



The Hilltopper

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INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Page 2
Smartboards
New President

Page 3
Spotlight
Journalism

Page 4
Soccer
Tennis

Page 5
New Beginnings
Cross Country

Page 6
Film
Choir

Page 7
Birthdays
Freshmen

Page 8
Poetry



Welcome Back

By Elham Ahmed



Hubert Jude Brown, also known as Hubie Brown, was a former graduate of Saint Mary of the Assumption High School. He graduated in 1951 with a scholarship to Niagara University. He is now a retired American basketball coach and a current television analyst. Mr. Brown coached in the NBA for years and won championships. He was later inducted into the Basketball Hall of Fame in 2005.

Mr. Brown visited St. Mary's on October 3, 2011. He came to tell the students a little about St. Mary's when he was younger.

Elham Ahmed, senior, said, "Meeting Hubie Brown has been an honor. He told us many interesting things about life."

Tanaija Abram, senior, said, "He always supported St. Mary's, always gave back and never forgot where he came from."

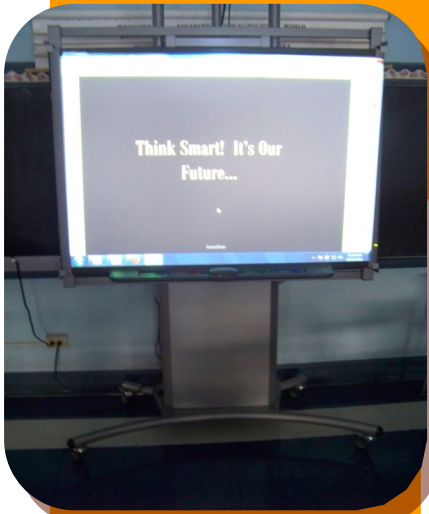
Due to all of his accomplishments, students can

idolize and look up to Hubie Brown. He put his head forward and did what many would never think could be done. He never gave up, and always applied himself to the best of his ability.



Seniors welcoming alumnus.

Left to right: Hubert Brown, Tanaija Abram, Siarah Torres, Elham Ahmed, Janel Proctor, Rashaun Liggion



Say hello to our new smart boards!

Think Smart! It's Our Future...

By Carla Gomes

This year, St. Mary's is fortunate to present to the students a new way of learning. Smartboards are interactive whiteboards that are used in classrooms. They are a great new edition to the school. Six Smartboards were purchased with grant money.

The teachers feel that there are certain advantages to having the smart boards. Mr. James Kaounis said, "It allows the students to interact more in the lesson." Professor Davide Berardi said, "You can pick up where you left off. You don't have to erase it for the next class. Another advantage is that things can be magnified and it's beneficial for students who are allergic to chalk."

Although there are many advantages with the Smartboards, teachers feel that there are disadvantages and changes to be made. Professor Berardi said, "Not all teachers can have them because of their affordability." Ms. Regina Fernandez mentioned: "The only disadvantage I

could see is the kids playing with it when they're not supposed to, forgetting to turn it off, or if it was to malfunction, causing me to lose the information I have saved on there." Mr. Kaounis said that he would "change the bulkiness and mount it on the wall. The angle isn't always convenient for everyone so we have to do our best to move it so everyone can see it."

According to the teachers, they will use the Smartboards for presentations and to better display the students' creativity. Students will benefit from interacting with the Smartboards because it's an important asset in today's education. Mr. Kaounis said, "It's going to be the common thing of the future for people to have them. We are dealing with a world where people are taking online courses and interacting with people who are hundreds or thousands of miles away." Smartboards are a portal for students' technological futures.

Mr. President

By Tanaija Abram

New in Office:
Matthew Borrello



St. Mary of the Assumption High School is going to change for the better according to the 2011-2012 Class President, Matthew Borrello. Matthew said, "I can help make this school a better place in general."

Matthew is a hardworking senior and honor roll student who is on the road to success. He is part of the National Honor Society and St. Mary's bowling and debate teams. He has two goals to change the school for the better. Matthew said he would like more field days, which are days when all students and

teachers in St. Mary's come together and do fun activities instead of staying in the classroom. Another goal is recycling.

Matthew definitely wants to bring more to the school mentally and physically. Being very happy and excited about becoming school president, Matthew began to think about what the job entails. Matthew said, "I know it is a great honor and I just hope I will be able to handle it!"

Spotlight

By Thomas Salazar

Mr. Casimir Muroski believes young people should know about their country's past. Mr. Muroski started as a history teacher for St. Mary's in 1981. Before coming to St. Mary's he worked in another school for two years. In his early years before teaching, he worked in warehouses and a Roy Rogers's restaurant part time.

Mr. Muroski went to Seton Hall University and majored in social studies. Some classes he teaches are Political Science and World History I to freshmen. Mr. Muroski said,

"Since I started here in St. Mary's there have been many changes. Some changes are there were no computers in St. Mary's. They could only be found in government buildings. Another change is there were more teachers and they would share classrooms because there weren't enough classrooms."

During his free time Mr. Muroski enjoys going to the movies and watching baseball games. He likes to attend workshops where he learns more teaching techniques. The most important message he wants to send is, "Do your homework and study for the test." Following these words will bring student success.



"The President proposes, but the Congress disposes."

Small Class of 8

By Alyssa Salazar

Despite the fact that most of the current 'Journalists' didn't choose Journalism as their elective, most of them are taking advantage of the opportunity. Seniors Elham Ahmed, Julian Bowen, and Tyler Hughes did not pick Journalism class. They were just put in it. However, they want to improve their writing skills. Some students wanted to be in journalism. Richonda Fegins said, "I love writing and I'm not used to this type of writing, but to be well rounded, I signed up for Journalism." Richonda continued, "I like a challenge here and there. This is definitely one." Junior Thomas Salazar, said, "I picked Journalism class because I felt like I wanted to become a better writer." Tanaija Abram said, "I picked Journalism class because I want to major in it in college."

The journalists have a lot of ideas: Richonda said, "The class is just getting started, so I'm not set on any Ideas yet. I think hard-hitting stories like things going on in the world could get students attention." Senior Carla Gomes said, "I already wrote an article on Smartboards and another on the tennis team, but although it's the school's newspaper, I want to write about what happens outside of the school." Tyler said, "I want to bring the newspaper back for everyone to read." Elham said, "As of right now I don't have any ideas because I'm still working on two articles, but I know that ideas will change soon."

Some students indicated that it is nice to have eight people in class because there are fewer interruptions, but with having fewer students there are fewer ideas for the newspaper. Richonda said, "Having eight people in the class can be good because it is not too many people that you have to worry about. When we read each other's work it goes well I assume, but having more people would definitely broaden the suggestions for another person's article." Julien, agreed with Richonda saying, "Having a small class is great, but when it comes to proofreading the papers as a class we don't have enough students to come up with

more ideas." Elham said, "The pros are we get more work done having such a small class. The cons are sometimes we do a little too much work and it gets tiring." Tyler said, "The pros are it's easier for the class to communicate and for Mr. James Kaounis, the teacher, to talk to us. The cons are that it's harder to make enough articles for the paper."

Tyler said, "I would like to interview some of the new students. I want to achieve better writing skills and to be able to interview people." Richonda said, "Before this class ends I think it would be so awesome to interview St. Mary's principal, Ms. Janet Malko! I love Ms. Malko, and I think it would be fun, depending on the topic, to interview her and see what she thinks." Carla said, "I believe that I'll be able to interview everyone I want because Journalism gives you that opportunity. By the end of this class I hope my writing skills will improve." Richonda said, "From this class I would like to achieve better writing skills. I feel that journalism is a good way to become so much cleverer with your writing. There are so many rules, and boundaries within just the format of an article. Being a writer myself I can say it's a real challenge for me, and it's different from what I'm use to". Tyler said, "This class involves more interaction with others and more teamwork." Despite the difficulties from a different style of writing, they intend to improve.



Left to right: Thomas Salazar, Tyler Hughes, Julien Bowen, Alyssa Salazar, Elham Ahmed, Tanaija Abram, Richonda Fegins, Carla Gomes

Performance on the Field

By Elham Ahmed



TEAM SPIRIT! Soccer team huddles together before the big game.

He kicks, he scores, goalllll! The soccer team at St. Mary's has been around for three years now. Professional soccer and high school soccer have many differences. The biggest difference is the substitution rule. In high school, when you come out of a game you may re-enter but when you come out of a professional game you can't re-enter.

There are many players interested in the sport. Current team player Juan Gonzalez, senior, said, "I played since I was five years of age, and I love the sport." Juan's been on the team for three years and it's something that makes him happy. "I feel great," was his response.

This year the St. Mary's soccer team has a new addition, Mr. Davide Berardi as the assistant coach. Mr. James Kaounis, also known as Mr. K, is the team's head coach. Mr. Kaounis explained why they have switched assistant coaches. "Our previous assistant coach Diego Sardone was not able to be the assistant this year

because he got a new job, and it's a schedule conflict. It's exciting to have an assistant coach that is in the building. He helps out with a lot of day to day tasks," Mr. Kaounis said.

Juan talked about Mr. Kaounis's coaching skills, "I find Mr. K's coaching skills to be rather better than last year. I feel that we are more of a team."

Even though the team's season just started, Mr. Kaounis says, "We haven't played any games yet, but the players have shown a lot of improvement from last year." Mr. Kaounis expresses his thoughts of how the team could improve. "The biggest thing is working well together and making sure everyone shows up to practice. Everyone can continue to work hard and improve," Mr. Kaounis said. His biggest goal for the team would be for them to have a winning record and also a season where all the players stay healthy.

The guys got their team down pact. With both new and old players the soccer team is set to begin a great season.

Let the Matches Begin!

By Carla Gomes

Tennis season has begun! The girls are excited yet nervous to see how this season will turn out. They are optimistic and so is Coach Martin Ferreiro. Coach Ferreiro, who started coaching the St. Mary's tennis team in 2003, said, "I think it's going to be a good season. These are the best group of girls I've coached in eight years."

Coach Ferreiro is dedicated to making the team better. He has requested score cards this year. Coach Ferreiro said, "We were the only team that didn't have them, so I got them." Before a big match he gives the team the best advice he can, especially to his starters: Seniors Michelle Luis, Carla Gomes, Kafilatu Tiamiyu, Richonda Fegins, Siarah Torres, Brielle Villavicencio and sophomore Stefanie Merced. Coach Ferreiro says to the girls, "Try your best and have fun." He advises his players to prac-

tice in the summer because the season is short and there's only so much the players can improve on during the season.

The girls on the tennis team enjoy this sport. "I joined the tennis team because tennis is my favorite sport during the year," said senior Richonda Fegins, "I get the most joy out of it, and I hate it when the season is over. Tennis was something I had no experience in and I can only say I have improved a lot since freshman year." Senior Kafilatu Tiamiyu mentioned, "I joined because I've always wanted to play tennis and the school had a team." Coach Ferreiro is driven to coach each year and it is because of "the girls on the team." Coach Ferreiro said, "I enjoy the attitudes we have here. You guys (girls) are fun!"

Senior Carla Gomes showing off her striking forehand.



Farewells Bring New Beginnings

By Alyssa Salazar

The threats “cocotasos,” meaning “I’m going to get you”, from former Spanish teacher Señora Alice Bus-som might be over but for Professor Berardi, the real magic is about to begin. Imagine walking into your Spanish class on your first day of school, psyched to meet your new Spanish teacher. Many students had a first impression of Professor Berardi. Senior Mercedes Igu described him as “He was nice.” Senior Michelle Luis enthusiastically shouted, “Spanish class will be fun!”

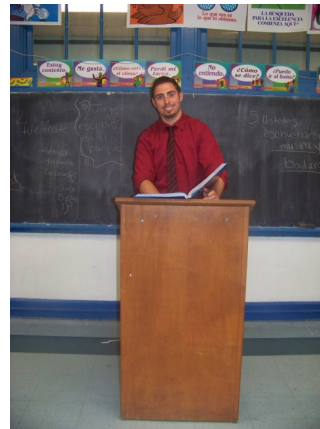
St. Mary’s students have a lot of ideas for the new Spanish teacher. Junior Jairo Vasco said “I want the Spanish professor to talk more about the countries we are from.” Senior Juan Gonzalez said that he would like the Spanish professor to show more movies. According to Mercedes, some teachers lack discipline. Mercedes wants Professor Berardi to “follow through with discipline.” Senior David Moncayo wants trips to museums that express the Spanish culture.

Juan and Jairo showed indifference learning from a male teacher, stating, “It really makes no difference to me.” Mercedes said, “I’ve learned from male teachers before, but not from a male Spanish teacher, so I want to see how he teaches the language and what

new things he has to offer.”

Professor Berardi intends to only speak Spanish in class. Juan said, “I speak Spanish fluently, so it has no effect on me.” Jairo said, “Spanish is a main language to me, so it doesn’t affect me.”

Generally, all students said they are excited for a new teacher. They hope that with Professor Berardi, they can accomplish a lot: knowledge of cultures, more films, discipline, and plenty of trips. Señora said it was expensive, but Professor Berardi will decide if it will ultimately be a great value that will be worth fundraising for. Welcome to St. Mary’s Professor Berardi!



Professor Berardi

Running is Mental not Physical

By Elham Ahmed

Shoes stomping in the muddy grass, hands moving up and down. Vigorous teens jogging to the finish line to finish up a well-run race. Mr. Richard Riepl, coach of the St. Mary’s cross country team said, “I love cross country and I always wanted to start a team. After four years, I finally got to with these seven wonderful girls.” It has been said by the girls that Mr. Riepl really has a thing for the sport which is good for the school and others who plan to come to St. Mary’s.

Mr. Riepl discussed his views on the cross country season. Mr. Riepl said, “I’m very satisfied with the commitment and hard work, and I’m very pleased with where we are right now.” Mr. Riepl shared his expectations of the team, “For now I would love for the entire

team to get to the point where they run non-stop so we can go to the state tournament.”

Mr. Riepl coaches multiple sports here at St. Mary’s because he enjoys coaching so much. Mr. Riepl wasn’t hesitant to say, “The best part is passing on my knowledge and love for the sport so they can get better. The team seems to be organized and off to a good start.” In closing Mr. Riepl said, “The cross country team can improve by realizing that the sport is a mental sport and that you have to run through the pain and run faster.” So far the cross country team’s results have satisfied Mr. Riepl’s expectations. Who knows if that will change, but let’s wait and see what else the team has to offer!

Lights, Camera, Action!!

By Tyler Hughes



Most of today's movies involve violence, romance, adventure, and horror. Some modern movies involve dodging multiple bullets (*Matrix*) or love quarrels between two mythical people (*Twilight*). Before these hit movies, there were many popular movies from the 1900's, such as *Gone with the Wind* and *The War of the Worlds*. Many movies were in black & white and silent, but they taught world history, science, and moral lessons. Film Appreciation is where students can watch and talk about these movies.

Film Appreciation class is where students can watch old-style movies from the 1900's and discuss their themes and importance. Film Appreciation teacher Mr. Richard Riepl said, "I was always interested in film ever since I was a young whipper snapper."

This class was formed for students with a deep interest in movies. Mr. Riepl enjoys watching movies with his students. After every movie, the class has a short discussion on the themes and special effects of the movie. They watch a wide variety of movies including silent, animated, and foreign. Mr. Riepl said, "Most of the well-known films we will be watching are *Citizen Kane*, *2001 The Space Odyssey*, and *Cinema Pacaplos*." This class is fun for most people, but it is difficult. Junior Sharmanie Usigan said, "In class, you watch movies, have tests on them, and write reports. Pay attention and don't fall asleep."

Mr. Riepl said, "Students need to realize that there are other films more important in life than *Die Hard* and *Fast and Furious*." Film Appreciation is meant to widen the students' view on movies. Mr. Riepl plans on teaching his students about different movies and their connection to today's world.

The Music is All Around

By Richonda Fegins

In the world of entertainment there is so much to be done, so much to be said, and so much to be heard. Some artists start right at the base, a high school choir, and with the help of their choir directors they come a long way. Music is something that has to flow within the body and the soul.

The St. Mary's choir director, Ms. Sharon Bell, summed her thoughts up about her choir this year, "My expectations for my students this year is to first be inspired to sing. Also, to enhance additional achievements for St. Mary's." Ms. Bell described her roots, "Music was taught to me from a young age in church; learning singing about God, and understanding that we are messengers through song. Anytime I'm surrounded by music is a part of giving back for me." Then she added, "It's a fulfillment of how someone took time with me in my youth. My youth teacher when I was fourteen years old pushed me to direct a choir, and to learn the meaning of music and how it relates to others. I first make myself available whenever I can with the schedules that my students have."

The members of her choir seem to be much more ecstatic about the instruments that she has added to choir, "I feel that the piano,

drums, and tambourines are the basics that bring together the complete sound. The students of mine that first versed on playing the instruments will be intertwined into the choir, with an objective of getting other students interested by watching their fellow classmates who already know how to play." Ms. Bell is not just St. Mary's choir director but she is in a choir of her own outside of the high school. Her schedule can get pretty hectic, but she seems to try her best to take out as much time as she can for her students and get to know them better, as well.

She's only been around for a year, but she loves it. "Some of the advantages I have are just learning about and meeting students that are willing to learn." Ms. Bell explained that she wanted to be able to teach them music from a young age. "I try and make myself available with the schedules that the students have but I usually get to sit and plan things out myself in mid-afternoons and late nights," said Ms Bell. Woo! Late nights are sacrifices, but she loves what she does, and who can blame her!?



September Birthdays

By Tanaija Abram



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September is the ninth month of the year. The name September comes from the old Roman word "septem" which means seven, because in the Roman calendar it was the seventh month.

In Southern United States it is the warmest month of the year and has very cool nights for northern states. September is also the month when harvesting first begins. The birthstone for September is sapphire and the birth flowers are aster and morning glory.

September birthdays in SMHS.

- Antasia Howard: 9/1. Virgo
- Mackenzie Barthelus: 9/2. Virgo
- Carla Gomes: 9/4. Virgo

- Sean Hankins and Romario Achille: 9/9. Virgo
- Nadir George and Shirley Abbelard: 9/10. Virgo
- Daniel Delgado: 9/12. Virgo
- Mercedes Igu: 9/13. Virgo
- Nicolas Rodriguez: 9/14. Virgo
- Danielle Valery: 9/15. Virgo
- Mary Grace: 9/17. Virgo
- Richonda Fegins: 9/19. Virgo
- Raquan Mayers: 9/20. Virgo
- Alysha Paul-Pierre: 9/22. Virgo
- Nigel Peters: 9/24. Libra
- Widgina Belzine: 9/25. Libra
- Ms. Fernandez: 9/27. Libra
- Mrs. Paterek: 9/28. Libra
- Jamie Okoli and Eunice Phillipe: 9/30. Libra



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October Birthdays

By Tanaija Abram

October is the tenth month of the year. The name October comes from the word "octo" which means eight, since October was the eighth month on the Roman calendar. During October, the leaves begin to change from bright green to nice autumn colors. October is also the month when Halloween is celebrated. It is thought to be the one night of the year when ghosts, witches and fairies are especially active. The birthstone for October is opal and the birth flower is calendula.

October birthdays in SMHS.

- Isaiah Jenkins and Deacon Valdez: 10/1. Libra



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- Elham Ahmed: 10/3. Libra
- Tanaija Abram: 10/4. Libra
- Larry Gonzalez and Kristen Pacius: 10/6. Libra
- Kafilatu Tiamiyu: 10/7. Libra
- Amanda DiGiorgio: 10/9. Libra
- Alesha DeBerry-Loyd: 10/12. Libra
- Mr. James Kaounis: 10/19. Libra
- Melody Cedeno: 10/19
- Emilio Hirashiki: 10/21. Libra
- Derrick Taylor: 10/25. Scorpio
- Carlin Helena: 10/26. Scorpio
- Juan Gonzalez: 10/30
- Ms. Karen Portuese: 10/30. Scorpio
- Mr. Richard Riepl: 10/31. Scorpio

Fresh Meat

By Julien Bowen

Freshman year can be a scary time for some students, especially in the first couple weeks. Most believe there is a lot more work in high school for students than in middle school, but some students think there isn't much of a difference at all. Freshman Jayson Peoples said, "St. Mary's is just like middle school, there's only more students and the work is harder."

St. Mary's offers many more after school and extra curricular activities than middle school, "I wanna play basketball and baseball for the school this year.", Jayson said. However, some students miss some things about middle school still, such as freshmen Louis Gaudin said, "I miss recess."

High school can be a lot more laid back than middle school if you do your work. However, freshman Rasheed Strothers said, "I think I'm gonna have a hard time staying out of trouble."

Some freshmen fear that all the work they are going to do this year will affect their free-time, but not all feel that way. Rasheed said, "The work won't affect my free-time at all." Some also fear that the upper classmen will treat them wrongly. But here at St. Mary's, the freshmen are treated just as fairly as anyone else in this school. Jayson said, "The upper classmen treat me very kindly."

At St. Mary's, a lot of fun can be had, but it's what you make of it. If you choose to do nothing and always get trouble be prepared for a pretty boring year. Just make sure your work gets done, and everything else will fall into place.

Poetry Cafe

“THEY DON’T KNOW...”

BY: ANNA FOJTIK

THEY DON'T KNOW MY LANGUAGE
 THEY DON'T KNOW MY LIFE PLAYS THROUGH MY
 HANDS
 THEY DON'T KNOW I BREAK OATHS OVER A TUNE
 THEY DON'T KNOW I HAUNT THE AIR WITH MY FEEL-
 INGS FROM THE PAST
 THEY DON'T KNOW I SPEAK WITH HISTORY
 THEY DON'T KNOW MUSIC
 BECAUSE THEY HAVE NEVER LIVED IT

“Bloodstained Tears”

By: Andy Hilaire

What has become of this wretched world?
 Spiteful jealousy, countless wars
 Murderous hate killing innocent love
 Many crimes carried out by double-faced criminals
 The world, driven to destruction and chaos
 Hearts, burning with envy, only desire to kill the defenseless
 Will it ever end?
 The painsplitting ache of sadness?
 The consequences of Anger’s hidden fury?
 There will be a time when peace will triumph over all,



“I Want To Be”

By: Richonda Fegins

I want to...

*Be a writer for future generations to ponder on the thoughts
 hidden within my mind*

I want to...

*Be a singer, so the world can hear my emotions, formed in a
 graceful sound of feeling*

I want to...

*Be an actress, so my peers can believe that they can express
 whatever fills their hearts. So the discomfort in their eyes
 may no longer be a part of their well-being*

I want to...

*Cry. And every time I cry I want to feel the burden of fear
 inside me vanish and release its soul on the world so I can
 breathe*

I want to...

*Dance in the rain, and let it just touch my skin. To feel
 heaven’s showers embrace my every inch of humanity*

I just want to be...

*ME, so that when this world... This cruel, ancient, yet pure
 and warm world takes me from the scene; I will be remem-
 bered just by the way someone blinked their eye. Such an
 impact thoughts have no words and every individual’s spirit
 is carried and shadowed by my own.*

I JUST WANT TO BE...