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The Freshmen Takeover

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Middle School



Cistercian MS MathCounts

By Joseph Spak, '21, who turned his article in late

Recently, I had the privilege of representing Cistercian at a middle school MathCounts competition. My friends and I had a blast traveling to the tournament, and being able to show our math skills there.

The drive down was much more enjoyable than expected. Along the way, we stopped at a gas station and bought some junk food for our hotel room. Once we arrived at the hotel, we hung out in the room, watched TV, and then went to dinner. Because it was a Friday in Lent, we ate fried

catfish and popcorn shrimp, both of which were delicious.

When we got back to the hotel we practiced math with Dr. Newcomb and Mr. Erickson, and actually enjoyed ourselves. Then we went back to our room and played cards for almost two hours. The evening experience was and awesome. The only drawback was that lights had to be out by ten thirty. We woke up early the next morning (6:15!), only to be greeted by a pitiful hotel breakfast. The food was terrible, so we all ended up eating cereal and toast.

The contest itself followed, a monstrosity which we were there to vanquish. It was the hardest MathCounts contest I've ever participated in by a long shot, and I think I speak safely by saying that this opinion is common to the rest of the team. Despite the challenge, it was still fun to be present there with my friends.

After the morning contest, we had a lunch break. Since breakfast had been awful, we expected a similar quality of lunch. We were pleasantly surprised, however; they served spaghetti and meatballs with garlic breadsticks. We all gorged ourselves.

Following lunch, we had to attend the awards ceremony, during which they announced the top scorers of the competition. At the ceremony, they gave out ten laptops to notable individuals, one of whom was Dr. Newcomb. I felt proud to witness Dr. Newcomb as he took the computer and received such recognition.

When presenting the computers, they were awkwardly playing You're the Inspiration by Chicago. It isn't a bad song, yet it was terribly presented.

After the awards ceremony was the countdown round (a small tournament where they give the top scorers math problems and the first to get the questions right wins). None of the Cistercian players were in it, but it was still enjoyable to watch. With the competition finished, it was finally time to head back. Looking back on the experience, it was definitely worth the while to make the trip, not only for the contest but also for the fun that we had. The adventure left me extremely happy and hoping that I would get more opportunities to go on similar school trips in the future.

Middle School Tennis

By Ben Woods, '21, who turned it in even later

The Middle School Tennis Team put a historic season on the books this year, possibly one of the best in school history. By that, of course, I mean that they won more than one match. Against Fort Worth Country Day, the first match of the season, they recorded the first Cistercian sweep against another team. For the past few years, it has been the other way around, so they all went crazy after the match, flooding the court and trying to carry the person who won the winning match on our shoulders. Coach Boyden sadly stopped them. I guess a 7th grader's death wouldn't look good on his resume. They went on to win many more matches, even tying St. Marks, knocking them off their high horse for the first time in recent history. However, the team didn't do all these truly astonishing things by luck, or even raw talent. The team was a closely knit group. The team didn't descend into the usual arguing over the line calls or the score. The eighth-grade veterans gave consistency to the team, and the seventh-grade team brought a TON of firepower, especially in the two who inadvertently became extremely annoying to the eighth graders because of how much better they were, despite being a year younger. Jokes and Coach Boyden impressions abounded (his famous "Go to Track" never gets old), but when it was time to get down to business, they got down to business, practicing as hard as they could. Overall it was a great season: successful, fun, and, most importantly, St. Marks-tying. This tennis year will live in the member's hearts.

Sports



TrackNation

By Alex Banul, '20, who is loved by Fr. Greg

Cistercian sports have a clear, strong emphasis on teamwork. In any sport you play at Cistercian, you will find yourself on a good team with other high school students. But back in seventh grade when I first started running the illustrious sport of track, I had an image of the sport being isolating and individual. Few of the races in track & field incorporate team efforts – the main team races being the relays

-- But after running track for three years, I know that TrackNation is more of a team than some of the other sports I've played. As the amazing Coach Dotson puts it, everyone who runs track is a member of TrackNation. If you walk around classes the following day with crazy sore thighs and possible shin splints from tons of running on the track and working in the weight room, then you are a member of TrackNation. Though we run as individuals, we compete as a team – we cheer each other on, we challenge each other to do better, we win together, we lose together. Even other schools' track teams are part of TrackNation, and we all represent the dedication and effort that track & field is all about. My personal experience with TrackNation has been one that I will never regret. From 7th grade to freshman year, Coach Dotson has been a huge help in my formation, both physically and mentally, teaching me proper form when running, sportsmanship, and competitiveness, among many other things. Oscar Parmenter and Patrick Andrews, both seniors, were great models for me when running hurdles. They both seemed to fly over the hurdles, and they gave me a great goal to shoot for in my coming years on TrackNation. They worked with me every step of the way, and I am more than thankful for their help and competition. Unfortunately, I was 2 seconds from qualifying for SPC in my race, 300M Hurdles, with a time of 49 seconds, but I am eager for next year so that I can get another shot, and continue to improve.

NBA Playoffs

By Patrick Geary, '20, who is secretly a senator

This year's NBA Playoffs seem eerily familiar to last year's playoffs. The Warriors and Cavs swept with no problem, and there were no other sweeps. In reality, there is only one team on each side of the country that can compete with these powerhouses. The biggest threat to the Warriors is the Spurs. With a healthy Kawhi Leonard, they've proved to be very lethal. As we saw in Game 1 of the Western Conference Finals, the Spurs can put up points. However, even with defensive specialist Danny Green, the Warriors offense proved to be too much of a match for the aging Spurs. One bright spot for the Spurs has been Patty Mills. After Tony Parker's injury, he had to take the role of starting point guard. Before these playoffs, he had only started 18 games! He has only started three games so far, but he will likely start much more. In the Eastern Conference, the biggest threat to the Cavaliers is the Celtics. In Game 7 against the Wizards, we saw how young and talented the Celtics are. Kelly Olynyk, 26, and Isaiah Thomas, 28, combined for 55 points, or 5 more points than the entire Wizards team scored in the second half! The main issue for the Celtics is that they cannot keep up with the Cavaliers in star power. In reality, no one can except the Warriors. With a starting 5 of Kyrie Irving, JR Smith, LeBron James, Kevin Love, and Tristan Thompson, they are practically unstoppable. Even though the Spurs and Celtics are great teams, it would be very unlikely for either team to win the series. Most likely, we'll end up with the same matchup as last year - The Cleveland Cavaliers versus the Golden State Warriors.

News

Special Council

By Alonso Medina, '18, who is our only news writer

"I hope you can let this go," were the words that started a chain of events which has left the political world in turmoil over the past week. It all started when an alleged memo quoting Donald Trump asking James Comey to end the investigation into Michael Flynn's possible connection with Russia was leaked to the Internet. Of course, the memo was a leak, and so its existence has not been fully confirmed. White House officials are reported to have stated, "While the President has repeatedly expressed his view that General Flynn is a decent man who served and protected our country, the President has never asked Mr. Comey or anyone else to end any investigation, including any investigation involving General Flynn." Whether that conversation ever happened or not, the result has been a political firestorm that threatens to engulf the Trump administration. Democrats are accusing Trump of obstructing justice, and Trump's Republican allies are preparing to weather the coming storm. The climax of these recent incidents was Trump's firing of FBI Director James Comey, on the recommendation of Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein, who sent Trump a memo which precipitated Comey's firing. Rosenstein's final statement on the matter is this: "I wrote it. I believe it. I stand by it." It was Rosenstein himself, however, who recently appointed former FBI Director Robert Mueller to head a special counsel to oversee the investigation of Russian government efforts to influence the presidential election. A special counsel sounds intimidating, but what is it? What may sound like a group of people is actually one person; specifically, a special counsel is a lawyer appointed to lead an independent investigation and prosecute anyone suspected of crimes. According to the law, the Attorney General can appoint a special counsel under "extraordinary circumstances" or when in it is in the public interest to do so. Ideally, the special counsel has to be as impartial as possible, and so a lawyer that is not involved in the political atmosphere is desired. Not only do Democrats, but also some Republicans, Senator John McCain included, have called for just such a special counsel. If Mueller finds anything incriminating, then he will be able to push for Trump's impeachment. If he fails to find anything, and if future investigations also fail to turn up incriminating evidence, then perhaps Trump's statement of being subject to a "witch hunt" will be corroborated. Only time will tell.

Julian Assange

By Alonso Medina, '18, who is still our only news writer

Whenever people discuss the 2016 election and factors that played in its results, one is bound to hear the names of Julian Assange and WikiLeaks. Julian Assange is the founder of WikiLeaks, a nonprofit organization dedicated to leaking information given out by whistleblowers. WikiLeaks has been the source of many controversial documents released over the last couple of years. During Obama's administration, WikiLeaks released documents such as the U.S. State Department diplomatic "cables", which were secret cables sent to the U.S. State Department, and in 2011, the 779 secret files which contained much information relating to prisoners in Guantanamo Bay. More recently, WikiLeaks released emails and information from the Democratic National Committee and Hillary Clinton's campaign manager John Podesta. Not only did the emails released provide a controversy that greatly affected the Clinton campaign, but the information from Podesta revealed the possibility of impropriety against Bernie Sanders. Obviously, these leaks lowered trust in these candidates, implying that they were cheating their way through the election. WikiLeaks has been accused of being in collusion with the Russian government by releasing documents given to them that would influence the 2016 election. However, this accusation remains unfounded, since incriminating evidence has yet to be found. However, the focus of recent news is not so much on WikiLeaks itself, but on its silver-haired founder, Julian Assange. Assange was born in Queensland, Australia in 1971 and founded WikiLeaks in 2006. He was wanted by the Swedish government for sexual assault allegations and by the British for failing to appear in court. For this reason, he took refuge in the Ecuadorian Embassy in London on July 19, 2012. He has been there for 5 years, but now, he claims that "The war, the proper war, is just commencing.". Why would he claim this? Well, on May 19, 2017, the Swedish government declared that it would drop its pursuit of sexual assault charges against Julian Assange. While this lifts a great weight off of his shoulders, Assange still cannot leave the Embassy. He is still wanted in Britain, but his lawyers are trying to clear that up. However, the fact that Sweden has decided to drop pursuit of charges has nothing to do with lack of evidence incriminating Assange. According to Marianne Ny, the chief prosecutor in Sweden, "I can conclude, based on the evidence, that probable cause for this crime still exists.". In fact, Assange's case can be re-opened if he returns to Sweden by 2020, which is the time limit placed on the accusations. According to Assange's lawyer, "He's a free man,", but given the true subtleties of Assange's situation, that will remain to be seen.

The Nest



Ask Kattdaddy!

Why is this the first time you have graced us with your wisdom? Where have you been my whole life?

Submitted by Rihanna

Whenever I need comfort I turn to the Bible, and I ask you to do the same. Read Romans 9:20, It should provide you with the answers you seek. Perhaps your own song can help you cope...

What is your opinion of dogs?

Submitted by Bee A. Gle

Dogs. Creatures driven by pure instinct and food drive. Never closing the gap between cats/man and beast. Unfortunately, one can hardly blame them because they don't have the higher capacities required to contribute meaningfully to the world around them. They, unlike some cats, never have time to write interesting articles to the Informer (something I recommend).

Do you advise studying for finals? Did you study when you were my age?

Submitted by Mothers Against Not Studying (MANS)

I would advise studying to all those who are not Kattdaddy. As a being of infinite wisdom, like myself, studying has become exceedingly tedious and #notworthit. And as an ageless being, I have never studied, because it all came and has always come to me.

What was your lowest grade on a test at school (back when you were only a kitten)?

Submitted by Bastet

School is only for those who need to learn (i.e. all of you reading this). As a timeless, all knowledgeable, jet-pack-wearing, space cat, this is not necessary. But I will tell you an embarrassing story from my kitten years. As everyone knows, cats love yarn. However, being above the regular cat I instead love space laser yarn. Once, I ate the yarn and after it...passed through I chased it around, even though it had not yet come out (if ya know what I mean).

Strong in the force, are you? Be you must, for a speaking cat you are. Tell me, can you? Appreciate it I would. Another question I have. Why wear a purple hat do you? If answer my questions you can, strong in the force you must be.

Submitted by Yoda

First off, I am very upset that you do not remember me. When you died, I remember watching a star when a voice spoke to me saying "It surrounds us, binds us." I then trained with my master, becoming a Jedi myself. However, the higher cat forces spoke to me and made me their champion. The force has served me well as the champion of cats though. The purple hat is a symbol of the power invested by the higher cat force. I have never lost it, not once. But if you happen to see it, contact me.

Submit questions over the summer to kattdaddy@gmail.com to have them answered in next years issue!

The Nest

Cistercian Clubs: A Year in Review

By Calvin Step, '20, who hasn't been to Quiz Bowl because of the Informer

Activities are an essential part of the Cistercian lifestyle. While regular classes follow a prepared curriculum which we must learn, during Activities, we have the opportunity to pursue passions both discovered, and passions yet to be discovered. Here, we have prepared a short summary of the nature of some of the activities we have here at Cistercian.

Exodus - Exodus is, as all of you hopefully know, the school's yearbook. The school year is spent planning, making, editing, and printing the yearbook for the students, faculty, and the various competitions that the book will be entered in. Matt Donohoe, when asked why he joined Exodus, stated that he has "Always liked reading the yearbook, and so I wanted to be a part of making the book that goes through the entire year!" Matt said that the Freshmen's main job was to get quotes, but some were in charge of specific pages. Matt was not personally in charge of a page, but fellow freshman Joe Dunikoski was in charge of the Freshman Mixer page. Matt feels that Exodus values Underclassmen (but not as much as the Informer, three out of the top four positions are filled by underclassmen) and that there is always something for them to help with. When asked what we should expect from the Yearbook this year, Matt had a single response: "a lot of Kaosi".

Reflections - Our School's Literary Magazine, Reflections, works by sponsoring several competitions for writing and artwork throughout the school year. After each of these competitions, this club decides upon winners, and the best entries make it into the annual Magazine. When speaking on why he enjoys being a part of Reflections, Stephan Salhab said "every piece is different" and that he enjoys being in the club because of this. The types of works submitted vary greatly in quality, content, and style. This is what makes this club so interesting. Anyone interested in judging other people's works should join next year!

Robotics - The Robotics team did extremely well this year, despite being a rookie team. They participated in the First Robotics Competition, which provided an incredibly friendly, yet fiercely competitive environment. There were teams from all around the world, including Brazil and Chile that participated, Some teams were sponsored by NASA and Boeing, as well as many other large companies. Knowing this, a small, parent-sponsored school like Cistercian was not expected to come in first place in qualifications, and third in playoffs. Unfortunately, they did not make it to worlds which was never part of our original goal, but they got very close to going. Nowadays, they can be found mastering the art of constructing with Lego robotics. If you are interested in Robotics, your presence would be greatly appreciated next year!

Mock Trial - Mock Trial is a club for those interested in Law. The year's first competition was a scrimmage. From this scrimmage, Joel Kattady says the team "absorbed the tactics and responses" of some of the top tier teams that they played in the scrimmage. Later in the year, at the largest competition that our Mock Trial competed in, these strategies were used, and the team made it into the 2nd round of competition. And in this round, the team lost in a very close round to Richardson for a spot in the State Competition. Next year, Asim Adhikari states that the team hopes to "work earlier, and be more efficient" so that they are ready and able to defeat Richardson in what will hopefully be an epic rematch.

By The
Numbers

Number of
songs released
by Champneys V

7

Number of Stu-
dents on the
Informer Staff

5

How many Cavs
players think the
Earth is flat

1

Number of Open
Positions on the
Informer

20+

Number of
Times We've
Used this Joke

2
MANY

The Nest

Clubs, cont.

Math Club - Math Club's name quite clearly describes its purpose. It's for people that like math. Joel Kattady describes Math Club as being "for those who want to take their love of math further". Various competitions have taken place this year, some at school, and some requiring the struggle of waking up early to get on a bus and be driven to the competitions. The following year will be similar, with various competitions taking place and Cistercian's math-loving students attempt to win them.

Quiz Bowl- Quiz Bowl is the pinnacle of academic competition at Cistercian. Basically, it is team jeopardy with no prize money and lots of adrenaline. During the last two seasons, the program qualified three teams each year for the the High School National Championship Tournament, something that has never happened before. This year's championship will be in Atlanta, GA in May. Throughout the rest of the school year, the various teams traveled through Texas and Oklahoma for weekend trips and competed at smaller tournaments, to hone their skills. It is always exciting to travel with the team, especially to spend time with Fr. Gregory and Fr. Augustine. If you haven't thought about it and love trivia, you should join next year.

Kyle Blessing and Jake Fitzgerald contributed to this article



Campus Construction

By Tom Worth, '19, who was the first to submit an article

We all know something is afoot on that side of campus with all those big machines, but very few know exactly what. I have interviewed Mr. Parker, the man with the plan, and so I bring to you the following illuminating information.

Over the summer, everything in the interior of the building north of the theater will be gutted and rebuilt in a new orientation. An office and two independent research spaces will be added, one of which will be a wet lab, and the other will have a network drop. These will

be primarily used by seniors who have science seminars. The Biology, Chemistry, Physics and Computer Labs will all be totally redone, too; everything from furniture and technology to the floor plan will be new—the hallways will be omitted for the sake of more spacious labs. The construction that is already underway, on the northeast corner of the building, is the addition of a single-story, two-thousand-square-foot Flex Lab. It will be used for earth science and electives. The L shape of this lab will allow it to be divided into two separated spaces. The roof of this lab will be accessible from the new Biology Lab, where the Computer Lab is currently; the open-air roof space will be used by biology classes for various experiments and exciting possibilities like a Mendel garden and star parties. Also new will be the landscaping outside the science building, for which irrigation will be provided by an above-ground tank rainwater collection system. In the same self-reliant spirit, solar panels will be installed too. Science teachers plan to begin next school year in their new labs: construction is scheduled to be completed by the first day of school. Faculty and students are very excited for the opportunity to work in the new environment, and the excitement will only have to be contained for a few more months.

Check our website, cistercianinformer.com, for more articles!

Letter From The Editor

Dear Readers,

My name is Jacob Rombs, and I am honored to be your new Editor-in-Chief. Many of you know me, but for those who do not, I am a freshman here at Cistercian. Outside of the Informer, I also do cross country, soccer and tennis, as well as participating in the pro-life club. I have worked hard this year for the Informer, and even before the end of the year, I have risen to the rank of Editor-in-Chief. I hope to succeed in serving you to the best of my ability through the coming years.

Pope Francis addressed journalists last semester, speaking of how important their job is, through seeking the truth in a professional and respectful manner. The very essence of our job is to find truth in the world and to share it, exposing the evil so that it may be repudiated, but also praising the good so that it may inspire others to do similarly. "There are few professions that have so much influence on society as journalism does. The journalist has a role of great importance and, at the same time, of great responsibility," the Pope said. I do not, therefore, take this job lightly, and I hope that you, the readers, will come to respect and appreciate the work that we do here at the Informer.

This year, the seniors have concluded their final year at Cistercian and therefore at the Informer. With their departure came an even lower number of staff, and into this vacuum of personnel I joined, bringing several classmates with me. This issue is called the "Freshmen Takeover" because of how we new freshmen have risen to our new senior positions, succeeding the now alumni who ran the paper for most of this academic year. Unfortunately, there has been little participation from the junior and sophomore classes, and so the ironic situation is that we freshmen hold many of the editorial positions — an extremely rare situation for high school publications. Dedicated staff such as Patrick Geary, the wise Kattdaddy, and Calvin Step have stepped up to the challenge, and performed extremely well.

In the short time that I have been at the head of this institution, we have begun to revive middle school involvement, receiving articles from students such as Joseph Spak and Ben Woods, and we hope for the middle school contribution to continue in the future years. This issue, the first publication without any involvement from seniors, is twice the size of any other issue this year, a feat of which we are very proud. But even beyond recruiting new people, and producing more articles, we have begun the process of starting a new section. We hope that with the help of Jake Fitzgerald, a new Arts and Entertainment section will be started, and a greater appreciation of the arts will be sponsored by the Informer.

In the coming years, we hope to exponentially grow the number of writers, and as a result, greatly increase the number and variety of articles. We hope to improve the quality of our writing, learning from this extraordinary opportunity to develop our skills, and therefore, greatly improve the quality of our product. But most importantly, we are excited to consistently provide you with reliable coverage of Cistercian life.

JOIN THE INFORMER!

Submit articles over the summer to cistercian.informer@gmail.com to have them published on our website! Check back next year to gain high-level staff positions, many of which are unoccupied at the moment. We are and will always be looking for articles for every section, and we are especially looking forward to Middle Schoolers writing articles for our brand-new "Middle School" section. Stay tuned for more information!!!