite her aching body, she insisted on seeing Leo for a while. So, she got out of bed and instantly sat down on the rock-hard, but 'stylish' couch in the living room. She hated it, but how it felt didn't matter, it was only its appearance that anyone cared about anymore. About an hour later, Leo was still not at the door. He was late. This was unlike Leo; he always preached the importance of punctuality. Shortly after, Paige's phone chimed, and she picked it up. It was Leo.

You aint home?

Yeah I am...on the couch

I knocked on your door like three times.

Try again.

I just did! just let me in!

Just come in, it's unlocked. But you could've knocked.

I did. Whatever Paige.

IAN STANLEY

THE 51s

Leo pressed enter and the automatic door slid open. He walked in.

“Paige!” he shrieked. “How’s your head?” he continued with a smile, taunting her about the entire bottle of wine she had drank. No one answered. He turned around the corner, passed some family photos and went into the living room. No one was there. He swiftly reached into his pocket and pulled out his phone to FaceTime Paige.

Ring... Ring... Ring...

The phone connected but displayed a heavily distorted image of Paige.

“Where the hell are you?” whined Leo.

“Oh My God, I’m on the couch in the living room” she said holding the phone so that her body was showing. “Do you want a map?” she continued sarcastically. The picture cleared up.

“You are not on the couch,” Leo replied. He rotated his camera to reveal an empty couch, an empty living room, and an empty house.

Staring at their phones, they paused. Then Paige said something, but Leo couldn’t make it out. With the blinding glitch of pixels across his phone, the call disconnected.

‘FaceTime Failed’

An agonizing ring radiated through the air causing Leo to drop to his knees. Once again, the lights were out. After the longest ten seconds of his life, the ringing halted, he got up off the cold floor, looked straight ahead, and as he walked out the door, his pupils widened. As soon as his feet hit the deck, he sprinted home; there was not a soul on the streets.



IAN STANLEY

THE 51s

streets.

Still alone, Paige wandered aimlessly around her house, and as she glanced up at the projected clock, the numbers disintegrated.

'51:51' read the clock just before it disappeared.

Maybe she was just in shock, but never had she seen that on a clock before.



Just across the room lay her phone. In a panic, she picked it up again, and dialed Ellie's number. The phone projected a loud melodic tone as her fingertips touched the screen. She waited.

There was no ring now, not a sound to be heard except for her heavy breath fogging up her screen.

'Caller out of region'

But she was not. Ellie was about two blocks away, walking distance in fact.

"Past the park and across the footbridge, lives my favorite neighbor in all of Northridge" she used to say.

Paige tried the phone again, ensuring to not miss a number.

'Caller out of region'

With the rush of adrenaline surging through Paige's body, she stepped outside for some fresh air. Just down the street sat Jared's house, and so she walked.

As she walked, her footsteps ground the tiny rocks on the pavement, and echoed off each house until she arrived at his door. The town was awfully silent. She knocked once. Twice. And now three times without an answer. Staring straight back at herself, she leaned into the perfectly centered window and shielded her hands around her face. It was dark. Either he wasn't home, or he

IAN STANLEY

THE 51s

was waiting for the power to reboot like everyone was. That's what Paige had hoped.

Slowly, she backed away from the door and stepped backwards down the stairs, her hand sliding down the rail. Paige walked to the garage, and being such good friends with Jared, she felt comfortable entering the passcode, which surprisingly, she remembered. The battery-powered door rolled open with a rumble. His old car sat under a beige cover, and she lifted it up.

As the cover unraveled, a small, hunter green car was revealed. Paige yanked on the handle, hoping it would be unlocked. And it was.

With the movement of her wrist, arm, body, and tendons, the door opened. In the back seat sat a brown filing box, labelled in marker with Jared's name, half rubbed off. Feet outside the car and bent over, Paige lifted the top of the box. Inside lay the largest stack of papers she had ever seen.



“What the hell?” She murmured quietly.

Disoriented, she grasped her phone and turned the flashlight on. The top of the paper read:

‘Jared Lyony [51 Employee]’

THE 51s

As far as Paige knew, Jared worked at a gas station down on Ashley Street, and his last name was Wales. She continued to read.

'As a part of Area 51, Jared is tasked with Project Isolate. Amongst the other 51s, by the end of 2054, Jared is to complete the scientific research and planning to isolate the human race through the dimensions so that conflict shall be eliminated.'

Paige threw down the paper, and she stumbled down the driveway onto the hot black pavement which she called her street.

Paige's grandma always told her "Do whatever you want. It's your life. Live it like no one's watching."

At last, Paige could finally live out her wise words. And it was then, for the first time, she wished they were watching.



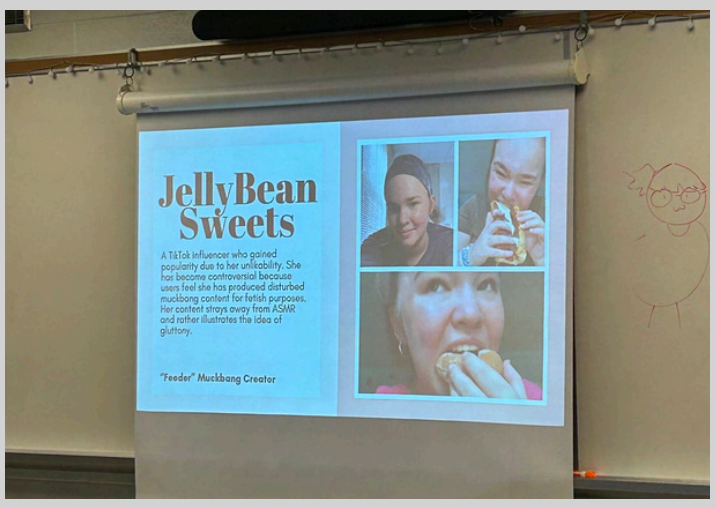
IAN STANLEY

SOCIAL SCIENCES CLUB

Written by Nissi Momson
and Lyn Moniz

Under the piles of clubs at Saint John's College lies a hidden gem waiting to be discovered...The Social Sciences Club.

Picture this: a cozy room filled with likeminded students who bring conversations to life as they discuss topics on pop culture in reference to the social sciences, including psychology and sociology. Both abstract and mundane topics are analyzed through the understanding of worldly complexities.

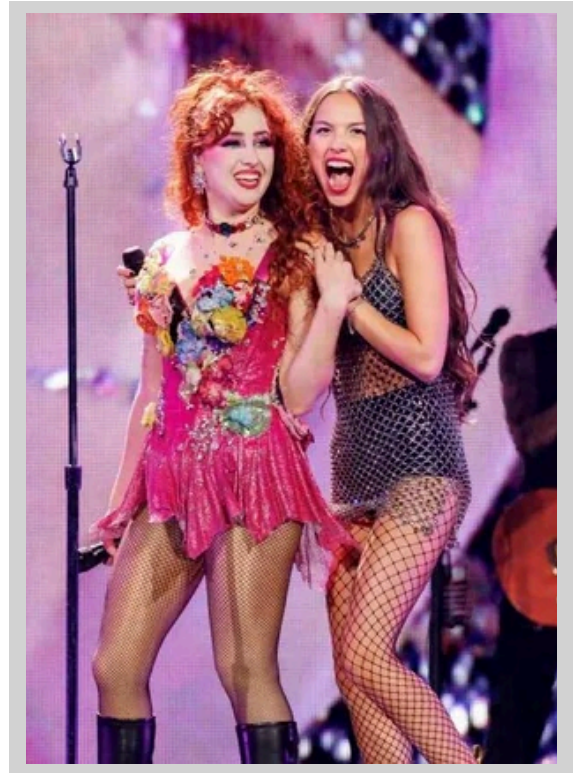


The Experience

As you walk through the door, you're greeted by friendly faces and an occasional bundle of Chips Ahoy cookies for the group to snack on. During the presentations, students are always encouraged to be curious, share their opinions, and participate in activities. Club members are also free to approach the club staff or contact the social sciences club via Instagram if they're interested in presenting their own 'topic of the week'.

One of the most popular topics at the Social Sciences Club this school year was a presentation called, "The Rise and Fall of Chappell Roan," where the discussion was kicked off with debates of Chappell's controversies and the humaneness of celebrity publicity.

What's more is that the Social Sciences Club is a place where your voice is heard. Each meeting is an adventure where you can explore the depths of individual perspective on topics that **matter**. You'll be met with philosophical and personal questions you may not have thought of before. Learn more about yourself, your peers, and your world at the Social Sciences Club **every Wednesday at Senior Lunch in Room 2043**. We hope to see you there!





THE A.C.E CLUB

Written by Sophie Dix, Jada Alonzo, and Jessica Catarino

An Amazing Way to Spread Awareness

ACE stands for Advocacy, Community, and Empowerment. The teachers who lead this club are Mrs. Custodio, Ms. Poos, and Mrs. Hammond Smith.

“The ACE club is a social justice group that focuses on different issues and different groups that are seen culturally at St. John’s that we want to bring awareness to,” says Mrs. Custodio.

This club informs students about ways to spread social justice awareness such as Orange Shirt Day, Pronoun Day, Black History Month, and Pride Month.



When asked who founded the ACE club, Mrs. Custodio replied, “Me and a previous coworker, Jackie. We brought this club to St. John’s. So originally at Assumption College, that’s where the idea of ACE was kind of created”.

There are countless reasons why you should join this club. ACE has many great ways to make a difference and get involved in the school community! When asked, why should people join the ACE club? Mrs. Hammond Smith answered, “I think it’s just learning to accept and appreciate other cultures. Sometimes we are unaware of our own blind spots on certain topics and issues”. ACE brings people together to share their diversity and to make a positive impact.



“The benefit of ACE is that it gives students a voice within the school community,”

- Mrs. Hammond Smith



There are so many ways you can get involved in ACE: you can help make the ACE bulletin board, that changes monthly with a new theme every time; come to the meetings; help plan their big events; and even just offer ideas.

By getting involved in ACE, you are learning new things, having new experiences, and promoting different cultures. When it comes to equality and social justice, there are some lessons that we forget to think about. ACE reminds us of those lessons and reaffirms who we are as individuals and who we are as a school.

The Day to Dress Down

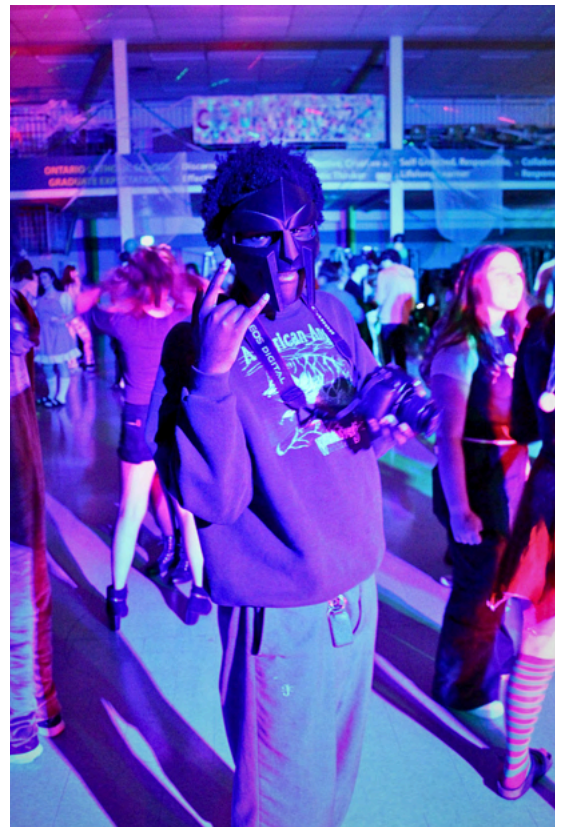
Written by Nissi Momson

In a school setting where uniformity is the norm, dress-down days are a rare opportunity to be seen as more than students in matching outfits.

For many students, the morning ritual of putting on a uniform is a reminder of school rules and routines. Dress Down Day is a break in routine that allows students to express their individuality.



Captured by David Okhimame



Captured by Lyn Moniz

Self-Expression

Most students opt for their most comfortable clothes, while others choose to make a statement and make the most out of their freedom of choice. The attire's variety showcases individuality and highlights the diversity within the school community. Some students take the opportunity to showcase their heritage, wearing intricate patterns and woven pieces; many showcase their streetwear style with bold sneakers, graphic tees, and accessories; and others lean into activewear, mixing and matching sets of fitted tops and jackets.

boo!



HALLOWEEN DRESS DOWN

This month's dress-down day took a spooky turn as students embraced the Halloween spirit. The halls were notably filled with an array of costumes, from classic animal looks to creative interpretations of fictional characters. Teachers and staff joined in on the fun as well, with Mr. Todd dressed as Santa Claus and Ms. Koolen sporting a NASA Astronaut for example.

HALLOWEEN SPIRIT



Captured by Lyn Moniz



The spirit of Halloween filled the air, and it was clear that this dress down day was not just about a break from uniformity, but about showcasing creativity. To capture the essence of this day, the Gazette crew conducted interviews throughout the day with students and teachers about their costume choices and the significance of dress down days.

Interviewing Students at SJC



When asked about the difference between her usual style and her chosen one for dress down day Grade 12 student Barbara shared, “I don’t usually dress like this, I dress more formal, but today I thought I may just switch it up.”

Grade 9 student Caitlyn, dressed as a character from the anime Danganronpa, explained, “It took [about] a month [to put together my costume].” She described her process of crafting her accessories, “this [hammer prop] is cardboard [and a] broom stick from the dollar store.” Making your own costumes might be time-consuming but it definitely shows a flair of creativity.



BE YOURSELF



One of the main reasons SJC students love dress down day is because it provides a space to express their creativity in a way uniforms don't allow. The spooky rendition was a perfect blend of creative and fun, the vibrant atmosphere was palpable. In interviews, students reflected on the importance of these days for building school spirit and came up with their own ideas for a perfect dress down day theme. Overall, the spooky dress-down day at St. John's College was a resounding success—it reminded everyone that while uniforms may define a dress code and the school's identity, individuality and expression are what truly define the student body.

**AN ETERNAL THANKS TO THE
FOLLOWING EAGLES FOR MAKING
THIS RELEASE POSSIBLE**

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