

# THE AUGUSTINIAN



“Tolle Lege”

Issue 2      October 31, 2024      St. Augustine High School

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## Saints hosts the Challenged Athletes Foundation

 **By Benjamin Nault ('26)**  
EDITOR

 **By Liam Olds ('26)**  
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

On October 17, St. Augustine High School hosted the Challenged Athletes Foundation (CAF) in the gym where they challenged our varsity basketball team to a game of wheelchair basketball.

The challenged athletes put on a show. They literally made circles around Saints players, zipping around the court at incredible speeds and hit cellies, making the crowd go wild.

The Saints varsity team performed admirably, especially for a first-time attempt, but the true glory belonged to the challenged athletes.

The CAF is an organization that helps people with physical disabilities pursue athletic excellence and lead active lives through sports.

The event itself was organized by Mr. Isaak after he had repeated interactions over 13 years with CAF while teaching his Careers in Sports inter-

session class. They were looking for guest speakers for the class, and Mr. O'Beirne suggested the founder of the CAF come and speak to the students. After a couple years of these talks, he invited the Saintsmen taking the class to go to their facilities to see in person what their organization does.

Wheelchair basketball is exactly what it sounds like — a game of basketball played entirely in specialized wheelchairs — and it is just one of the many sports that the CAF sponsors, helping people with physical disabilities to perform at the highest level.

A large number of CAF-affiliated athletes go on to compete at the Paralympics thanks to their provided training, coaches, equipment, travel funds, and more. Equipment for Para athletes is highly specialized and often extremely expensive, much more than the average person can afford to pay. For example, according to CAF's website, the kinds of wheelchairs used for the wheelchair basketball game often cost upwards of 5,000

SEE CAF, pg. 2



The challenged athletes showing Saints how it's done.

David Sabaga ('26)

## Hey, where did all my classes go?



Never fear, Mr. Igelman is here!

Jameson Grohman ('26)

 **By James Burrell ('26)**  
STAFF WRITER

A few weeks ago, more than a hundred students opened the Canvas app to see all of their classes missing. Students and teachers alike were alarmed by this event, but this computer issue isn't so much of a freak accident as many believe.

Most of us have heard of the problem by now, and around one-seventh of us had to deal with it. It is important to note that no information has been stolen or tampered with during the temporary “blackout.” However, contrary to popular belief, the cause of the

cyber complication was not an attack on Saints, nor a breach in its security, nor a virus accidentally let loose by AP Computer Science students.

The computer anomaly stems from MySchoolApp, a portion of the company Blackbaud, which manages the information about your class schedule and personal data that is crucial to the school, such as your parents' email addresses and phone numbers. The cyber mishap was not through Canvas, the learning management system that deals with your assignments and grades, even though the problems were reflected there.

SEE WHERE'S MY CLASS, pg. 5

ST. AUGUSTINE DRAMA DEPT. PRESENTS

# TRAP


A HIGH SCHOOL PLAY

WRITTEN BY STEPHEN GREGG

DIRECTED BY TRAVIS BLUMER & COLDEN LAMB

NOVEMBER 15TH AT 7PM  
NOVEMBER 16TH AT 2PM  
NOVEMBER 21ST, 22ND & 23RD AT 7PM

RAYMOND CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS  
3266 NUTMEG STREET, SAN DIEGO, CA 92104



PRODUCED BY SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT WITH PLAYSRIPTS, INC. (WWW.PLAYSRIPTS.COM)

The new play coming to Saints is the story of a serious incident last year that took place in a local theater in Northern California.

The play is told through the interviews, letters, newspaper articles, recordings, and security camera footage from the night and following nights of the tragedy.

The play? TRAP. A daring and provocative theatrical production unlike Saints has ever done in the past.



# Owen, why are you so flippin' cool?!



Senior Owen Sullivan competing in the USA Gymnastics Men's National Championships in Daytona, Florida in May 2024. *Courtesy of Owen Sullivan ('25)*



By Michael Luzi ('25)  
MANAGING EDITOR

This year, senior Owen Sullivan qualified to compete at the USA Gymnastics 2024 Men's National Championships in Daytona, Florida.

Sullivan is a three-time academic all-American gymnast and two-time national qualifier.

Most high school students, especially young men, are not very interested in gymnastics at all. Overshadowed by other popular sports like football and basketball, it is seen as a rather niche sport. Most schools do not offer it, so aspiring gymnasts have to attend private clubs in order to compete.

Owen got interested in gymnastics at a very young age. He was inspired after watching the 2012 Summer Olympics in London, and decided to try it out for himself.

He started his gymnastics career with the Seawind Gymnastics team in Carlsbad around the age of seven. After practicing with the team for a while, his family moved to Colorado. But relocation did not end his gymnastics dream.

"Moving to Colorado definitely positively impacted my experience as a gymnast because the Olympic training center used to be in the area that I lived in, so I had great access to really good equipment and coaches," Owen said.

He returned to Southern California as a sophomore, coming back to Seawind in Carlsbad, becoming a level ten gymnast for the team. As a full time high school student and gymnast with four hours of practice every day after school, he has to be able to manage his time to excel in both areas of his life.

One of his biggest accomplishments is competing in the national championships this May in Daytona, Florida. His team was able to qualify against top teams in both the state and regional levels. He placed third overall on the parallel bars at Regionals, making him qualified to compete in Florida. In the national championship, he placed in the top half of all the competitors.

He plans to continue competing in the future. He is looking to walk onto a team in college, but the field is very competitive.

Owen performs many tricks, his favorite (and equally impressive) feat being a double-double off a high bar. This is performed by doing two flips and two twists off the steel bars and then dismounting.

He recognizes that he would not be the person that he is today without competing in gymnastics. Not only has practicing with Seawind Gymnastics and in the Colorado Olympic training center improved his skills, but it has also developed his life skills.

"Gymnastics is not just a sport and doing well in competitions, it's also taught me how to be a good person," Owen said. "It taught me how to approach difficult things in my life, and it also taught me time management."

Owen also urges those interested in gymnastics to start as soon as they can as gymnastics helped build him into the young man he is today.

"Have fun with it and don't get discouraged because it is very hard to get started. Just by practicing and putting in the effort, you are improving, even if you don't see it physically," Owen said.

## CAF

*continued from page 1*

to 6,000 dollars each. Other forms of equipment, like prosthetic legs for runners, can cost around 15,000 dollars.

The CAF has many programs, one of which being Roll to Success, and another program with the Department of Veterans Affairs, where veterans at the hospital here in San Diego do sports such as rock climbing, golf, fitness, skiing, and snowboarding. On top of supporting programs, they support individualized grants. "The biggest obstacle to sports for people with disabilities is access. It's very expensive," said Nico Marcolongo.

Nico Marcolongo is the program manager of the CAF, and played a big role in organizing the event at Saints.

Insurance doesn't cover some prosthetics or gear for sports. So when a running foot can cost up to \$15,000, it can be a really big barrier to those who love sports but are sadly hindered by their disabilities and unable to continue their athletic dreams or activities.

"When somebody all of a sudden loses their limb, or they're blind, or they're paralyzed, they're thinking what's next? They are thinking that it's taken away from them," Mr. Marcolongo said. "We want to let them know they can do all the things they used to do and all the things they never dreamed of doing. We want to empower them to be able to do it."

One of the stars of the show, Samuel Nehemia, stunned everyone in attendance on and off the court. Before the game commenced, Nehemia dazzled the gym with a goosebump-inducing rendition of the national anthem. Nehemia has also performed the national anthem at Petco Park before and Saints hopes to welcome him back sometime during the basketball season.

As if Mr. Nehemia's voice was not impressive enough, his track record is absolutely incredible. He used to represent Nigeria in the Paralympics in wheelchair racing and when he came to the U.S., he discovered a passion for wheelchair basketball.

Mr. Nehemia said that even though leaving wheelchair racing was difficult, he wanted to have a team experience.

"I wanted to connect with people



Mr. Samuel Nehemia singing the national anthem before the game.

*David Sabaga ('26)*

— that is what I was missing," Mr. Nehemia said. "Wheelchair basketball as a team sport was what I needed."

He now plays for the San Diego Silverbacks, a Division 3 team registered in the National Wheelchair Basketball Association that plays both locally and nationally. According to Mr. Nehemia, training is very rigorous, taking up several hours each practice. The team is able to mesh well together because a lot of the players have similar disabilities, especially those concerning the lower body. That being said, it is evident to anyone who has seen wheelchair basketball that the upper body strength of these athletes is unmatched.

Staying active through cycling as well, Mr. Nehemia truly embodies the spirit of CAF's mission.

Mr. Marcolongo said that one of the biggest things we can do as high school students to help with CAF's goal is to volunteer. The CAF Community Weekend is occurring in the first weekend in November in Mission Bay. There are many events you can participate in throughout the county, so please attempt to make it out to some event during your time at Saints.

The recent demonstration at Saints was to raise awareness about the CAF and about the fact that these athletes exist and how much the CAF helps them. The event also raised them some money — after the competition, Saints donated 1,000 dollars to their foundation.



## EMPOWERING LIVES THROUGH SPORT

Sports create purpose and fuels dreams. That's why the Challenged Athletes Foundation is committed to providing athletes with permanent physical disabilities access to life-changing sports equipment, coaching, and competition expenses.

CAF is ready to deliver more impact, create more invaluable opportunities for mentorship, and strengthen our adaptive athlete community.

Learn how your organization can be part of the movement that's breaking barriers, igniting futures, and changing lives. [challengedathletes.org/partner](https://challengedathletes.org/partner)



# It's time to reconsider AI



By **Jonah Villafaña ('25)**  
EDITOR

The rise of AI tools in education and professional settings has sparked debates around their potential for misuse, particularly in cheating and academic dishonesty. With AI's ability to generate content, answer questions, and complete tasks autonomously, there are growing concerns about integrity and fairness.

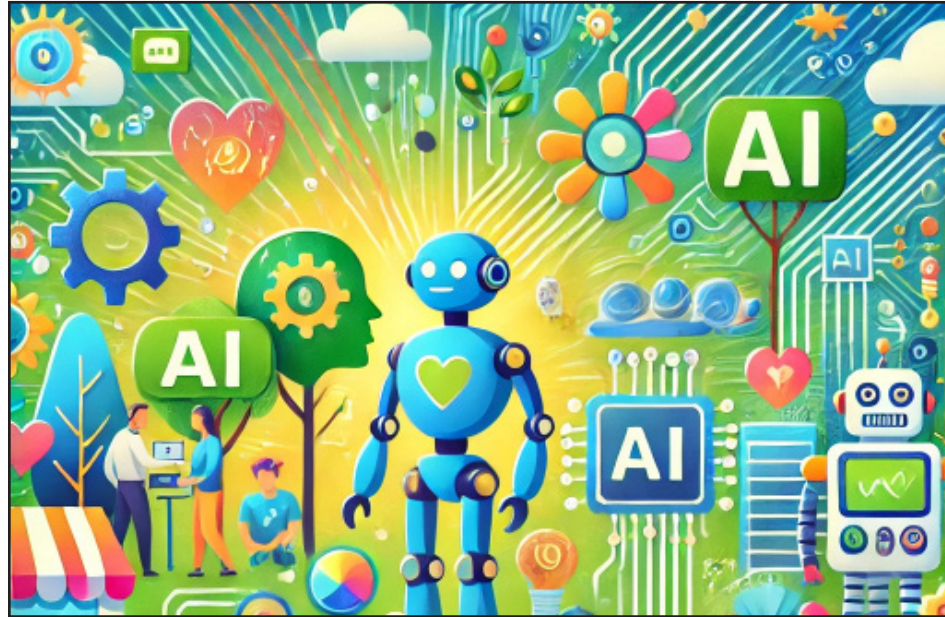
The introduction you just read was written in less than ten seconds by ChatGPT, reinforcing how easily students can use generative AI for less-than-honest purposes. But AI has the potential to be more than just a machine to complete rote tasks.

Artificial intelligence used wisely can help develop the critical thinking skills and endurance needed to be successful in the real world. However, using AI simply to finish homework assignments poses many problems regarding accuracy, academic integrity, and future academic success.

Artificial intelligence, although easy to use, can often provide inaccurate information or simply fabricate data. For example, trying to use ChatGPT to get notes for Mr. Chesser's socratic seminars or to solve physics problems for Mr. Adams's class doesn't always give right answers or correct information. Better yet, ask ChatGPT to play a game of chess and you'll see how absurd AI can be.

Even if ChatGPT was completely infallible, there are more significant problems regarding its usage. First, using generative AI to cheat poses a threat to academic integrity and puts students at risk for disciplinary action.

Some students use ChatGPT because they don't want to dedicate the



*Created using generative AI*

necessary time to complete the assignments. However, let me pose this question: is saving some time and effort really worth the risk of a zero and a referral? Students who complete assignments legitimately build up the motivation and endurance needed to succeed later in life, not to mention that they learn the crucial skill of time management.

Furthermore, upholding academic integrity now can help students avoid other ethical problems later in life. Using AI to cheat often means compromising one's ethics for the sake of personal gain. In simpler terms, the more you use ChatGPT to cheat, the more likely you are to take shortcuts later in life, and getting caught then often has worse consequences than just a zero. Even if it seems like a pointless assignment for an insignificant class, there are always future repercussions for the decision to cheat.

The most pressing issue with us-

ing generative AI is the deterioration of critical thinking. Students who use AI to replace original ideas deprive themselves of the incredible thought power that defines human nature. One of the greatest determinants of being human is the ability to come up with creative new ideas, from the development of tools and language to the incredible theory of relativity and calculus.

Replacing human thinking with AI debases what it means to be human, and it provides a pathway for AI to succeed humanity. Even though such a scenario is not realistically on the horizon, relying on ChatGPT to accomplish menial tasks now could easily devolve into complete reliance in the future.

You may ask, "How can using ChatGPT to complete this simple homework assignment lead to AI replacing humanity? Isn't that a little extreme?" But using AI on simple tasks creates a disposition of laziness and moral indifference, which can be incredibly detri-

mental to the future of humanity.

But all of this doesn't mean that ChatGPT is completely bad. In fact, AI can be a powerful tool to aid in the acquisition of knowledge. That's where the responsibility lies. People who use AI must develop a new disposition: a disposition to learn.

"Students need to have the attitude to learn from ChatGPT and not just use it as a means to an end," said Brother Mauricio, OSA. "They must first learn to have a desire to learn."

To demonstrate, consider the following example. Imagine that you want to get from one place to another by either driving a car or riding a bike. Driving is faster and much easier while biking takes physical effort and time, but with this extra time and effort comes physical strength and endurance, whereas driving would result in physical deterioration if you didn't exercise at other times.

People who choose to bike tend to have a disposition to stay fit, and they will be more prepared to engage physically in the world. Likewise, people with a disposition to learn from AI without simply cheating will develop their mental muscles of critical thinking and deductive reasoning, giving them the endurance needed to survive in the world around them without having to rely on shortcuts.

So instead of just telling ChatGPT to complete assignments for you, use it to find inspiration to start. Instead of telling it to write an essay for you, use it to correct grammatical errors and to branch off from original ideas. By adopting this attitude to learn, you can still benefit from AI while not becoming completely reliant on it.

## Saints Side Gigs: Sabaga's sweet success



By **Benjamin Nault ('26)**  
EDITOR

*The Augustinian* is launching a new column, *Saints Side Gigs*, featuring Saintsman who have found interesting ways to make a little extra cash when they're not on Nutmeg Street. We're here to show you that, yes, even though you may still be in high school, it's never too early to start your career in entrepreneurship and to gain experience in a given field.

We start with David Sabaga, a junior here at Saints, who owns his own business, David's Creationz, which prides itself in event decoration and desserts. In this first installment of our new column, we interview Sabaga to gain insight into what it's like to own a business as a high schooler.

*This interview has been edited for clarity and conciseness.*

**The Augustinian:** How did you get your business started, and what made you want to start your own business?

**David Sabaga:** My grandmother was actually a baker in Iraq, which is where my culture comes from (I'm Chaldean). She was a very popular baker back home, and when I was younger she taught me a lot of the stuff that I know now. During COVID I practiced baking a lot more, experimented, and got to develop recipes. That's pretty much what got me to where I am now. I got most of my clients during COVID, and that's pretty much how I grew.

**TA:** If another Saintsman was planning on either creating their own company or was interested in knowing how they would get something like their own company started up, what would be some of the first steps that you'd recommend to get started?

**Sabaga:** You can start off in many different ways. If it's a food business or baking business, you're going to need things like health permits to make sure you are following required health codes, and you need the permit to be able to sell to the public. Same thing goes for pretty much whatever you're doing. If you're going to be selling large quantities of stuff to the public, and if you want to be able to sell your goods openly, you're going to need to get those permits from the city.

**TA:** What is one of the major qualities that you find is very helpful in your process of developing, or what have you learned from your experiences?

**Sabaga:** Definitely time management. It takes a lot to be able to balance a schedule of school, sports, whatever you're into, and a business. Other people are relying on what you're presenting to them, so you need to make sure to have standards and good morals with whatever you are doing as well as making sure that you are getting everything done. Also, social skills and being able to communicate with other people is very important, making sure to be able to explain, being able to ask all the questions that you need in order to complete what you are doing, making sure that you have good social

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Junior David Sabaga and some of his "Creationz." WHO LET HIM COOK??  
Jameson Grohman ('26)



# What voting means to Saintsmen



By Liam Olds ('26)  
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

With the 2024 Election Day racing closer, a new class of Saintsmen are eligible to vote for the first time. Voting can be a very exciting privilege, but that's not to say it's stress-free. Aside from the decision of whom to vote for, getting all of your affairs in order can seem a daunting task. Thankfully, voter registration is made to be as easy as possible.

For California residents, registration can take many forms. The state offers preregistration programs that allow 16 and 17 year-olds to register early as well as typical voter registration. Both can be performed online, through the mail, and in-person.

**For those who have not yet registered but want to do so, it is not too late.** Deadlines for online and mail registration passed on October 21, but in-person registration is available as late as Election Day. Waiting may have cost you a line-free experience, but it does NOT have to cost you your vote.

Even though registration is supposed to be an easy process, a massive number of young people still are not registered to vote. A survey done by the United States Census Bureau after the 2020 election showed that of all potential voters ages 18 to 24, some 55.8 percent reported being registered to vote, and only 48.0 percent reported having actually voted.

In the 2022 midterm elections, a similar trend was demonstrated in another U.S. Census Bureau survey that revealed 45.6 percent of potential voters under the age of 25 to be registered to vote, and a scanty 25.6 percent reporting to have voted.

As a whole, about two-thirds of eli-

gible voters cast their ballots in the 2020 presidential election, per the Pew Research Center. This number was the highest rate for any national election after the nineteenth century.

More data from the U.S. Census Bureau suggests that registration is the greatest barrier as to who will vote. While the percentage of total voters dodged in the sub-50 percent range, of those who were registered to vote, voting rates were floating near the 90 percent mark.

Now, as is tradition for every article published in *The Augustinian*, there has to be some mention of Taylor Swift. Swift made headlines following her endorsement of Vice President Kamala Harris, an Instagram post that included a link to voter registration. This link was visited by some 405,999 people, a number later confirmed by the federal General Services Administration. Additionally, over 27,000 new voters were registered in the day following the post.

Registering to vote and actually voting are crucial for a multitude of reasons — not only is it your civic duty, but it is your primary way of enacting change on the local, state, and national levels.

As senior Luke O'Leary pointed out, many California voters are concerned that their votes "really don't matter." While it is likely that California will go blue in the presidential election, the race for the White House is not the only race taking place this fall — local elections are still crucial.

Local government is by far the most influential level of government in our day-to-day lives, and because it is a smaller pool of votes, each ballot matters more. This November, San Diegans can vote on the offices of mayor, city attorney, and city council members for Districts 3 and 9.

As California residents, Saintsmen



Created using generative AI

Edited by Benjamin Nault ('26)

also have the opportunity to vote for state officials, including members of the State Senate and State Assembly. There are a series of propositions on the local and state level as well that will directly affect lots of Saintsmen.

As one first-time voter, senior Dominic Bartel, pointed out, local elections can be "way more impactful." Bartel specifically mentioned San Diego Measure G, a ballot measure that was proposed to address transportation concerns like traffic congestion and smog.

Other ballot issues like the statewide Prop 32 will decide whether or not to raise the minimum wage. If passed, the minimum wage would rise to 17

dollars an hour immediately and reach 18 dollars shortly after, the timeline of the increase depending on the size of the business. Many students work minimum wage jobs and would be directly and immediately impacted by such a measure.

As senior Luke Friesenhahn put it, voting in the U.S. "has huge implications, a lot more than most other democracies across the world." It is your opportunity to "finally do something about issues that you see around society, your country, even the whole entire world."

Bartel shared a similar sentiment, saying "People definitely need to vote...What do you mean your vote won't count? Like come on, just vote!"

## How seven states will decide the election



By Paddy Ward ('26)  
CONTRIBUTOR

Voters in just a handful of states, called swing states, will define what the next four years of our nation's future will look like and who runs it. These states can swing the election results, hence their name. Swing states can be different each election cycle — for example, Florida used to be a cutthroat battlefield that could make or break an election, but now it sits comfortably on the Republican ticket's roster.

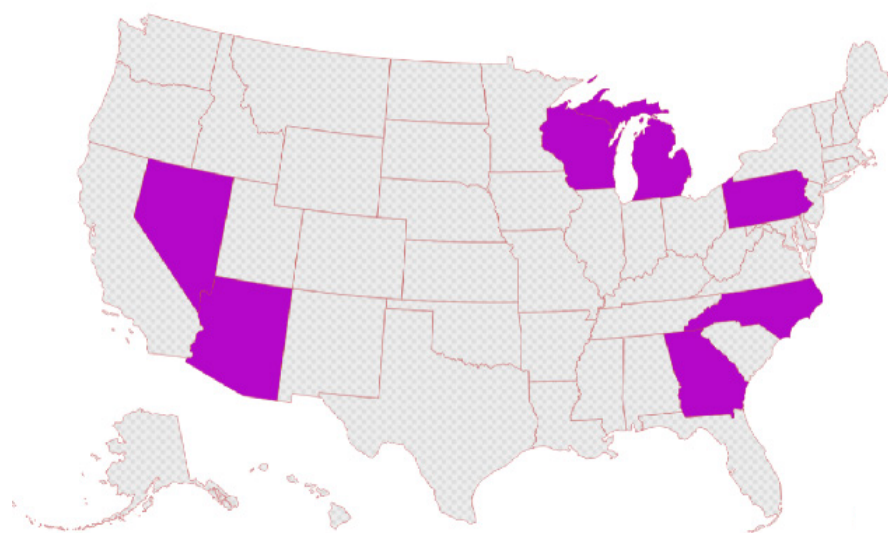
This time, there are seven states: Nevada, Arizona, Wisconsin, Michigan, North Carolina, Georgia, and Pennsylvania, the makeup of which is identical to that of the 2020 election cycle.

Out of these seven states, President Joe Biden won six in the 2020 electoral race, with the exception of North Carolina. The narrow margins of victory differed slightly in each state. According to CNN, Nevada and Michigan were won by about three percent, Pennsylvania two, North Carolina and Wisconsin roughly one, and Arizona and Georgia came down to just 0.3 and 0.4 percent, respectively.

### Nevada: 6 electoral votes

Nevada carries the smallest amount of electoral votes out of the swing states, but can still prove pivotal to either campaign.

The economy is the most pressing issue for Nevada residents as Nevada has the highest unemployment rate in the entire country at 5.5 percent (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics), and 12 percent of Nevada residents live below the poverty line



(U.S. Census). High inflation and rising costs of living have been hurting Nevada residents for years, and many are looking for new solutions.

### Wisconsin: 10 electoral votes

The first of the Great Lakes states in the mix, Wisconsin, is as close as it can get. With a 0.6 percent lead (Source: FiveThirtyEight), Kamala Harris cannot risk losing this state.

Wisconsin is a state where public safety is a key issue. Donald Trump has supported increased power to law enforcement and denounced Kamala Harris as being soft on crime. Both candidates want to improve public safety and neither want to defund law enforcement institutions. Kamala Harris is the former Attorney General of California and has promised to crack down not only on national crime

but also on international crime.

### Arizona: 11 electoral votes

Arizona is the only border state on the swing state roster, so naturally, immigration is the most pressing issue for its voters. Some Arizona residents believe that more open borders will yield economic benefits while many others believe that it will increase drug usage and crime rates.

The two candidates tend to have differing views on immigration, with the spirit of Harris's policy being more open and Trump's being more closed.

As of October 10th, former President Trump had a lead in Arizona of about 2-3 percent (Source: FiveThirtyEight, Emerson College, and RMG Research).

### Michigan: 15 electoral votes

Michigan, a state with a largely industrial-based economy and known for its automotive production, is proving to be another tight race. Because of the large industrial sector, unions — one of the key pillars of the modern Democratic party — are very prevalent.

Michigan residents are also wary of foreign impacts on markets. The keystone of Donald Trump's economic plan is high tariffs on foreign products, especially those from China, which is becoming a worrisome automotive rival. Vice President Harris is expected to continue the current administration's tariffs which are mostly the same from the Trump presidency.

### N. Carolina: 16 electoral votes

An overlooked state in the 2020 election, North Carolina can make or break a campaign this year. North Carolina is a heavy-hitting swing state with 16 electoral votes, the same amount as Georgia.

North Carolina has an interesting voting demographic, with a quite substantial and growingly progressive population primarily centered in urban and suburban centers.

This progressive voting block has healthcare as its top priority, as well as abortion rights. In North Carolina abortion is currently legal until the twelfth week and treatments such as IVF (In Vitro Fertilization) are still legal. However, many voters are fearful that North Carolina will become the next state to hinder or even prohibit access to these.

Former President Trump had taken

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## SABAGA

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skills, being able to talk friendly, communicatively, and descriptively overall is very crucial because that's also a good first impression to your client, and if the client sees that you are not presentable, not professional, then that's definitely an offset.

**TA:** For people who might want to start their own business, how would you recommend they go out and advertise their business or grow a clientele that relies on the good you're providing?

**Sabaga:** Definitely social media is a big one right now, making sure that you have good, updated posts on Instagram, making stories, and possibly having Instagram pages dedicated to what you are selling. Additionally, you can definitely advertise yourself within your school, which is another good network. That is kind of another one of the ways that I got to begin at Saints. I started to give out some goods for teachers and other students to be able to promote my business, and I got in touch, and now I do events with Saints.



**TA:** Where do you see David's Creationz going in the future?

**Sabaga:** I think this is going to be a good hobby for me and a good side hustle for now during high school and during college, but I want to become a dentist ultimately. I think it is a pretty good side job that builds social skills, creativity, and it teaches you to be able to talk with other people, to be on time, and to balance good time management skills.

**TA:** Is there anything more that we haven't asked you that you think is important for our readers to know?

**Sabaga:** If anyone needs anything make sure to please let me know, I would love to help you out with anything, baking or decorating related, and if anyone has any questions, make sure to reach out via my Instagram account or see me at school if you're a student.

## WHERE'S MY CLASS?

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Essentially, both Canvas and MySchoolApp need to sync up everyone's information daily to make sure that no information on one site contradicts the other. While Canvas was doing just fine that fateful afternoon, MySchoolApp fumbled and didn't fully synchronize. Many students across multiple schools were impacted by the discrepancy, and Canvas was unable to access and display the affected students' information.

Mr. Igelman, who deals with Saints's technology and database management, attempted to contact parent company Blackbaud about the issue, but he couldn't get a hold of one of their software engineers at the time.

The cyber anomaly persisted for several days until Canvas and MySchoolApp resynced to a previous backup and updated from there, with everything running smoothly again.

While this is one of the largest technology breakdowns in the school's history, this isn't the first time a tech issue has struck Saints before. As Mr. Igelman describes it, "things will happen," and systems will naturally have bugs.

Ultimately, the goal is to mitigate, or even completely eliminate, these technical errors, but the crux of the problem remains that these bugs stem from Blackbaud and Canvas, not Saints.

Because of this, there's not much that can be fixed on Saints's side of the problem. Luckily, "99 percent of the time, [the software] runs perfectly," Igelman said. His main task is finding the source of the issue and reaching out to the company to fix it.

These anomalies are rare but can have big consequences, as we have seen with the issue a few weeks ago. Even though it isn't as exciting as some hacker being vanquished, keeping Saints's data secure is an important job that needs to be constantly monitored.

If you see Mr. Igelman or any of the IT people at Saints, make sure to thank them for what they do to keep the school running online.

## SWING STATES

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credit for the 2023 Supreme Court ruling that removed the federal protection of abortion. Kamala Harris has used this and a conservative plan called "Project 2025" to rally voter support (though Donald Trump has not endorsed Project 2025).

**Georgia: 16 electoral votes**

Georgia played a pivotal role for Joe Biden's victory in 2020, and it will most likely be as influential for the winning candidate in November. The Georgia election in 2020 only came down to around 11,000 votes (CNN and Fox News), and the predicted margins for 2024 are just as slim.

According to a survey by Marist College, 25 percent of Georgia voters feel that "preserving democracy" is a top issue on their mind. Preserving democracy is such a pressing issue because after the 2020 election, several voter suppression bills were implemented in Georgia and other states. Claims about the 2020 election that former President Trump spread created much concern in voters across the aisle.

Many Georgian voters feel that this is an election for America's democracy and is not just about who wins what seat.

**Pennsylvania: 19 electoral votes**

Pennsylvania has the most electoral votes of any swing state, and the fifth most of any state in the nation. With 19 electoral votes and a very diverse population, Pennsylvania demands a substantial amount of funds and time from any campaign.

In Pennsylvania, the mining and fracking industries are a very divisive issue: these industries make up 36.6 percent of fuel jobs and include about 31,349 workers (Department of Energy). The economic and environmental impacts of the industry are substantial causing it to be spotlighted by the media. Donald Trump's campaign supports not only the fracking industry, but also deregulating it. They have also claimed that Kamala Harris plans to ban all fracking though she has vehemently denied this.

Fracking may not be the most pressing issue for voters across the country, but for Pennsylvanians, it is the one they are loudest about. Most likely, the outcome of Pennsylvania will substantially impact the overall election results.

It is important to remember that no matter who gets to 270, which state flips, or which senator wins, what matters most is who we are: Americans.

# Ranking your next Halloween watches



By Ben Bayona ('27)  
CONTRIBUTOR

However you choose to spend your Halloween — be it trick-or-treating or vegging out on the couch — Halloween movies capture the spirit of this centuries-old tradition. Compiled below is a tier list so you know which top-notch movies to watch and which were botched.

**Five Nights at Freddy's (2023): C**

Avid fans of the games would find enjoyment in seeing their favorite haunted animatronics live out the main points of the convoluted lore. Newcomers, on the other hand, are left with an average movie with very few scares and a plot that is just a bit too simplistic. It's not a bad movie by any means, it just takes very few risks.

**Annabelle (2014): F**

There's nothing special about *Annabelle*. It's simply a "couple gets haunted object and are haunted by it" type of movie. There's no deviation from that formula, a formula that has been done by many movies before and (probably) after it, and in a better manner at that.

**The Exorcist (1973): S**

*The Exorcist* is rightfully a behemoth among horror movies. One of the most prestigious horror movies, *The Exorcist* ages gracefully, even after half a century. The practical effects sell the pure horror this movie elicits. The unbridled acting given by Linda Blair's performance of a possessed child intensifies the already horrifying premise. It is best experienced blind.

**It (2017) & It Chapter Two (2019): B**

As one product, both chapters of this modern iteration of *It* tell a great saga of a bunch of unpopular kids growing up, becoming friends, and taking on a murderous clown. Both ensembles of the cast, the kids and the adults, act their parts perfectly against Bill Skarsgård's version of Pennywise the Dancing Clown.

**The Nightmare Before Christmas (1993): A**

What's this? A Christmas movie in the Halloween list? Tim Burton's *The Night-*

*mare Before Christmas* is a fun ride for the whole family. Its usage of stop motion animation makes the movie timeless as it is still a beauty to behold after 30 years. It's a blast.

**Beetlejuice (1988): B**

This movie, although a banger, is definitely not for everyone. Those who are interested in a kooky afterlife comedy would have their niche filled. Michael Keaton's performance of the titular character steals the scene every time he's on screen. The plot is simple, but it is a blast the whole way through.

**Night of the Living Dead (1968): A**

Especially considering the limitations of the time, *Night of the Living Dead* is a great product. The homemade feel and the lack of color further amplifies its aesthetic as an older movie, which, to a modern audience, deviates from the norm for the better.

**Winnie the Pooh: Blood and Honey (2023): F**

Letting IP's into public domain is a necessity in culture, but movies like this aren't helping its case. The acting is bad, and the childhood icon turned serial killer looks really goofy. Rest in peace, Eeyore. You died for nothing.

**Jeepers Creepers (2001): D**

It's boring. The Jeepers Creeper (that's definitely not its name) has a haunting design, but its victims drag the movie down. The leads and their flat personalities barely hit the threshold of acting. This movie will make you want to play the song of the same name to summon the Jeepers Creeper.

**Paranormal Activity (2007): S**

Call this list biased, but this San Diego-based horror movie deserves its S ranking. With its found footage style a la *Blair Witch Project*, the raw footage grounds the story in reality, leading to the supernatural aspects feeling possible in our world. The growing dread and anxiety of the situation puts all who watch on edge throughout the movie. It's a modern classic.



## Cook Cooks: candies better off crushed



By John Cook ('26)  
STAFF WRITER

Candy is the most important thing that goes through everyone's minds (and mouths) on Halloween night, with 600 million pounds of the sugary stuff being sold every year during the spooky season. As a whole, candy is pretty well-liked, with a variety of different types and flavors for everyone to enjoy, but some candies face strong dislike in the ruthless world of public opinion.

What causes these sweet treats to be so disliked? Most groups of opposition criticize certain unfavorable characteristics of candies, throwing related, disliked candies to their public graves.

One common consensus among Americans is that candy corn is the worst candy ever created. More moderate opinions hold that it tastes good for the first ten pieces but becomes nauseous afterwards. When boiled down, the main argument consists of candy corn having too repetitive a flavor with no variation to keep things interesting.

This logic applies to many other

candies as well. Circus peanuts are also criticized for its strong banana flavor that quickly becomes overwhelming. In fact, the most commonly hated candies are those that have the characteristic of being too self-similar. Other candies in this group include jelly beans, gummy bears/worms, and Peeps. Of course, these are also some of the most recognizable candies because of their consistent flavors, so it's more of a double-edged sword than a complete drawback.

Other generally avoided candies are overly chewy candies, including Tootsie Rolls, Bit o' Honeys, and wax bottles. Some of these are also disliked for only having one flavor, but their main source of dissatisfaction is the excessive effort in chewing required for just a quick taste of sweetness. Unlike some of the other candies, these are not particularly unpopular candies, but when looking through one's loot after a long night of trick-or-treating, most people will put them off to the side or try to see if they can trade for another candy.

Lastly, candies that lean heavily into a flavor other than sweet always have the most polarized opinions. Treats like

Lemonheads or black licorice are the most debated examples, but Hot Tamales can also spark a pretty heated conversation. With these candies, people's personal tastes are either completely for them or completely against them, without any real middle ground. Most people commonly say that these candies have an "acquired taste," a saying often serving as the motto for these delectables, especially black licorice. With their strong, unique flavors, there appears no middle ground in preferences: people either love it or hate it.

Amid all of the debate surrounding many different candies, there is one that is almost universally loved: chocolate. It is the perfect example of a sweet treat, which is why it is so common in so many other candies. There are hundreds of different candy bars all encased by chocolate, and for the few that are disliked (like Almond Joys), it's more the filling's fault than the chocolate itself. The sheer number of chocolate-based candies — from Hershey's Bars to M&M's to Snickers — really shows just how dear chocolate is in everyone's hearts.

## You can do WHAT to a pumpkin??



By George Burrell ('26)  
STAFF WRITER

One of the most heralded and widely-celebrated traditions of Halloween is that of pumpkin carving. Dating back to the infamous story of Jack O'Lantern, a legendary Irish man from an 18th-century folktale, pumpkin carving was originally intended to cast away evil spirits from one's home. Nowadays, people all across the world partake in this timeless tradition by carving all sorts of expressions into the orange exterior of a pumpkin.

However, the common face of a jack-o'-lantern has become rather bland. So, here are a few distinct designs that will make your carve truly stand out this Halloween:



**Unconventional Colors:** As it turns out, not all pumpkins are orange. Next time you go to a pumpkin patch, look around: you may find some white, red,

blue, even purple pumpkins! Although these colors may look unappealing and untraditional, it can allow for some pretty creative carves. A white pumpkin, for example, could have a ghost pattern while a blue-green pumpkin could be useful for a Frankenstein face. All in all, the prominent change in palette will make your pumpkin stand out like Krampus on Christmas.

### Drill-bit Delight:

No one said it was required to use knives to carve a jack-o'-lantern. One of the most cool (albeit uncommon) ways to carve a pumpkin is with a powertool, specifically a motorized screwdriver. This can help you carve freakishly flawless circles in your pumpkin and can give it a sort of alien appearance. Another creative option using a drill-bit is to make a luminaria-like pumpkin carve. Either way, a drill-bit pumpkin is a sure-fire way to draw attention!



### Jack Eat Jack:

Just like Russian nesting dolls, pumpkins come in a variety of different sizes, from puny pebbles to buff boulders. A creative pumpkin carve takes advantage of this disparity in diameter by including a miniature jack-o'-lantern within the hollow of a larger one. With this seemingly simple addition, your carve will create a pumpkin-ception sensation.

### Logo Illumination:

When it comes to carving a pumpkin, there are multiple different shapes and sizes that you can create instead of just a typical face — one of the most notable (and lucrative) of these is a logo. Logos are very recognizable and usually simple, and they also pose a pleasant challenge to more experienced carvers. Also, taking a picture and posting your carved creation could also get you merchandise from that specific company, such as a T-shirt or sticker.



No matter how you carve your pumpkin this Halloween, try to make it challenging and be creative! Of course, if you can't think of any way to carve your pumpkin, you can always just make some pumpkin pie instead.

## CreaTEENS



By Mattie Gosling ('26)  
CONTRIBUTOR

Looking to step up your physique while increasing your athletic performance? Introducing the not-so-magical supplement: creatine. Fitness enthusiasts around the world are bringing attention to creatine, catching the eyes of many teens. Why is this product so popular, and is it safe for use among growing teens?

Creatine is a naturally occurring compound that helps your muscles produce more energy during intense physical activity. The body converts creatine into creatine phosphate, which boosts the creation of adenosine triphosphate (ATP), the main energy source for muscle contractions. This energy is stored in your muscles and used when you work out.

The pressure to perform well in any sport can be overwhelming, which is why so many teen athletes have already turned to creatine for help.

Creatine builds lean muscle, which is good for athletes looking to increase strength without having to increase body fat. Creatine draws water to muscles, essentially increasing their size. Over time — and with consistent training — creatine can help you build much more muscle than people who don't take creatine.

With more energy being stored, creatine enhances the short bursts of energy needed in sports like tennis, football, basketball, and soccer, allowing these athletes to train harder and with a high-



Mason Choi ('28)

er intensity. For teen athletes, this means being able to sprint faster, jump higher, or perform better during repetitive sprints and drills. Many young athletes report that creatine helped them break through to the next level in their sport.

Creatine can also reduce inflammation, greatly improving the speed of muscle recovery after an intense workout. Faster recovery can also lead to more consistent training, reducing the risk of overtraining or injury. This is especially important for teens as having a consistent stretching basis or attending physical therapy is not always possible. Thanks to creatine's recovery benefits, it can help sustain steady gains in strength and stamina. 5 grams a day is all it takes to see a difference in athletic performance and recovery.

Despite creatine being one of the most researched supplements, when it comes to teenage use there are some concerns.

As stated earlier, creatine's job is to

draw water into your muscles, increasing the chance of dehydration if one is not cautious about their water intake. This can lead to muscle cramps and stomach problems, hindering an athlete's performance. It can also lead to quick, but temporary, weight gain. As muscles grow over time, weight may increase gradually, but remember: it is lean muscle, not fat.

The biggest concern surrounding creatine is possible damage to the kidneys. Creatine is processed through the kidneys, which could put potential stress on the organ. While there is no evidence pointing to kidney damage, it is important to not overuse creatine.

Teen usage of creatine is debated in the field, but you can do more research to see if creatine is right for your body. Creatine can behave and react differently to different people, so making sure that creatine is right for you with a doctor or medical consultant is paramount, but, if all is good, why not give it a shot?

## ATTENTION! SPACE AVAILABLE

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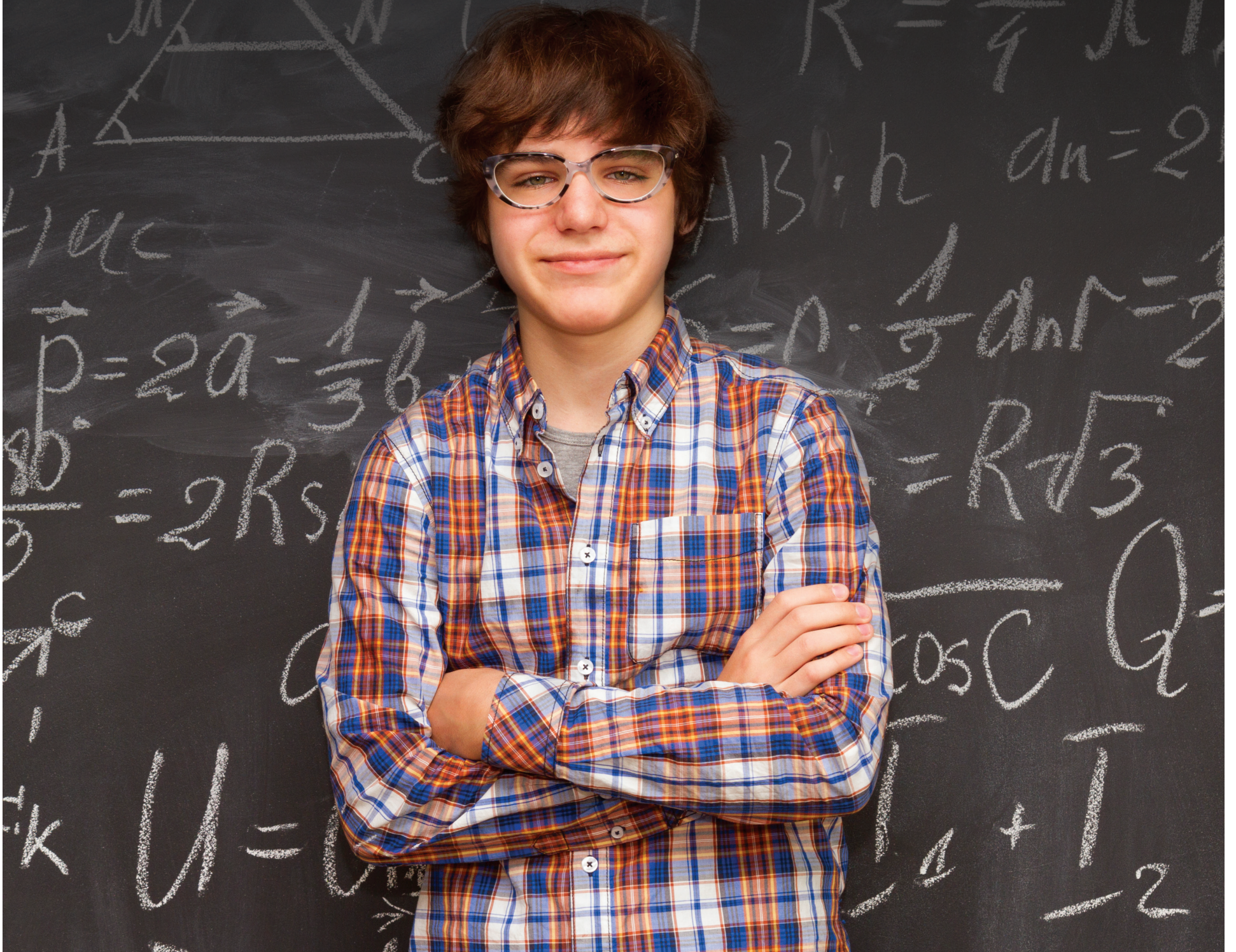
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# Costume conundrum? Enzo's got you covered.

**By Enzo Simon ('27)**  
EDITOR

Saintsmen, with Halloween steadily approaching (in theme with its ominous and frightening mascots of Jason Vorhees, or more recently, Art the “Terrifying” Clown), I implore you to please have no fear — for Enzo is here! (Which is quite surprising given that I missed the previous two Halloweens — my costume was that of a hospitalized, asthmatic-plagued patient — a true testament to my ethos, that is, credibility on the subject.)

*But what subject?*

The scariest subject of them all, Saintsmen. The one that has caused you to don a wolfish persona, howling away with horror. The spine-chilling prospect...of choosing this year's Halloween costume. *Spooky!* And with that *bold* attempt at an introduction, I segue to my first tip.

### Have no fear.

If I can muster up the courage to mention my Tinker Bell costume (wait around and find out!), you should have no shame in dressing up as whomever/whatever you desire to be. Even if it's someone like Tinker Bell (and if you do, hit me up — I have a *spare* costume that I'm sadly too “muscular” to fit into anymore).

Just remember to stay classy, Saintsmen. No need to be a public menace and humiliate yourself with an offensive or

provocative outfit. The holiday is for fun-time frights, not traumatizing thrillers that will ruin a child, parent, or anyone else's time.

Otherwise, you'll only add onto the disgusting list of villains who inspired the next tip.

### Equip yourself against monsters.

Now I, a very holy altar server, would *never* suggest violence, and I strongly recommend running or fleeing from any danger.

But **if**, for some reason, your inhaler jams or you trip (as all horror movie characters do), you might be forced to fight. In that case, make sure there are some “defensive mechanisms” within your costume.

This Halloween, many people are opting to go as Deadpool and Wolverine, and despite their notorious “peacefulness,” I'm sure you *razor-sharp* Saintsmen will somehow be able to squeeze in some built-in defense into their colorful spandex.

Or perhaps you can unlock your inner *Kwisatz Haderach*, with your makeshift stillsuits — composed of skin-tight Uniqlo thermals and hoodie-string nose plugs — and aggressively shriek your “desert-mouse” moniker until your assailant's blade chips and shatters.

Remember, your imagination's the limit. You can even challenge the un-LOVELY *Challenger* with a tennis racket and a good swing — bonus points if you're with two *friends*, preferably a boy and a girl...friend.

Which leads to my next suggestion.

### Group Costumes.

They offer extra security — any monster would run from a combination of spiked Sabrina Carpenter heels, a crazy throuple with metal tennis rackets, and the bright, blinding glamor of a Charli XCX “brat” green outfit.

And arguably more important: they promote perfect pizzazz! Honestly, wasn't your eighth grade gang of prisoners the highlight of your middle school career?

Lastly, they facilitate female interaction (this is the most important...obviously). Talking from experience, more is, in fact, always merrier (for some *reason*, the ladies are never satisfied with just me).

So go out there and embrace your *Unitas*, Saintsmen. After all, we are social creatures.

### COSTumes.

Clever, I know. Almost as much as my cutting of costs with cutting of (pillow) cases to make little, spine-chilling eye holes for my *scary* ghost costume.

Yes, Saintsmen, the true horror of

Halloween as we mature: cost.

But, again, have no fear, determined readers, for you can be stingy while spooky, frugal while frightening, and thrifty while terrifying!

You can always use your mom's make-up, your younger and *quirkier* fashion styles (the Met Gala welcomes your mismatched highlight socks and crocs), or just Pinterest (I promise it's not actually *that* embarrassing to use).

### Put care into the scare.

Lastly, there's no Halloween without its signature horror. Terrifying costumes will always yield the most candy (unless you're dressed up as Jesus and trying to get candy from my mom).

Remember, classic villains will never cease to curdle blood. Dracula (I personally am not a fan of impalement nor exsanguination), the werewolf (I was never “Team Jacob”), and of course, Frankenstein (I still have nightmares of those late-night to early-morning annotations), although a bit hackneyed, still remain splendidly scary.

Have fun hoarding all the attention this Halloween, Saintsmen. And if for some reason you disagree with any of my tips, kindly forward your complaint(s) to

Mr. Vincent Adultman — one could say he's the Dr. Jekyll to my Mr. Hyde.



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# Are high schoolers too old to trick-or-treat?

**By Sebastian Rodriguez ('27)**  
STAFF WRITER

Halloween is right around the corner, and what's better than dressing up and going out into your neighborhood to get free candy? Trick-or-treating, a tradition around 100 years old, brings out millions of people, mostly children, into the streets for candy. Wearing a costume and going around houses with your friends can be very fun, but how old is too old for trick-or-treating? Moreover, are teens too old?

Let's consider one of the biggest pros first. Trick-or-treating brings people together, giving families and friends an opportunity to share a fun, spooky night. Speaking from personal experience, Halloween is definitely not fun home alone — kids roaming around at night, banging on your front door like they are ready to bash it down for a few measly pieces of candy — it's scary! It's a night to spend time with other people, and trick-or-treating is a great way to do so.

Last year, I spent the entirety of Halloween doing three things: watching movies, getting up to give candy to the trick-or-treaters at the door, and wishing that I had gone out to get some candy of my own instead of seeing it fly out of my pantry faster than I could say “boo.” As much fun as a relaxing afternoon may be, there's nothing like going out, being social, and stocking up on some sugary treats.

On the flip side, the main issue commonly brought up is that trick-or-treating is mainly associated with kids, and in an attempt to distance them-

selves and appear “cooler” or more “nonchalant,” many high schoolers opt to avoid participating in the “immaturity.”

It's understandable why people wouldn't want to do something that seems as childish as trick-or-treating — they don't want to look foolish by walking around the neighborhood begging for candy. But going out on Halloween night to trick-or-treat, especially with a group of friends, can create some lasting memories.

Another big question with trick-or-treating in high school is the problem of dressing up. Most people just dress up as a character or something relevant to that year, but is that also too embarrassing to continue as a teenager? Absolutely not. High schoolers can most definitely dress up — trust me, the girls love to see a charming young man in a cute Teletubby costume.

Granted, not many of you will be all too keen on donning a bright pink costume, so I suggest that you just go as whatever character you like. Dressing up just amplifies the fun that you have on Halloween, and it doesn't take anything away.

Even better are group costumes. If Halloween is a day to be with others and enjoy yourself (which it is), then wearing fun costumes together can enhance the trick-or-treating experience.

In all honesty, no one is going to care if they see high schoolers trick-or-treating. They should still be able to enjoy their final few years of get-

ting free candy before graduating into adult life.

All in all, there shouldn't be anything stopping high schoolers from

trick-or-treating. It promotes a fantastic amount of fun through dressing up and eating free candy, all while hanging out with friends.



By Jason Chang ('27)