



RAHHHHHHH!



VIKING IN THE
SNOW

Hilltopics

Volume LIX

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Student Publication Since 1965



WATCH OUT!

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Letter from the Rector

It is hard to imagine Valentine's Day during Lent. On further reflection, that may not be such a bad idea because Lent, like Valentine's Day, is ultimately about love - our love for God. On Valentine's Day, we express our love to those dear to us by sending them cards, flowers, chocolates, or taking them out to dinner. During Lent, we express our love for God by purifying our heart, by fasting and abstaining from sin, by taking time to pray, by giving alms and engaging in works of charity. Lent, like Valentine's Day, is a time to express, to fortify, and to fructify our love for the Lord.

But, in order for our expression of love to be meaningful, and in order for that same love to be stronger and bear fruit, it has to go through some kind of purification. It has to be tested. The Gospel at the beginning of Lent provides us with a good metaphor for that - the desert. The desert is a dry, scorching, and tough place. All of us may be or have been in a "desert" at some point in our lives. The desert is our experience of dryness - dryness in spiritual life, dryness in prayer, or dryness in the practice of our faith. It is in those moments when we are put to the test. It is in those moments when we need to put our trust in God and call on him in prayer. It is in those moments when we need to take courage and say to the devil, "Get behind me!" Like everything else in this world, the desert and the temptations will come and go. But, God's love, God's mercy, and God's faithfulness will endure. Jesus knew that. Jesus believed in that. Jesus hoped in that when he was in the desert. That is what enabled him to triumph over temptations and the devil himself.

As we make our journey further into the season of Lent, may we welcome the experience of "desert" in our lives. Let us use it as an opportunity to show our love for God, to strengthen our love for him, and to make it bear fruit. So that holding fast to God in faith and trust, through prayer and perseverance, we shall pass the test with flying colors, and emerge from the experience a stronger, wiser, and holier person like Jesus, and with a love for God that is ever stronger and ever more fruitful.

2023 - 2024 Hilltopics Staff



Long Nguyen ('26)
Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam
Favorite Song: Summertime Sadness
by Lana Del Rey
Hobby: Video Games



Platon Rybakov ('27)
Beverly Hills, California
Favorite Song: Master of None
by Beach House
Hobby: Skating

Student Spotlight

By: Diego Soto ('25)



Duy Do ('26)
Ha Noi, Vietnam
Favorite Song: Nhung Loi Hua Bo
Quen by Dear Jane and Vu
Hobby: Playing Badminton



Nhat Pham ('26)
Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam
Favorite Song: Chúng Ta Cua Hien
Tai by Son Tùng M-TP
Hobby: Soccer

Speak to Win

By: Alan Mora ('26)

Forensics has been an extracurricular activity offered at SLS for years. However, it is not an easy one to explain. To put it simply, forensics is competitive public speaking. One can compete, by joining a team to do a group interpretation or going solo and creating your own speech to perform in different ways. Actively participating in forensics promotes better communication skills, encourages confidence and critical thinking skills, as well as, helping one overcome his fears of speaking in front of others. The only disadvantage might be, having to wake up early on a Saturday mornings.

The head coach of the forensics program is Mr. Martin Vu. Mr. Vu explains that he has two goals for this season, "Being conference champions and to have at least one state champion." This all may sound daunting, but do not worry, forensics is a beginner-friendly activity. When the team goes to a meet, everyone supports each other. Some may not succeed at first, because it takes practice, time, and experience to succeed. Nonetheless, it can be a good opportunity to overcome ones fears and gain confidence. You will never know, unless you try.



Tomato, Tomato, Tomato!

By: Cristian Cruz ('25)

This year's spring musical, **Something Rotten** is set in the Renaissance Era. The story of two brothers, Nick and Nigel Bottom, who are play writers. The brothers want to achieve fame through a play but cannot because they are living in the same era as William Shakespeare, the greatest playwright the world has ever known. The brothers are very desperate and seek a fortuneteller who expressed that their play will be very different, by having music, singing, and dancing. With that said, the brothers set out to write their first play.

Director, Mrs. Andrea School, said, "I am very excited for this year's show, and the more I get to know the musical, the more eager I am for students to get to know their characters." She also stated, "There is so much humor in this show and so many opportunities for cast members to expand their skills. With a larger cast this year, including several newcomers to the stage, I look forward to coaching them in their movements and voice projection, all necessary in order to capture an audience's attention. Above all, my goal is to once again provide a fun and remarkable experience of personal growth and connection between cast and crew members that are unique to time spent in a theater."

St. Lawrence Seminary High School Proudly Presents

SOMETHING ROTTEN!

May 3 at 7pm
May 4 at 7pm
May 5 at 2pm

\$5 Tickets at the Door
For reservations call
(920) 753-7570

St. Lawrence Seminary Theater
301 Church St.
Mt. Calvary, WI

Book by Karey Kirkpatrick
& John O'Farrell
Music and Lyrics by Wayne
& Karey Kirkpatrick
Conceived by Karey & Wayne Kirkpatrick

SOMETHING ROTTEN! is presented through special arrangement with Music Theater International (MTI). All authorized performance materials are also supplied by MTI. www.mtishows.com
Adapted from original script to fit general audiences.

Rejoice, Emmanuel!

By: Justin Tran ('25)

The annual Christmas Concert has been a longtime tradition at SLS. The music director, Mr. Daniel Matthew, works with the band and choir during the first semester to create a musical masterpiece. This year's Christmas Concert began with a collaboration of the band and choir and performed "Rejoice!" The band continued with, "Christmas Calypso," and amazed everyone with their talent. The choir's angelic voices gave the audience goosebumps as they sang, "In the Bleak Midwinter." New this year to the concert, were performances by the Music Club, featuring "All I want for Christmas" and the Wind Ensemble, performing "Waltz of the Flowers" rearranged by Andrew Nguyen ('24). These two performances brought new life to the SLS music program, featuring more individualized talent. Mr. Matthew shared, "I'm extremely proud of our students for their efforts and practices to contribute to this year's wonderful Christmas Concert." Br. Baudry shared, "This is a great memory for me, to see our dear students shining on stage with the love of music for God." This year's Christmas concert successfully concluded with many departing with a smile on their face and a song in their heart.



HARMONY



ON BEAT

Phew...Halfway Through!

By: Bao Tran ('26)

On December 15, students concluded the first semester and went home to enjoy a three-week-long Christmas break with their family and friends. Miguel Herrera ('26) traveled to Mexico to visit family. He had a fun time seeing family he has not seen in a while. Miguel went to his Uncle's to celebrate the New Year, they enjoyed playing board games and video games. "I also watched a Spanish bullfight, which was amazing. It is a dangerous and controversial sport, yet a fascinating one," said Miguel.

Jason Hong ('25) enjoyed his Christmas break in Korea. He visited his grandparents and celebrated the New Year. Jason stated, "I miss Korean food so much, and we created such good memories." Jason also played tennis and went skiing with his Uncle. He also had a chance to meet up with old friends. Every year the Christmas break gives all the students time away from school to enjoy family and friends. It allows them to return relaxed and ready for the second semester.



WHAT'S UP?

Hit the Snow

By: Hung Nguyen ('25)

Winter marks the transition to the New Year and the annual celebration of Winter Carnival on the Hill. Winter Carnival is just one of the anticipated traditions at SLS. With the slogan, "It's Chilly on the Hilly," the 51st Winter Carnival took place on January 31st. The annual event creates a friendly competition on the Hill and helps with the boredom of winter.

In preparation for the event, the students slept in, had breakfast and dressed warm to compete as fraternities. After breakfast, students reported to the Chapel for pray in honor of Our Lady of the Snow and for instructions for the day. Joaquin Baldree ('24) held the torch and lit the cauldron in the center of the chapel to start Winter Carnival. The enthusiastic students participated in activities such as cup pong, beanbag toss, football, soccer, ultimate Frisbee and floor hockey. The Vice President of Student Council, Daniel Cornejo ('24), shared, "With the mild weather this year and the inability to make ice, the Executive Committee members along with Mr. Bargender and Mr. Villegas decided to replace one of the most anticipated activities, broomball with floor hockey, to boost the excitement."



OUCH!!



OUTTA MY WAY



DIVE!



FIRE UP IN HERE

After hours of playing, students relaxed in the refectory for lunch and student names were drawn for the All Star Students versus the All Pro Faculty/Staff volleyball game. Throughout the volleyball game, the spectators displayed a gamut of emotions, some with cheers and some of disappointment. The three matches were neck and neck, but in the end, the faculty/staff was victorious. To continue the afternoon there were basketball activities, such as, a three-point contest and knockout and some individual game room events like ping-pong, a spelling bee and a video game tournament. To conclude the day's festivities, Rat Race was played and a Scavenger Hunt, created with questions/riddles relating to Hill.

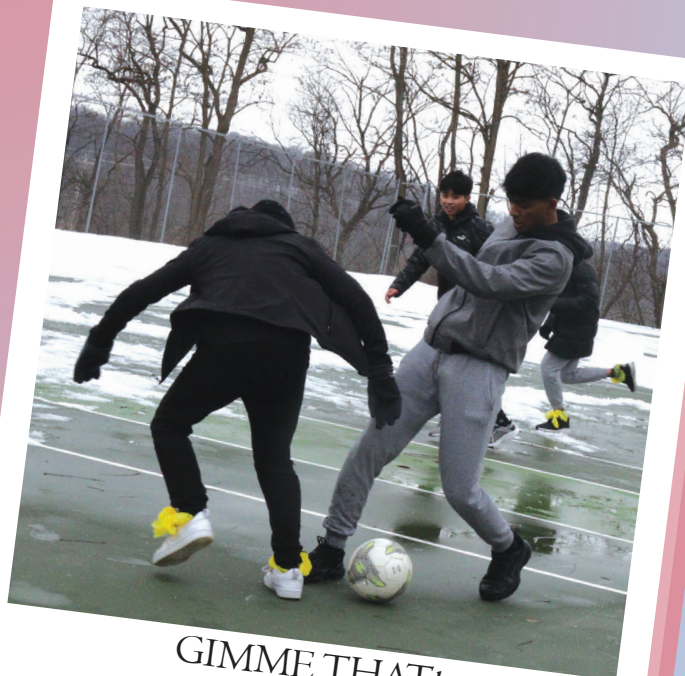
After dinner, the students congregated in the chapel. The day's events ended with prayer and announcing the winners. Cheers from the winners and disappointment in the hearts of the less fortunate echoed throughout the chapel. Winter Carnival continues to bring excitement to the Hill during the long winter months and gives the students a break from the daily grind of school.



THIS IS AN ACE FOR SURE



GOTTA GO



GIMME THAT!

“Chuc Mung Nam Moi”

By: Max Trinh ('25)

The Lunar New Year, the Year of the Dragon, was celebrated on the Hill on Sunday, February 4th. The event started with dinner prepared by hardworking students, and the help of some parents. For dinner, the Vietnamese served egg rolls, shrimp crackers, fried rice, noodles, salad, and braised pork with eggs. The Koreans offered Tteok-bokki and Eomuk, which are essentially spicy rice cakes and fish cakes and for dessert, a coconut and coffee jello was served. The students lined up to wish Fr. Zoy and Fr. Peter a happy new year, full of health and prosperity where each student received the gift in a red envelope. After prayer, students performed the iconic dragon dance and the company followed the “dragons” outside, where firecrackers were lit. Mr. Bryce Gassner exclaimed, “My favorite was probably the singing. The students were phenomenal performing the dragon dance and the food was extremely delicious.” Sal Gonzalez ('25) said, “I think the food was the best part. I ate a plate, three desserts, and some leftovers.” This year’s Tet celebration was successful. It would not have been possible without the contributions from Mr. And Mrs. Van, and planning by Fr. Truong. The Hilltoppers are already looking forward to next year’s celebration.



A Step Into the Pro-Life Movement

By: ThienHanh Mai ('25)

On Thursday, January 18th, a few select Hilltoppers flew to Washington, D.C. to attend the March for Life event for the second straight year. Upon arrival, they stayed with SLS host families and spent the first night recharging after the long trip to D.C. On Friday, the students visited the Bible Museum, walked in the March for Life, and visited the Smithsonian Air and Space Museum. The Bible Museum had a lot to offer. It had an exhibit built to look like Nazareth in Jesus' time, it had exhibits containing Bibles from different languages, and it even highlighted important buildings and people of the faith.

The March for Life was long and exhausting. During the walk, the Hilltoppers passed by significant landmarks like the Washington Monument, the Capitol Building, the Supreme Court, the Library of Congress, and many more. During the walk, the SLS representatives held up signs and shouted chants against abortion. When asked about the trip, Jonah Lim ('26) stated, "I loved the trip. The March was so exciting. I learned a lot about abortion laws, and I very much enjoyed my time in D.C. It was great to experience something new like this."

Following the walk, the group went to ThienHanh Mai's ('25) house for supper where traditional Vietnamese dishes like pho, egg rolls, stir-fried noodles, and fried rice were served. Saturday, the group attended the Students for Life conference at the Grand Hyatt Hotel. Here, they listened to pro-life activists, such as, former Vice President Mike Pence and Students for Life President Kristan Hawkins. They also met Mr. John O'Neill ('15), who is currently active in the pro-life movement. At the end of the trip, the SLS group attended a Lunar New Year's festival at Dulles Expo Center. Here, there was a lot of music, food, and games. Dr. Michael Donahou summed up the adventure by stating, "The trip was very successful. Not only did everyone have a lot of fun, we also learned a lot."



RALLY TOGETHER



IT'S A LITTLE COLD



FIGHT FOR RIGHT!

Life after SLS

By: Said Villa ('25)

It is that time of the year, when SLS seniors start to prepare for graduation and what comes next. Senior, Kiet Pham is planning to attend a four-year college at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. His plan is to study mechanical engineering. Kiet said, "As a kid, I was interested in machines and robots, so I have decided to become a mechanical engineer. I chose UN-Lincoln because it is a very good school with affordable tuition." Senior Xavier Saucedo has decided to join the Marine Corp, with his sights on becoming military police. He said, "I am doing this for two reasons; I am very grateful for this country I live in and want to know that I am doing something good for it and my future family." Senior Nam Nguyen is planning to attend Texas Christian University in Fort Worth, TX, to pursue a career as an electrical engineer, with a focus on semi-conductor physics. He stated, "I have spent a lot of time preparing and I think it is all going to be worth it."



GO HUSKERS!!!

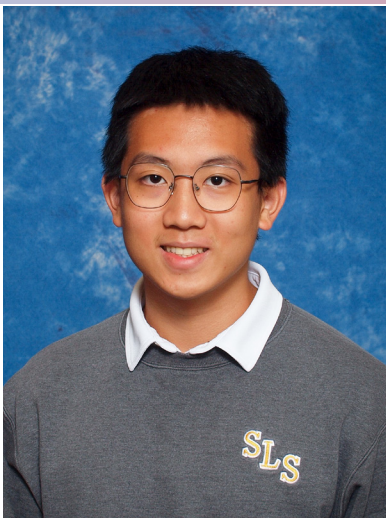
UNIVERSITY OF
Nebraska
Lincoln



MARINES



MARINE CORPS!!!!



YEEHAW!!!



Ornamenting Season!

By: Christopher Vu ('26)

A new fun activity, Door Decorating, was introduced on the Hill to boost the holiday spirit and celebrate the end of the first semester. Mr. Kevin Buelow, Director of Institutional Advancement, suggested the activity. The doors to be decorated were randomly picked by each fraternity. One rule of the activity was that decorations had to be handmade. The frats had three days to design and decorate their doors with their fraternity mentors. Mark Tran ('26) said, "I really enjoyed bonding with my frat while decorating our door." The doors varied from a scene of the Nativity, a snowmen and trees to Mr. Nguyen, Dean of Students, as Santa Claus. The judges chose the most appealing, original, and creative designed doors to win a fraternity prize. When asked, Mr. Bartel stated, "I believe door decorating was successful in bonding each fraternity together and most of the students enjoyed it." The staff and students admired the decorated doors that helped keep the holiday spirit alive on the Hill.



IS IT EVEN?



TREE!!

That Needs Repairing

By: Jonah Lim ('26)

There are many elective classes offered here at SLS, which can be unique and helpful for the students' futures. Choosing to take any one of these classes may influence what students pursue beyond high school. One elective offered is Small Engine Repair. The name of the class explains itself. Students learn how to repair small engines, such as, a snow blower, lawn mower or a chain saw. The instructor is Mr. Matthew Bahr, who also teaches Wood Fabrications, Graphic Design, and other hands-on classes here on the Hill.

In Small Engine Repair, not only do the students learn how small engines work, they also learn about the tools used for repairing engines. Senior, Iñaki Falcon said, "This class is very interactive and exciting, and Mr. Bahr does a great job in teaching all the aspects of an engine." There are two major projects done in this semester long class. The first being how to disassemble and the re-assemble an engine. As the students take apart the engines, they familiarize themselves with the various tools used and parts of an engine. Then as they reassemble the engine, they learn the importance of putting the parts back together in the correct manner.

The second project is to repair a small engine. At this point students will apply what they have learned from Mr. Bahr while disassembling and re-assembling an engine. Upon finishing the semester long class, students should walk away with a general knowledge of how to fix a small engine.



THIS BOLT IS SO TIGHT

Hilltopics
301 Church Street
Mt. Calvary, WI 53057



From the Editors

And we're back! For many of us, Christmas break was way too short. But now that we're back on the Hill, we're refreshed and ready for the final half of the year. For us seniors, this latter half of the year will be even more packed with bittersweetness, as our time together really starts ticking down. Basketball, Wrestling, Forensics, Solo and Ensemble and even preparation for the musical has many of us working harder on top of our normal schoolwork, but we keep going. Let's all keep working hard!

-Nile and Jonathan

What masterpieces we're observing:



Great Wave Off Kanagawa
by Katsushika Hokusai
(Humanities reference)



Detail of the (better) Lamb
in the Ghent Altarpiece by
Jan Van Eyck



Girl with a Pearl Earring
by Johannes Vermeer
(Humanities reference)