

THE HOUSING

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<u>Volleyball</u>

Arabian Nights

by Christina Curran

On November 19, Seton School hosted The Enthronement Dance, honoring the Feast of Christ the King. The dance finished off spirit week, which was from November 14 to 18. This year, the theme of the dance was "Arabian Nights." The gym was decorated with colored lights and candles. There was a backdrop of a desert and an elaborate rug that made up a photo shoot area. The gym was also decorated with gold balloons that emphasized the theme. The dance was held from 7 to 10 o 'clock pm.



The students were encouraged to visit the chapel, which had been decorated for the night. Mrs. Duran held adoration in the chapel throughout the dance. Aside from that, there was dinner, dancing, and a swing dance competition, with Connor Khoer and Anna Russo as the winners. The students were given Arabian themed food for dinner. The dance was very successful this year. One student said that the "chapel was so beautiful." Another student said, "This year was even more fun than last year. The decorations looked so good and the theme was cool. I loved all the lights and candles." Thanks to Tim Blanchette for being the DJ, to Mrs. Duran for decorating the chapel, and to all the other volunteers.







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The Seton School Pizza Line

By Zach Moore

At Seton School the pizza line is infamous for the mass amounts of cutting in line that occurs. According to Seton Student Isaac Fleisig, while waiting for his pizza, "If you don't cut the line, then you're the one getting cut. You could be the first person in line for pizza, but it might still take 5 minutes to get your food because of all of the people cutting in front of you in line." According to many other students, the pizza line is "uncontrolled" and "chaotic". Now, there's no need to worry as there are many solutions. For one, an adult lunch monitor (or parent looking for pro-points) could stand there sending people who cut straight to the front of the line back to the end. Another option would be a student led push not to allow or tolerate cutting in the lunch line. In summary, the line cutting in the Seton School pizza line is out of control and needs to be stopped one way or the other, and with many easy solutions available and on the table, one would hope that change is enacted soon.





Fall Play By Gabe Marm

Seton School is proud to present this year's Fall Play: "A Christmas Chaos!". The play started off with an attempt to put on "A Christmas Carol," but when everything went wrong, the show had to go on! The hilarious attempt at "A Christmas Carol" was fun for the whole family to see. The superb performance was directed by Mr. Matt Moore, who has great experience in the entertainment industry. "I have been directing and producing for 30 years. In that time, I have directed hundreds of commercials, live events and theatrical productions for global clients as well as local audiences," Mr. Moore said in an interview. "In addition to my professional work, I own a small production company that creates high-quality theatrical experiences in a family friendly environment." The play this year was certainly a great production under Mr. Moore's leadership.

The students who participated in the play also had a great time. Jerome Kramer, who helped with lights and sound, said "I thought this year's play was amazing, and I will definitely help again next year." One of the actors in the play, Nick Moore, also had positive feedback about the play. "I really had a lot of fun in the play and had a chance to improve my acting skills along the way. A Christmas Chaos was still just as fun, if not more fun, than the musicals." Mr. Moore had a great time, and said, "It really was a very fun group of performers and staff. Everyone gave me 110% and I really enjoyed each moment."

The Fall Play is a great way for students to be involved firsthand in a great aspect of Seton School's theater. Even if you don't like to perform on stage, there are plenty of roles to play, such as stage crew or lights and sound management. If you enjoyed Seton's production of "A Christmas Chaos," make sure to congratulate the cast and crew who worked hard to put on this play.



Girls' Winter Sports

by Luke Griffin

The following article covers the season until December 31.

Girls Junior High Basketball

The Junior High girls have had 4 games so far. With a record of 2-2 they have won 2 and lost 2. Their excellent coach is Mrs. Nancy Bauer. The 7 starters for this team are; Katherine Bauer, Charlotte Smith, Clare Heiny, Mave Burgus, Annelise Chau, Marion Vander Woude, and Kathryn Blanchette.

Girls Junior Varsity Basketball

Junior Varsity have won 4 out of their 5 games, with a record of 4-1. Monica Smith, Maddy Heiny, Madeleine Smith, and Ella Pogue are the starters. And their coaches are Mrs. Mary Cate Smith and Mrs. Eileen Heiney.

Girls Varsity Basketball

The girls Varsity basketball team has an outstanding record of 6-1. Coached by Mr. Dick Pennefather and Mrs. Lalli, this team has begun what looks like a great season. Starting for the team is; Lucy Pennefather, Lily Vander Woude, Jacqueline Hugo, Isabella Chau, and Catherine Witter



Winter Sports Kickoff: Brilliant

Basketball and Stunning

Swimming!

by Victor Henry



the stats presented are of DEC 2023

JH Basketball

The Junior High boys have started their season 2-2, with a completely fresh team. The old JH coach and roster all moved up to JV this year, leaving a blank slate for this year's 7th and 8th graders to fill in. Coach Garvey has stepped up to take charge of the team, assisted by Mr. Saffian. 8th graders Tom Waldron and Will Luckey lead the massive 16 man team in points this season thus far. Our middle schoolers are looking good to have a great season this year.

JV Basketball

The JV Boys started their season with an outstanding 3 game winning streak. Their first win was an electrifying comeback vs. Virginia Academy, coming back from 20 points down to winning by 10. With a recent tough, 2 point loss at the Heights School in Maryland, the JV team stands 6-2. Starting small forward Joe Geary leads the team in points, averaging about 22 points per game, followed by center Justin Saffian and power forward Matt Luetkemeyer. The team is in great hands with Mr. Kevin Fox as the head coach, and we are hoping to see a successful season from our JV team.

Varsity Basketball

Seton's Varsity Boys are currently undefeated at 15-0, an incredible start to their season. Head Coach Vander Woude assisted by Mr. Cristian Godeanu has done an excellent job coaching the boys this season. Point guard Dominic Nguyen, averaging 16.3 PPG, and shooting guard Patrick Nguyen continue to lead the team in scoring. Philip Vander Woude also leads in 3 pointers. Coach Vander Woude has been especially impressed with their "unselfish play and good team chemistry". He also said they have improved much because of their "offseason playtime", and his goal this season is to have "a good, industrious, team spirit". Over the Christmas break, our Varsity team swept through the Mt. Vernon tournament filled with tough public school teams like McKinley Academy, Centreville HS, and Mt. Vernon HS to win it all. We are all rooting for the boys to continue their success this season and maintain their winning streak.

Seton's Annual Icebreaker Invitational (Boys and Girls)

Seton hosted its annual first meet of the season at the Freedom Aquatic Center. Head coach Mr. Jim Koehr has said he likes to get all his swimmers to swim as many events as possible in the first few meets. He seems to have accomplished this, as almost 170 Seton swimmers raced in relays, and more than 190 total solo races were swam by all of our swimmers. Whether it was their first meet, or their 50th meet, I am sure Coach Koehr is very impressed with his swim team this year, and is excited to see how many records they can break.

Christmas Traditions: Classic and Creative

by Teresa Curran

Christmas is celebrated by families all over the world, but the traditions of every family are unique to them. Some families celebrate Christmas Eve by driving around and looking at the decorations and lights of the houses in the town. Others might go to midnight Mass, which is a beautiful reminder of St. Andrew's prayer, that Jesus was born "At midnight, in Bethlehem, in the piercing cold."

Although old traditions are priceless, there is always room for new ones! Here are some traditions used all over:

Many households enjoy the tradition of "Elf on the Shelf." In this tradition, parents set up a toy elf somewhere in the house, sometimes setting out treats or putting the elf in unusual places. This tradition adds to the excitement of the season, and gives kids something fun to look forward to every day leading up to Christmas.





A less well-known Christmas tradition is the "Christmas Pickle." This tradition is usually done with a pickle ornament, but any family ornament can be used. The ornament of choice is hidden on the tree, and the first child to find it gets a prize. Generally, they get to open the first gift on Christmas morning.

The tradition of milk and cookies for Santa Claus is very popular. The tradition is usually a way for the children of the house to thank Saint Nick, but it was an even larger thanks in the time when the tradition originated. In the 1930s, the cookies were a small way of thanks during the Great Depression, as something sweet during hard times.



During the month of December, almost every house you pass has a cheery wreath hung on the door. While it's a popular decoration, few know the meaning behind it. It was originally a Roman tradition, but it eventually became a Christian one. The circular shape represents eternal life, and the red berries are symbolic of Jesus' blood on the crown of thorns.

During Christmas time, enjoy your family's Christmas traditions, and maybe even try to add some new ones, to truly make the season the most wonderful time of the year!



Hamlet Night

by Zach Moore

Hamlet Night was crazy this year, from Luke Mantooth's stunning portrayal of The Queen, to Mark Mosiman's breathtaking performance, which brought many to tears. Senior Dom Irving commented that Hamlet Night was "so much fun that he'd consider doing it again!" Many seniors chose to wear interesting costumes this year, notably Luke Mantooth's stunning dress and wig combo! Jack Gregory's knight and Patrick Nyugen's king costumes were two of the fan favorites this year along with Luke Mantooth. With four judges for the event, most of which being Seton teachers, it was very scrutinous, but most of the seniors passed! The winning scene was: by: Patrick Nguyen, Peter Hassan, and Timothy Grinder. Without further ado here are some of the best costumes from Hamlet Night:



Veteran's Day

by Gabriel Marm

Every Year on November 11, we celebrate Veterans Day. Veterans day is a chance for us to honor those who have served our nation. November 11 was initially celebrated as Armistice Day in 1919, marking the one-year anniversary of the end of World War I. Two years later to the day, an unidentified American Soldier from WWI was interred in a special tomb at Arlington National Cemetery. In 1954, after the harrowing ordeals of World War II and Korea, President Eisenhower approved the act to change "Armistice Day" to "Veterans Day." Since then, it has been a day to celebrate and honor those who served in our Nation's military.

There are many traditions that we practice on Veterans Day. Among them are parades, ceremonies, military discounts at stores and restaurants. One of the most famous traditions is the poppies. Poppies would cover the battlefields in Europe during WWI, and they would grow on the graves of the soldiers afterwards. Since then, they have become a symbol of the heroism and sacrifice of those who served in our Nation's military.

The biggest way for us to show our gratitude toward our Country's Veterans is to simply say "thank you" to a Veteran and their family. This shows them that someone appreciates the sacrifices that they have made for the defense of this Country. On this Veterans Day, say "thank you" to a Veteran and remember that they helped to defend this Country that we all love.



A Mother for All Nations

by Teresa Curran

Our Lady of Guadalupe's feast day is on December 12th. All of Mary's apparitions are honored as special, but Our Lady of Guadelupe is one of the most famous Marian apparitions of all time.



Our Lady appeared to St. Juan Diego in 1531, on Tepeyac Hill. Her request was to have a shrine built at the site to honor her. The bishop refused to build without a sign. Our Lady appeared again, and told Juan Diego to pick the flowers he would find nearby. Sure enough, there were enough flowers to fill his tilma, blooming in December. Thinking the flowers themselves were the sign, Juan took them to the bishop. When he opened his tilma, those in the room saw the famous and miraculous image of Our Lady, imprinted onto the fabric of his tilma. Though many could tell you what the image looks like, few know the symbolism behind the elements of the image. The Aztecs believed in gods and goddesses of nature, such as the sun and moon. The sun rays present behind Mary in the image symbolize that she is more powerful than their sun god. The moon below her shows that the moon god is crushed beneath her feet. The brooch at her neck, which shows the image of the cross, means that Jesus is more powerful than she. These signs were understood by the Aztecs, but not the Spaniards. This showed that Mary came for all races and people, not just one.

Aside from the miracle that occurred on that day, scientists have continued to make miraculous discoveries about the image. The constellations of stars on her tilma are an exact image of what the sky would have looked like on the day she appeared. What's even more fascinating is that the image is flipped, so the stars are not like we would see them, looking up, but as someone would see them, looking down. God was looking down at his mother, and the stars, as they would look from Heaven, appeared on the tilma.

In Our Lady's eyes, a microscopic image of Juan Diego is present. In human eyes, an image of what the person is looking at is reflected in their eyes. This shows just how very human Mary is.

Our Lady of Guadalupe is a beautiful reminder of Our Mother's love for us. The shrine that was built on Tepeyac hill resulted in 9 million people converting to Christianity. Juan Diego is an example to us all that one person can change history, if we just follow Jesus and His Mother.

Our Lady of Guadalupe, pray for us.

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VEX Tournament at All Saints

by Emily Coreas

On November 11th 2023, Seton School hosted this year's VEX robotics tournament at the All Saints Parish Activity Center. This year's tournament was a blended competition. Middle school teams and high school teams were competing against one another. This was a huge deal since in Virginia about half of the tournaments are limited to blended competitions. This was the first Virginia tournament of the season. It consisted of forty-eight teams participating, with thirty-seven teams being high schoolers and eleven of the teams middle schoolers.

Three high school teams and two middle school teams from Seton competed. The Seton VEX Club finished three matches behind last year's team. The overall record was 17-18 in the qualification phase of the All Saints tournament, which is in line with the record of the 2021-2022 club. Overall, this year's VEX tournament was a huge success. And thank you to all of the amazing volunteers.



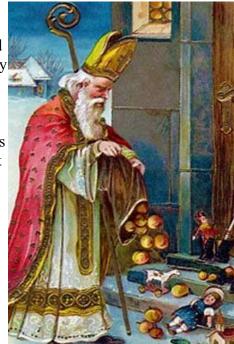
The Legend of St. Nicholas

by Christina Curran

Everyone loves St Nick's day. People put out their shoes and St. Nick fills them with goodies. How did this tradition start? St. Nicholas was a fourth century bishop of Myra. Much of what is known about Saint Nicholas is legend. He was born in Patara, an ancient seaport city of Lycia. As a young man he traveled to Egypt and Palestine. He was imprisoned and tortured during Emperor Diocletian's persecution of Christians. He was later released during Constantine the Great's reign and attended the Council of Nicea. Saint Nicholas was buried at a church in Myra, but in 1087 his remains were stolen by Italian sailors who took them to Bali. This change in location increased St. Nicholas's overall popularity and caused Bari to become a popular tourist attraction. The majority of St. Nicholas' relics remain in San Nicola basilica in Bari, Italy; however, some of his relics are in different churches throughout the world. Saint Nicholas is the patron saint of Russia, Greece, children, sailors, unmarried girls, merchants, pawnbrokers, Fribourg, and Moscow. Roman Emperor Justinian dedicated an European church to Saint Nicholas in Constantinople in the 6th century.

There is a legend that a poor man with three daughters could not afford to pay for his daughters' dowry. The girls were going to be forced into

prostitution in order to pay for their living. Saint Nicholas was said to put the needed money into the family's window. This legend started the tradition of Saint Nicholas, which is still around today. Saint Nick's Day is often celebrated by putting chocolate gold coins into shoes, to honor St. Nicholas' generosity. His feast is celebrated on December 6. Saint Nicholas, Pray for us!



Amazing Advent Traditions Around the World

by Colette Kramer

Advent, the four weeks before Christmas, is a time of preparation for Christ's coming. Throughout the world, many different traditions and customs are used to help prepare minds and souls for our Savior. Some traditions, such as the Advent wreath or Advent calendar, are widely popular in Europe and the United States, and others are less well known.

Las Posadas, a Mexican custom, is one example. Posada is directly translated to mean "inn" or "lodging". The *posadas* are nine festivals, one every night from December 16th to the 24th. These nine days represent the nine months that Mary carried Jesus in her womb as well as commemorating the journey that Joseph and Mary took to Bethlehem. Children carrying a statue of Joseph and the Blessed Mother are followed by musicians as they process through the streets of their town. They stop at every house asking for lodging before they are finally let into the house hosting the Posada. Mass is then held and the children break open piñatas, usually made in the shape of a star.





Another of these traditions is the celebration of St. Lucy's Day. St. Lucy, or Santa Lucia, as she is known in Italy, was a martyr who died during the persecution of Christians in the 4th century. Her feast is mainly celebrated in Scandinavia, Sweden, and Italy. Legend says that she lost her eyes, but they were miraculously healed after her death. Customs for St. Lucy's day center around the oldest daughter in a family. Traditionally, she dresses in a white gown symbolizing purity, a red sash for martyrdom, and a wreath with candles in it, because Lucy means "light". Then, she serves coffee and a

traditional food such as Lussenkatter, meaning

saffron buns.

In the Philippines, a custom known as *Simbang Gabi* is followed by Catholics during Advent. Simbang Gabi translates to mean "Dawn Masses". Between December 16th and 24th, at the same time as Las Posadas are happening in Mexico, Filipino

Catholics wake up at dawn to attend Mass. This was originally started so that field workers could attend before work started. After Mass, they bought food from vendors outside, including bibingka. These Masses are dedicated to the Blessed Mother.



The Jesse Tree is a very traditional way to prepare for Christmas. Jesse Trees have been around since medieval times. The concept was based on Isaiah 11:1, "A shoot shall spring out of the stump of Jesse...". Every day there is a Bible verse to read and an ornament to hang on the tree. Jesse trees show how Jesus' birth was prophesied in the Old Testament.

Although we should not celebrate Christmas until Christmas day actually takes place, there are many different customs that we can follow throughout Advent. Seton students, when interviewed, expressed interest in starting some of these traditions in their family. "I think that doing a Jesse Tree would be really cool." said one seventh grader, and a freshman added, "Celebrating St. Lucy's day sounds fun, because I'm the oldest girl in my family." We can get fun ideas to help prepare for Christmas from different cultures, and truly have a holy Advent.



The Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ

By Allison Quispe

The nativity of Jesus, cherished in Christian tradition, unfolds in Bethlehem with humble beginnings. Mary, a young virgin, receives a visit from the angel Gabriel, who tells her she'll have a baby through the Holy Spirit. Joseph, her fiancé, also gets a divine message, and despite the confusion in the beginning, they both trust God and trust what he will do.

In a town bustling with visitors, Mary and Joseph find shelter in a stable since there's no room at the inn. There, Mary gives birth to Jesus, wraps Him in cloths, and lays Him in a manger. Nearby shepherds, startled by singing angels, rush to witness the newborn.

Meanwhile, wise men from the East, the Magi, follow a bright star to find the baby, presenting gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. This simple yet profound story of Jesus' birth is a timeless reminder of hope, love, and the extraordinary found in the ordinary—a story that has warmed hearts for centuries.





A Walk With Our Lord

By Luke Griffin

The annual Christ the King Procession occurred on November 16th. It was held on Seton campus in honor of the feast of Christ our King. Led by Father Mark Moretti, the students, teachers, and faculty of Seton all got up after Mass and processed once around the block. The monstrance was in the lead of the procession, while the Seton band played hymns. Following the procession was an enthusiastic chorus of "An Army of Youth," and then the class songs to end the 2023 Spirit Week.

According to Mrs. Carroll, Seton started the procession in the early 1990's. "There are several reasons for this tradition," said Mrs. Carroll. For one, it "gives the students the opportunity to pay public homage to Christ the King." Other reasons for it, "are to allow others to witness the procession for Blessed Sacrament" and most importantly, "to honor the Blessed Sacrament in the monstrance."

A big thanks to Father Moretti, the many senior altar servers, Mr. Catabui, the choir, Miss Erwin and the band, our sacristans, the readers, the sound crew, and everyone who attended.





School Spirit!

by Monica Smith

Spirit week this year was as eventful as ever. To start it off, every class paints a banner to correspond with their class color and theme. During the week they take a class picture that also goes with their theme. The days were filled with fun and the themes were very creative. Starting off on Monday the theme was Athlete vs Academic Day. For this day students had the option of dressing up in their favorite sports team jersey, socks, headbands, and other accessories that represented sports, or you could dress up as someone who loves school, and tries their very best. Tuesday was Tacky



Tuesday; this meant students dressed up in mismatched clothes and crazy hair do's! Wednesday was Heritage Day, so everyone dressed up in something that showed what their heritage is. For instance, if you were Irish, you could have worn green white and orange socks, representing the Irish flag. Thursday was Twin Day.



a friend, and dress as their twin for the day. Some wore the same clothes, and some went all out acting the same like each other. Friday was the biggest day, which was Class Color Day. Everyone wears their class shirts and anything with their class color on it, such as headbands, bracelets, hats, face paint, and much more. Each class sings their class song and then listens to all the other classes sing theirs. The juniors and seniors split up, start rallies, and try to get people to come to their sides while the teachers and staff vote. One student said, "It's really cool to see that during spirit week, the classes really

come together, and show that they are excited to be at Seton." Another student said, "The volleyball games were really fun, and it was fun to see each class rooting for their players!" Spirit week is a fun filled week where everyone enjoys each activity, and has fun with their friends.









THE INOUISITOR

A Capital College Night

By Colette Kramer

On Wednesday, November 8th, Seton hosted their first "Planning for College and Military Academy Night". Freshmen, sophomores, and their parents were provided with a wonderful opportunity to learn more about college loans, CLEP exams, military academies, and other topics related to college and preparation for college. Informative talks were given, followed by time for the students to speak with Seton alumni and graduates from local colleges.

Mrs. Annemarie Ciskanik, Seton Academic Dean, introduced the speakers, as well as speaking on CLEP exams and college financial aid and loans. She said, "CLEP exams are recognized at 2,900 colleges in the U.S., and greatly reduce overall college expenses."

Two other members of Seton's staff, Mrs. Tina McIntyre and Mrs. Charlotte Guyant, also gave presentations, as well as Mrs. Stephanie Reyes, who coordinates the AP exams. Mrs. McIntyre spoke on high school transcripts and GPA's, and Mrs. Guyant, Seton Guidance Advisor, gave an explanation of the High School Resume. "You should start building your resume now," she said.

Mrs. Reyes spoke about the AP exams and the opportunities Seton students have to take them, letting the students know that the AP exams are held in May, and cost \$98 each to take.

To talk about military academies, Seton invited Captain Ron Bishop of the U.S. Navy to speak. He gave some tips for students planning on entering a military service academy: Talk to those who have done it successfully, take hard classes and excel in them, and practice an honorable lifestyle.

Lastly, Justin Woodbury, GMU Catholic Campus Minister and former FOCUS missionary spoke about the Catholic Campus Ministries. 86% of Catholics fall away from their faith at college, but campus ministries help prevent that, providing daily mass and bible studies for college students. Mr. Woodbury said that every student should put "Their relationship with God... first and foremost" in their lives.

Seton's first college planning night was very beneficial to students in planning their path after high school. A freshman attending stated, "It was very helpful, and I definitely will take AP exams now." This will hopefully





The Ultimate Showdown

Allison Quispe

The volleyball games for this year's Spirit Week took place on Wednesday, November 8 at the end of the day. The teams were 7th graders vs. 8th graders, freshman vs. sophomores, and juniors vs. seniors. All the teams were separated between boys versus girls. Each team had between 7 and 10 players, including subs to be on the court. When the game began the sevies had a strong start, but ended up losing to the 8th graders. One of the players said "We could have beaten them easily, we just got tired and needed a break". Another 7th grader said, "We'll beat next year's sevies, just watch". Next up were the freshmen vs. sophomores. The sophomores had a rough start, but managed to catch up, winning the match. One of the sophomores said, "Easy win and we'll do it again next year against the seniors". Lastly it was the juniors vs. the seniors, and this game was one of the closest games to be played. Both teams had really strong and competitive players, but the seniors ended their Spirit Week volleyball game with a huge win. This year's volleyball games were a huge success and we can't wait until next year!

Pictures:













BONUS FEATURE: NFL End of season Update

by Victor Henry



If you are just a casual fan, and are wondering why teams like the Texans or Packers squeezed into the playoffs, or how the Detroit Lions came out of nowhere to almost become the NFC Champions. Well you have come to the right place, because in this monthly NFL Update article, you can learn all about the NFL regular season from every team's perspective. So click on the link down below, and enjoy the article presented by your Sports Editor, Victor Henry!

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