

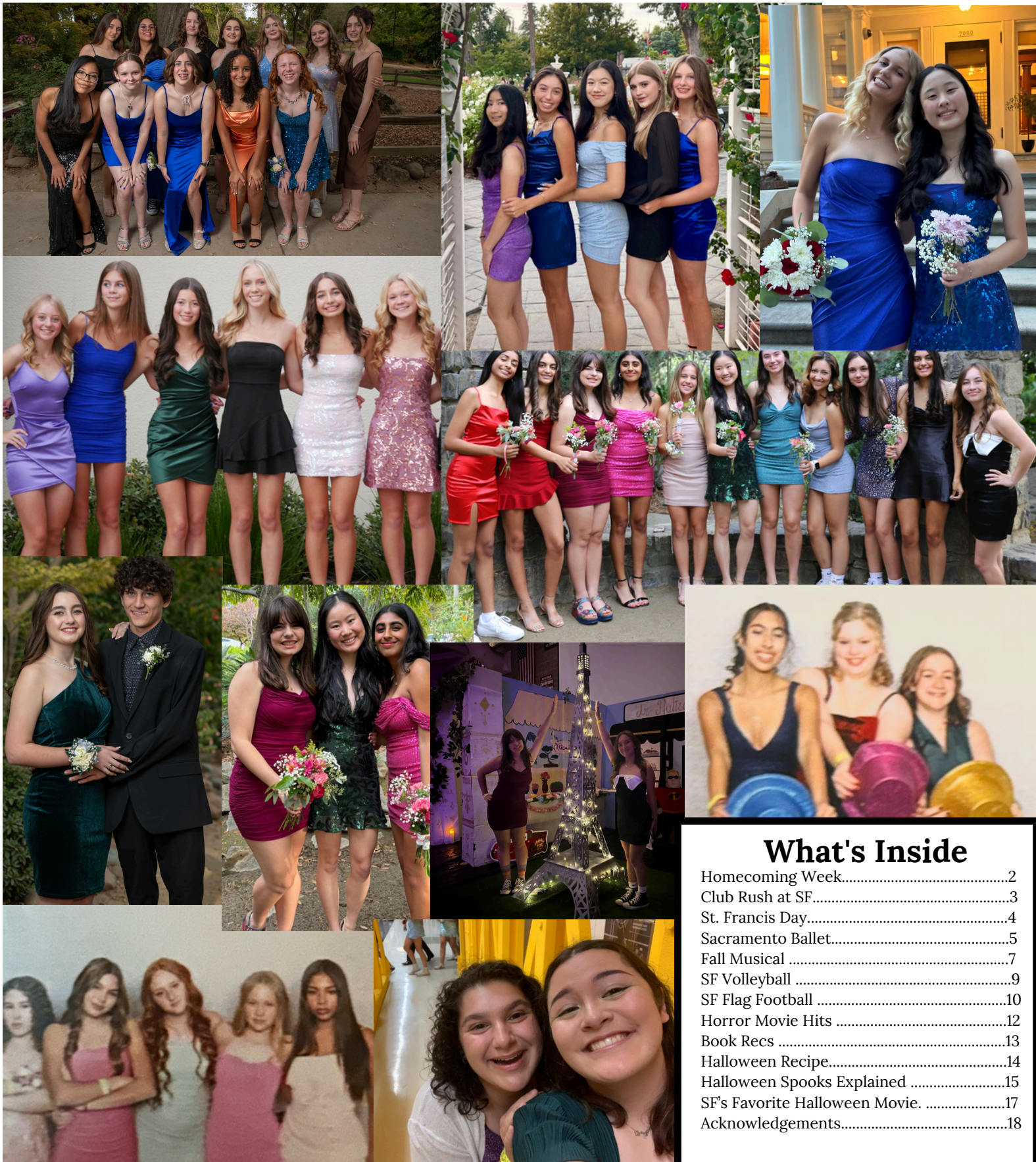
The Mandolin

St. Francis Catholic High School

October 2024

"Spread the word."

Issue 129



What's Inside

Homecoming Week.....	2
Club Rush at SF.....	3
St. Francis Day.....	4
Sacramento Ballet.....	5
Fall Musical	7
SF Volleyball	9
SF Flag Football	10
Horror Movie Hits	12
Book Recs	13
Halloween Recipe.....	14
Halloween Spooks Explained	15
SF's Favorite Halloween Movie.	17
Acknowledgements.....	18

Homecoming Week

BY TRINITY ITO '27

During Homecoming Week at St. Francis, all St. Francis students are unified for friendly competition and sisterhood. Homecoming week took place between October 21st and October 25th. The five days of Homecoming Week consisted of five essential activities: the Canned Food Drive, Class Meetings, the Sports Day Rally, Dec Night, and the Homecoming Rally. All events have many roles to play and multiple opportunities for creativity. In addition to the activities, each day of the week has a dress-up theme. Monday was Troubie colors, Tuesday was class colors, Wednesday was class jerseys, Thursday was different age levels, and Friday was roles based on each class' subtheme. All dress-up days related to Homecoming Week's overall theme: cities.

The freshman class of 2028's subtheme was the city of Los Angeles. Their dec, class song, cheer, entrance, skit, and dance were centered around their city.

When asked about her favorite part of Homecoming Week, Brianna Sheldon, a freshman on student council, said, "Definitely how it brings together all types of different people."

Another freshman, Hannah Chithea, described her experience similarly. She said her favorite part of Homecoming Week was "Seeing how hype and spirited everybody is for this school and getting to see just how much everybody loves this school." The freshmen brought the hype this year and placed third in Spirit and Class Song at the Homecoming Rally.

The sophomore class of 2027's subtheme was the city of London. The sophomores got fourth place in Spirit and Class Song, second

in all but 3 games. Many sophomores enjoyed Sports Day simply because of their success.



The sophomores during a particularly victorious game during Sports Day.

PHOTO COURTESY OF @SFHS_TROUBIES ON INSTAGRAM

Sophomore Sophia Harmon said, "You see all of your friends going up and playing all the sports and you get to cheer for them".

Sophomores and all classes alike united with each other to compete in rigorous and thrilling sports to earn Homecoming Week points. Overall, they tied with the seniors for second place at Sports Day, tied with juniors for second for dance/skit and spirit sticks, and took second place for dec, ultimately beating the seniors.

The junior class of 2026's subtheme was Paris. The juniors challenged the seniors in numerous categories, such as Dec and Sports Day. Their Paris-themed Dec consisted of the Louvre, Paris Fashion Week, and an adorable Paris bakery that essentially decided their win over the other classes.

cont'd

Junior Elizabeth Koo said, “My favorite part of Hoco Week is Thursday, Dec Night. I love seeing everyone working together to build something amazing!” Their effort and dedication to dec was demonstrated in their victory.



Class council member Maysen Boswell cheering her class on during Sports Day!

PHOTO COURTESY OF @SFHS_TROUBIES
ON INSTAGRAM

The senior class of 2025's subtheme was New York. Their choice of a popular city allowed them to claim first place in the entrance, class song, cheer, and spirit.

The seniors' experience with Homecoming Week shined through with their dominant win over the other classes for spirit stick points, and they won by a margin greater than 10. This, and their choice of city, led to their victory at the Homecoming Rally and taking home the win.

Senior Stephanie Olvido, the SBO Vice President, the Mandolin Editor-in-chief, and APIC President characterized Homecoming Week as “incredible.” She also said, “At St. Francis, we get to be spirited for three weeks with spirit sticks and dec, and it all comes together during Hoco Week with our dress-up days, 1-2 hour long rallies, and some class competition.”

Olvido's summary highlights the effort and energy put into Homecoming Week. Homecoming Week's spirit, tolerance, and creativity is unlike anything outside of St. Francis.

Club Rush at SF

BY DELANEY MCGAHAN '28

St. Francis' annual Club Rush took place on September 16-17 in lower Serra Court. At lunch, club representatives displayed information about their clubs on posters and answered questions from excited students! Beaming and bustling, girls grazed the candy bowls at each of the tables and learned about the various clubs.

Club Rush is a time for SF students to explore the many activities they can get involved in during the school year. The idea of this event is that students get a chance to learn in depth about what each of the clubs SF has to offer. From heritage clubs to athletic clubs, there is one for everyone. Two senior students, Natalie Sandoval and Isabella Ramos, created the St. Francis Beach Volleyball club this year.

cont'd

“We love playing beach volleyball and the community that comes with it. We also hope that it encourages more people to try the sport out and maybe discover a passion for something that they hadn't been interested in or experienced before,” Ramos said. Every club here allows students to try new things and get involved. Along with joining a club and participating in the activities,



Italian Club
at Club Rush
PHOTO
COURTESY
OF STEPH
OLVIDO '25

students get the opportunity to join a sisterhood and tight knit community. With an overwhelming amount of options, there is never a dull moment during Club Rush. Some club representatives think out of the box to attract students, like the club Women In Negotiation (W.I.N). This club had everyone surrounding their table, each writing on a notecard why Taylor Swift deserves the fame she has. Whoever wrote the most persuasive piece would be awarded a jellycat! Most would say Club Rush is a worthwhile experience.

It is obvious that Club Rush is only the start of the amazing experience of being in a club at this school. Clubs are a huge part of SF's culture and sisterhood. They give students plenty of opportunities to get out of their comfort zones, find new interests, and make new friends. Club Rush is a memorable and important event that St. Francis students partake in!

St. Francis Day

BY GEORGI WILLIAMS '28

Celebrating our patron saint, St. Francis Day on October 4th was not only filled with various activities and crafts, but special bonding experiences for our SF students, families and staffuly. Students arrived at school at 9:15 a.m. with a convenient late start, and began the day with our annual St. Francis Day Mass. The theme for this year's celebration was “Celebrating Women of Character, Courage, and Commitment.” Troubies came dressed as their favorite female role models such as Rosie the Riveter, Taylor Swift, Barbie, Billie Eilish, Ariana Grande and even some student's own mothers.



PHOTO COURTESY OF KINDER KHOV '27

cont'd

To bring it back to the general schedule, mass concluded around 10 a.m. with a striking performance from our extremely talented St. Francis Choir. Students were dismissed from mass, and the main celebration began.

Activities were spread far and wide throughout the campus for our Troubies to explore. The slime station immediately ran out of supplies from the rush of students ready to create their own batches. Free food like pretzels and snacks were provided for everyone participating, and students even decorated their own sugar cookies! Creating bookmarks, decorating pumpkins, making bracelets and making sand DIY's were just some of the other activities available. However, one event seemed to be a fan favorite. JUST DANCE! Located in the CLC, a Just Dance center was crafted, and it truly seemed like the room was taken right to the dance floor. "It was so fun to dance with friends and just have a good time," says freshman, Emi Martin. In other news, Tie dye was also a huge hit, as is every year.

peaking of every year, SF's celebration of our patron saint is an annual event,

meaning this was our freshman class' first time experiencing the joys and sisterhood of the St. Francis Day celebration.

Taking it to the finale, the closing ceremony commenced at 12 p.m. with jeers and roars from thrilled Troubies, ready to see their very own peers perform during the festivities. Hula, Chingu and ERA were the dance team performers, with ERA performing the Dallas Cowboys Cheerleaders' very own Thunderstruck routine.

The theater department gave SF a sneak peek into the upcoming fall musical, Once Upon a Mattress, and the SF choir and Blue Skirts groups performed with heavenly vocals. Performing is fun, but we can't forget some friendly competition. Musical chairs had everyone on their toes, and the costume contest made students cheer as loud as they could for their favorite outfit. But nothing could embody sisterhood more than the totality of student and staffulty members coming together at the end of the celebration to commemorate the life of St. Francis. Us Troubies are excited to see what next year's celebration has in store.

Dracula/Sacramento Ballet Performance

BY MATILDA MYERS '27

Chills and thrills haunted the stage last weekend when esteemed local dance company, the Sacramento Ballet, released their long-awaited production of Bram Stoker's Dracula. The show, which premiered the night after Halloween at the SAFE Credit Union Performing Arts Center, brought the eerie backdrops of London and Transylvania to our Northern Californian stage.

For those unfamiliar with the original tale, Dracula begins with the young English lawyer Jonathan Harker, who travels to the Romanian region of Transylvania with the intention of meeting a client of his firm: Count Dracula. To his utter horror, the Count is actually a vampire, and Harker only narrowly escapes death.

cont'd

Meanwhile, back in England, Harker's fiancée, Mina Murray Harker, stays with her friend, a woman her age named Lucy Westenra. Lucy becomes victim to Dracula, who had made the voyage from Transylvania to England on a boat carrying 50 boxes of dirt. She dies not long after the encounter, leading vampire hunter Van Helsing to the conclusion that vampirism has taken place. According to legend, vampires require the soil of their homeland in order to remain alive. Knowing this, the vampire hunters destroy most of Dracula's boxes of dirt. Dracula's next victim is Mina, and following the attack, the group decides to follow Dracula back to Transylvania. There, they find Dracula in the last box of dirt, and the vampire is stabbed through the heart.

Out of the existing Dracula ballets, the interpretation performed last weekend remains the most loyal to this plot. As such, this production was much more theatrical than the Sacramento Ballet's previous shows—such as last year's Swan Lake and the annual Nutcracker—which assumed a style commonly associated with traditional ballets.

Furthermore, Dracula featured more props than perhaps any other production in the company's history, a number well above 50. "It's the biggest show we've ever done," stated Artistic Director Anthony Krutzkamp for Good Day Sacramento, "It's actually going to be the hardest tech rehearsal we've ever done in the theater..."

A second highlight of the show was the wonderfully decadent costumes. Courtesy of the acclaimed Milwaukee Ballet, these costumes were modeled

after the real English and Transylvanian garments the characters would have worn in the novel. From giant ball gowns to tattered straitjackets, the costume department of Dracula left nothing for want. As put by Zandra Manner, the Wardrobe Supervisor at the Sacramento Ballet, "[It's] like when you watch a movie: you can get a storyline going, but costumes make you understand what's going on, so that you know where you're at, and it helps you and it guides you to your story".

Perhaps the biggest cause for excitement was the collaboration of Michael Pink. A man known for bringing classical ballet to the 21st century, the renowned choreographer, director, and dancer has been a prominent figure in the dance world since joining the London Festival Ballet in the 1970s.

It was during this time that he won the West End Theatre award for his very first choreographic work, 1914. Pink would go on to achieve further acclaim for his productions of Strange Meeting, Peter Pan, and of course, Dracula. Since its creation, Pink's Dracula has been performed all over the world. In a recent interview regarding the Sacramento Ballet production, Pink said, "...It's a spectacle; it's designed to be a theatrical experience that you would expect if you were paying to see a Broadway show, and that allows the audience to come on this incredible journey and leave the theater buzzed and on a high, and saying, 'Wow, I never thought ballet could be like that'".

In summary, last weekend's production excelled in every way imaginable: its incredible set and costume design accompanied by Pink's captivating choreography

cont'd

resulted in a wonderfully terrifying gothic horror, just as Bram Stoker would've intended. Dracula will certainly go down as a highlight of Sacramento Ballet's 2024 season, and we can't wait to see what they do next!



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE SACRAMENTO
BALLET

Fall Musical

BY ADA FRUIN '27

Once Upon a Mattress is a fresh take on a classic fairytale that is not only enormously funny, but also filled with loud and entertaining musical numbers with witty lyrics. This November, St. Francis's Performing Arts department is staging *Once Upon a Mattress*, created by Jay Thompson, Marshall Barer, and Dean Fuller, with music by Mary Rodgers.

Once Upon a Mattress is the story of a kingdom where the queen has outlawed marriage until her son, the prince, marries. The catch is the queen will only allow the prince to marry a true princess. In comes Winnifred, a loud, confident, and un-ladylike maiden, who is as far-removed from royalty as possible. The question is, will Winnifred win the hearts of the kingdom, the queen, and the prince?

Once Upon a Mattress originally opened Off-Broadway in the Phoenix Theatre in 1959. It quickly gained popularity and moved to the Broadway theatres, the Alvin, the Winter Garden, the St. James, and the Cort. After well over 400 performances, the show closed in July of 1960. The original leading actress, Carol Burnett, won a Theatre World Award in 1960 for her performance of Winnifred.

The musical was revived on Broadway in 1996 at the Broadhurst Theatre with Sarah Jessica Parker as the leading lady. The revival closed after 188 shows in 1997. This year, there is another revival of *Once Upon a Mattress*, but this time it has been adapted by popular television writer, Amy Sherman-Palladino. Starring Sutton Foster, this version is running Aug 12, 2024–Nov 30, 2024 in the Hudson Theatre.

Once Upon a Mattress originally opened Off-Broadway in the Phoenix Theatre in 1959. It quickly gained popularity and moved to the Broadway theatres, the Alvin, the Winter Garden, the St. James, and the Cort. After well over 400 performances, the show closed in July of 1960. The original leading actress, Carol Burnett, won a Theatre World Award in 1960 for her performance of Winnifred. The musical was revived on Broadway in 1996 at the Broadhurst Theatre with Sarah Jessica Parker as the leading lady. The revival closed after 188 shows in 1997. This year, there is another revival of *Once Upon a Mattress*, but this time it has been adapted by popular television writer, Amy Sherman-Palladino. Starring Sutton Foster, this version is running Aug 12, 2024–Nov 30, 2024 in the Hudson Theatre.

con't

St. Francis's talented Performing Arts department has worked hard over the past two months to perfect their production of *Once Upon a Mattress*. Each performer has their own process for learning their part and creating a character that comes to life onstage. St. Francis junior Maddison O'Brien plays the Wizard, a character who requires a lot of energy and a focus on comedic timing. When O'Brien was asked about getting into character, she said, "How I get into character is I try to maintain a sort of balance between someone with a lot of energy and someone who is almost like a people pleaser." O'Brien also comments on comedic timing, "Comedic timing I would say is interesting because when the wizard gets to tell a joke or do a fun trick he gets way too excited about it.



Sutton Foster in a production of *Once Upon a Mattress* at New York's Hudson Theater.
PHOTO COURTESY OF EXEUNT NYC

So I would say comedic timing is something that's trying to do the joke properly but also trying to rush because he wants to make people laugh." Sophomore Kathryn McWilliams plays the Nightingale of Samarkand, and has an enchanting vocal solo.

Vocal solos are often hard to approach because they are performed without support from the rest of the cast, so McWilliams breaks down her process for learning a solo. "I think the best way to learn vocal solos is to listen to a recording of the song first then try to sing different parts before putting the whole song together." McWilliams said. "Jumping straight into a whole song can be too much, so I find it best to take it apart first thing."

Once Upon a Mattress is opening on November 14th and closing November 16th, for a total of four performances. With a lively and dedicated cast and crew, they will be sure to make it a show you will never forget.



PHOTO COURTESY OF ST. FRANCIS HIGH SCHOOL

St. Francis Volleyball Rises to the Challenge in Sierra Foothill League

BY MERCY COLLIER '26

St. Francis Volleyball rose to the occasion this season, tackling the move from Delta League to Sierra Foothill League with perseverance and dedication.

For the last ten years, St. Francis has been in the Delta League facing familiar opponents like Elk Grove, Franklin, and Cosumnes Oaks high schools. The Troubies have enjoyed many league championships, but this year, they had to adjust to the challenge of a new and more competitive league.

The Sierra Foothill League includes a number of formidable teams, but all three Troubie teams held their own this season.

Varsity finished 7-7 in league play, losing to Rocklin, Oakridge, and Folsom high schools, but defeated Davis, Whitney, and Granite Bay. The Troubies won against Del Oro once but fell to the Golden Eagles later in the season. St. Francis finished 15-5 in non-league play and took second place at tournaments in September and October, finishing the season with a 22-12 record overall and qualifying for playoffs.

For the last 35 years, Alynn Wright was the head coach of the St. Francis Varsity team before she retired last year. Taryn Wright, the Troubies' long-time Junior Varsity coach and Alynn's daughter took over the Varsity team this year as the Troubies made the move to the new league.

In Wright's view, the challenges that came with the switch to Sierra Foothill have made Varsity stronger.

"I think overall we did pretty well," said Wright. "It was definitely a transition to a much tougher league...but I think it was a good change for our program."

That hard-won grit earned the Troubies a spot in league playoffs, but Varsity's season came to an end against Folsom in the second round. Nevertheless, Varsity Team Captain Chloe Johnson, was proud of the way the team came together this year.

That hard-won grit earned the Troubies a spot in league playoffs, but Varsity's season came to an end against Folsom in the second round. Nevertheless, Varsity Team Captain Chloe Johnson, was proud of the way the team came together this year.

"I love that our team is so close and supportive of one another," said Johnson. "With varied grade levels, I can talk to the older girls for help or advice about anything, and the younger girls never fail to make me laugh. It's like getting to play your favorite sport with your little and big sisters, which makes it so fun and filled with love!"

Beyond Varsity, St. Francis' Junior Varsity and Freshman teams both had stellar seasons.

The JV team had an exceptional season in the new league. Led by new JV Head Coach Todd Rhoads and Assistant Coach Alexa LoGiudice, the Troubies went undefeated, beating strong contenders all season. Junior Varsity also placed third at both the Stockton Classic and Carmichael Invitation tournaments.

cont'd

The Freshman team finished league with a solid 8-6 record and 26-7 overall under the leadership of new Frosh Head Coach Joey Uliana and Assistant Coach Lisa Magley. They took first place at both the Stockton Classic and Craft Memorial Tournament.

From Freshman to Varsity, the Troubies have shown their resilience in a season of change, paving the way for a bright future in the Sierra Foothill League.



The St. Francis Volleyball team after win vs Davis High School on October 23rd, 2023.

PHOTO COURTESY OF MARK HONBO

Varsity Flag Football's Freshman Quarterback

BY GEMMA FRISCH '28

Lola Fox is the current quarterback for St. Francis High School's varsity Flag Football team. I interviewed her today to get more insight on what players struggle with and strive for.

Gemma: Hello! Thank you for agreeing to this interview today. What is your previous flag football experience?

Lola: I played for one year on my previous school's (Saint John Notre Dame) flag football team.

Gemma: What made you decide to keep playing football in high school?

Lola: I really loved the sport. I thought it was especially fun during OTA's. St. Francis has great coaches

and I've gotten to meet so many great girls. This made my decision to start playing in high school an easy one.

Gemma: My next question for you is what are the advantages of being one of the youngest on the team?

Lola: One advantage is getting to see how all the other teams play.

This will allow me to know what to expect for the next few years. Also, I have more time to become as great a player as I can be.

Gemma: What are the disadvantages of being one of the youngest on the team?

Lola: One disadvantage is not being able to be with the same girls for the upcoming seasons after they graduate.

cont'd

Gemma: If you could play any other position what would it be?

Lola: I would play either a rusher or lineman because I used to play both last year. I really enjoyed both positions as well. This will allow me to know what to expect for the next few years.

Gemma: What motivates you?

Lola: My team really motivates me. They always give me high-fives, wish me good luck before every game, and always support me.

Gemma: Do you find it easy to balance school and sports? If so, how do you?

Lola: Sometimes it's difficult but mostly it's manageable. One thing I do to maintain balance is completing my homework the day it's assigned instead of the day it's due. This allows me more time to relax or focus on extracurricular activities.

Gemma: What advice would you give to future Troubies who want to play flag football?

Lola: Advice I would give is to give all you've got into everything you do. Whether it's a practice, game, or pre-season workout, you should put all your energy into it. When you give everything all you've got, you perform much better and advance more as an athlete.

Gemma: Do you think your team works well together?

Lola: Yes, I do think our team works very well together. We are all very close with each other on and off the field.

Gemma: On Wednesday October 23rd, St. Francis beat Folsom 44-0. What was it like playing in that game?

Lola: Yes, I do think our team works very well together. We are all very close with each other on and off the field.

Gemma: On Wednesday October 23rd, St. Francis beat Folsom 44-0. What was it like playing in that game?

Lola: It was amazing. However, I was sad since it was our last game of the season. I am glad we ended the season with a win.

Gemma: What was your favorite thing you've accomplished during a game here at St. Francis this season?

Lola: My proudest accomplishment in a game is when I threw my high of five touchdowns in a game. In that game, I threw four out of five touchdowns in one half.

Gemma: Finally, what have you learned from being a part of the St. Francis Flag Football team?

Lola: I have learned so much. The most important thing I learned is how to trust your teammates. This allows us to perform better as a team and act as sisters off the field.



PHOTO COURTESY OF MARK HONBO

Horror Movie Hits

BY SANA SARKARI '28

Movie Review: *Smile* - A thrilling 'chiller' for your night in

If you're looking for a horror film that delivers chills, *Smile* is a must-watch. This bone-chilling movie takes the act of smiling and transforms it into a haunting ordeal that keeps you on the edge of your seat.

The plot centers on Dr. Rose Cotter (played by Sosie Bacon), a psychiatrist who tries to help her patients but ends up tangled in a terrifying curse after witnessing a traumatic event. Suddenly, every smile she sees feels unsettling, as if an evil grin lurks almost everywhere.

From the first scene, *Smile* is captivated by outstanding cinematography. The eerie lighting and sound keep the viewers on edge. You can expect plenty of jumpscare because just when you think it's safe, another one pops up!

So, if you're up for a spooky night in, gather your friends and watch *Smile*. And don't forget to have someone nearby to hold onto during the jumpscare because, in this movie, there's plenty.

In short, *Smile* is a thrilling adventure that's as entertaining as terrifying. It'll leave you scared to go to bed for the next couple of weeks.

Rating: ★★★★★☆ (4 out of 5)

Movie Review: *Coraline* - An enchanting animation with a chilling twist

If you're looking for a more family-friendly film, *Coraline* is the perfect choice! This animated film takes viewers on a journey that introduces many scary elements while also ending with curiosity.

Based on Neil Gaiman's iconic novel, the story follows Coraline Jones (voiced by

Dakota Fanning), a girl who has just moved into a new home and finds a hidden door that leads to an alternate world. This "Other World" seems like a dream come true. Her "Other Mother," makes her every wish and dream come to life. However, as Coraline soon learns, this enchanting world hides a deep secret.

Visually, *Coraline* is stunning. The movie is fully stop-motion and filled with vibrant colors and landscapes that force you to keep your eyes on the screen. The film perfectly balances beautiful imagery with creepiness, leaving a lasting impression on audiences of all ages.

Dakota Fanning's voice acting is magical, perfectly showing Coraline's bravery and curiosity. The supporting characters, like the mysterious neighbors and the intimidating Other Mother (voiced by Teri Hatcher), add intrigue to the movie.

Coraline isn't just for kids; its themes of bravery and the importance of family resonate with viewers of all ages. The script combines humor and suspense, making it a thrilling experience that leaves everyone on the edge of their seats.

In conclusion, *Coraline* is an unforgettable film that skillfully combines fantasy and horror. Perfect for a family movie night, leaving its viewers wanting to know more.

Rating: ★★★★★ (5 out of 5 stars)



PHOTO
COURTESY
OF FLOOD
MAGAZINE

Book Recs

BY NEHA VASANTHAN '28

It's fall. Fall means curling up in a warm blanket, with a fall sweater, candles and a hot drink, and reading the perfect book. Whether this is a tradition, or about to be one, you need the right literature. For some, that means a bone-chilling murder mystery, but for others it's a vibey dark academia novel, a fantasy/romantasy action book, or a deep and profound read.

For the girls who love their horror films and true crime, there is no better book than *A Good Girl's Guide to Murder* by Holly Jackson. Five years ago, Andie Bell was murdered. Everyone thinks her boyfriend did the deed, but teenager Pip Fitz-Amobi believes otherwise. Pip decides to take on the case and re-solve it, using her cleverness, bravery, and knack for forensics. This YA book is good for anyone older than 13.

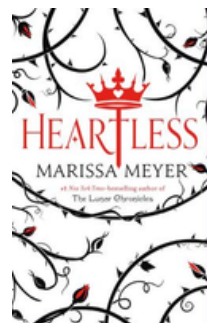
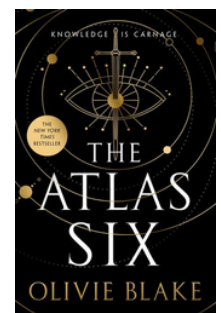
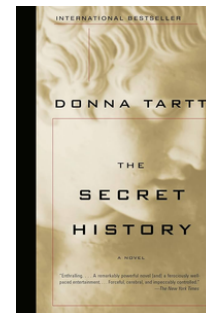
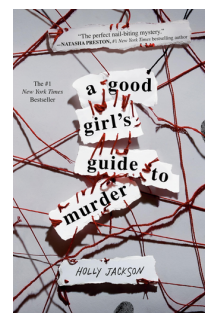
For not just the excitement of a murder mystery but also the vintage feel of a dark academia novel, try Donna Tartt's bestseller titled *The Secret History*. Years after Edmund Corcoran was murdered, six of his friends start reflecting on what happened, and if one of them killed him. This is a great book for people ages 14 and up. For less crime and more dark academia (with a pinch of magic), *The Atlas Six* by Olivie Blake is perfect. It shows six magicians who have been invited to be part of the secret organization called The Alexandrian Society. It's a mystical and exciting read for teens 15+.

There is nothing more mystical and exciting than a good fantasy or romantasy (a portmanteau of romance and fantasy) novel. *The Dance of Thieves* duology by Mary E. Pearson checks all of those boxes. Kazi, an ex-thief who is on a secret mission for justice, ends up in a forced-proximity and enemies-to-lovers trope with the crown prince. Marissa Meyer's novel, *Heartless*, is a genius fairy-tale retelling of *Alice in Wonderland*. It shows the tragedy and love story of Catherine Pinkerton—

the future Queen of Hearts. It's guaranteed to have you sobbing and attached to the characters. These are both fantastic reads for teens of all ages.

If you are looking for something life-changing instead, Matt Haig's sci-fi novel, *The Midnight Library* is flawless. Nora feels like a failure when she dies at only 29, but has the chance to choose to relive her life as if she had made different decisions. This book highlights the importance of life and that it is worth living, even when it's hard. It displays a wise and crucial meaning in the form of a fast and fascinating story. It's super enjoyable for ages 15 and up.

Don't forget to check trigger warnings, read a longer summary for all these books, and check with a trusted adult to make sure they are good for you, your mental health, and correlate with your personal maturity. Happy reading!



In order from left to right, starting at the top: *A Good Girl's Guide to Murder*, *The Secret History*, *The Atlas Six*, *Heartless*, *The Midnight Library*, and *Dance of Thieves*

PHOTOS COURTESY OF BOOK PUBLISHERS

Halloween Recipe (Mummy Cake Pops)

BY OLIVIA WEDDING '27

These cake pops are the perfect treat to bring to a Halloween gathering. A super customizable and fast treat that everyone is sure to love. They're so simple to make, with only four ingredients, and they'll let you show off your baking skills to all your friends and family. Follow the steps below to make this delicious treat.

Ingredients:

- 1 box cake mix (or from scratch)
- 1 can of frosting (or from scratch)
- 2 packages of white candy melts
- Edible googly eyes
- Candy sticks
- Foam board *to place cake pops while drying*

Equipment:

Food processor (optional)



PHOTO COURTESY OF ROSE BAKES

Instructions:

1. Bake the cake. Let your cake cool before the next step.
2. After your cake is cool, mix the cake in the food processor or crumble by hand. Make sure the pieces are fine so it's not too clumpy when you add the icing.
3. Mix about half the jar of frosting with your cake crumbs.
 - It should be almost like a dough but not too sticky.
4. Roll your dough into balls, place them on a sheet of parchment paper, and stick them in the refrigerator.
 - If it is sticking to your hands it is too sticky, you'll have to add extra cake.
 - If it is too dry and you are struggling to form balls, add more frosting.
5. Melt your candy melts in the microwave according to the package directions.
 - Be careful because you do not want to overheat the candy melts.
 - If overheated, add shortening.
6. Dip the end of your candy stick into the candy melts and insert into cake balls.
7. Let them sit in the fridge for an hour.
8. Once chilled, dip into the candy mixture.
9. When almost dry, place the eyes on the cake pop so they stick.
10. Take the leftover candy melt, put in a Ziploc bag, and cut a small hole in the corner. Then pipe on the lines on the face to make it look like a mummy.
11. Let cake pops dry on the foam board.
12. ENJOY!

Halloween Spooks Explained

BY DESLYN GALANG '28

Whether it be Frankenstein's creature, Count Dracula, or the IT clown, Halloween is filled with positively frightening monsters to give spooky season enjoyers a good scare. Part of the fun of Halloween is indulging in eerie legends, but where, when, and how did they come to be? Multiple different cultures can be credited with contributions to the iconic figures that we know today.

Although vampires can be sourced back to as early as Ancient Greece, the origins of the monster can primarily be traced back to Bulgaria, where the legend circulated in the Slavic population. Originally, the fanged beasts were non-corporeal ghost-like entities who caused chaos in unsuspecting towns. Nowadays, we would call the original vampire a poltergeist. As time went on, vampires started to shift from being ghosts to being reanimated corpses. The beliefs around these vampires likely stemmed from a lack of medical knowledge, as certain symptoms from diseases such as rabies, pellagra, and porphyria overlap with the vampiric tropes we know now.

It might be a surprise to us now, but the concept of vampires drinking blood was a later addition to their lore. The concept of vampires drinking blood came from a mix of two things. First, patients with porphyria can have urine which is a red color; people at the time assumed that they were drinking blood. Second, intellectuals in the 1700s were trying to add a scientific layer to the vampiric phenomenon. This was around the time that the West was starting to distance itself from superstitions, so people were trying to

transfer the idea of vampirism from a supernatural occurrence to a scientific one. The "drinking blood" idea was something that made the vampire seem more believable, as human blood was thought to have medicinal properties. It also tied into the "undead" aspect of vampires, as blood was believed to be the holder of the human soul. Since vampires are dead, it would make perfect sense for them to seek out blood as a remedy to the absence of life.

Werewolves, the haunted humans who could turn into ravenous canine beasts, are present in different mythologies. Originating in Ancient Mesopotamia, the Epic of Gilgamesh is one of the earliest accounts of the wild monsters. The Sumerian love goddess Inanna, also known as Ishtar, tried to convince Gilgamesh to marry her, promising him riches, servants, and prosperity. However, he rejected her on the account of the fact that she was infamous for dooming her past lovers to horrible fates; one of these lovers was a shepherd whom she turned into a wolf. Moving over to Western Europe, werewolves were also ingrained in Ancient Greek lore. The word "lycanthropy" (the supernatural transformation of a person into a wolf, as recounted in folktales) stems from the myth of Lycaon, an arrogant king who tried to test if Zeus was truly a god by feeding him human flesh. In order to punish Lycaon for being impertinent, the king of the gods turned him into a wolf. Lastly, werewolves were also mentioned in the Saga of the Volsungs, an Icelandic epic that sings of the tales of Sigurd the Volsung. In the story, it tells of wolf coats that, when worn, would turn the wearer into a wolf for ten days.

cont'd

The history of witches can be traced back to multiple places, one of which being Ancient Greece. Circe, the daughter of the sun god Helios, was a powerful witch who had a way with magical drugs. When Odysseus and his men stop at her island of Aeaëa, he sends out a scouting party who end up stumbling upon Circe's palace. Tempted by an enchanting voice, the men are eventually invited by Circe to come inside. She fed them a feast, but as the men drank their wine, they didn't realize that she had snuck one of her special magical drugs into the mixture. Circe had transformed them into pigs. Another witch in the Greek mythos was Medea, daughter of King Aeëtes. In order to understand Medea's story, we need to understand Jason, her ex-husband. Jason was sent on an impossible task to retrieve the Golden Fleece, so that he could reclaim the throne that was wrongfully usurped from his father and by extension him. Once Jason arrived on the shores of Colchis, where the Golden Fleece was located, King Aeëtes agreed to give him the precious item—if he could yoke two-fire breathing bulls, plough a field, and sow it with serpent's teeth that would grow into warriors. Medea told Jason that she would give him an enchanted ointment that would make him invincible to the heat of the bull, but on the condition that he would marry her and steal her away from her hometown. Throughout the story, Medea is shown to be ruthless, as she murders her brother Apsyrtus, her father King Pelias, Jason's new fiance after he left her, and even her own kids.

The Bible mentioned witches, specifically in 1 Samuel 28:3-25. The Philistines were getting ready to go to war with Israel, and King Saul needed advice to drive the army away. So he

sought out the Witch of Endor, asking her to summon the spirit of Samuel for advice, despite the fact that he had banned magic from his land. Promising her that she will not be punished for doing what he asked, she brings up the spirit of Samuel, who gives him the dire message that he and his sons will die and that Israel will be conquered by the Philistines. Afterwards, the Witch of Endor gives Saul and his men a feast.



PHOTO COURTESY OF US GHOST ADVENTURES

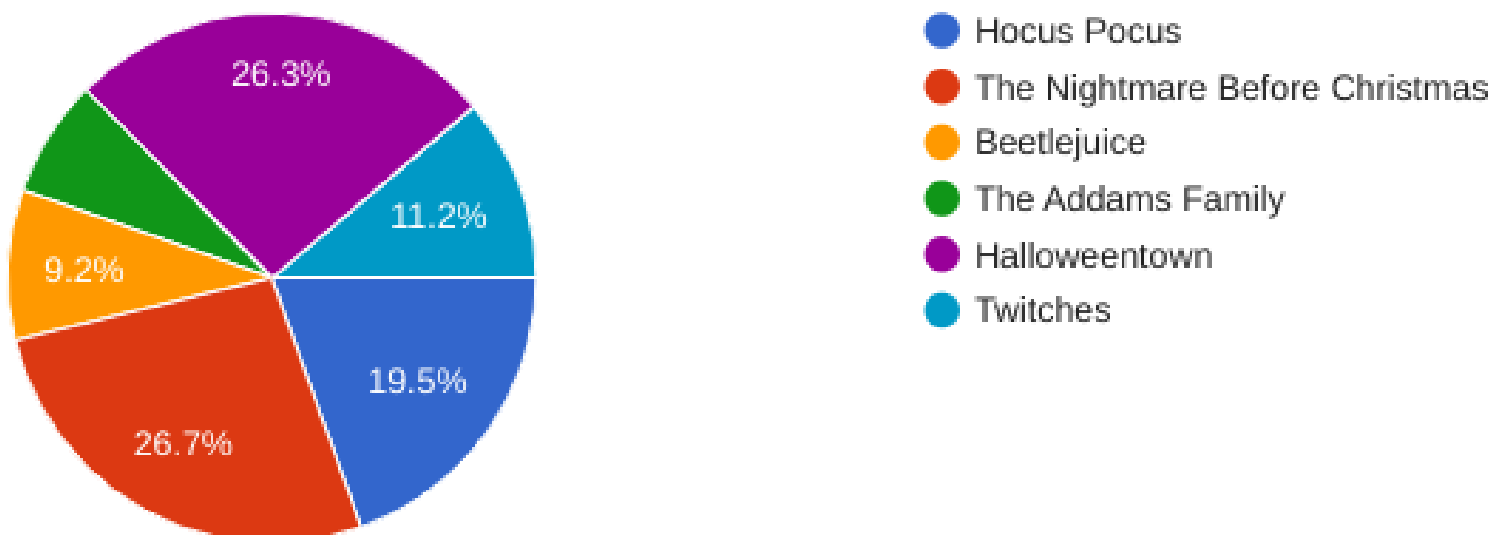
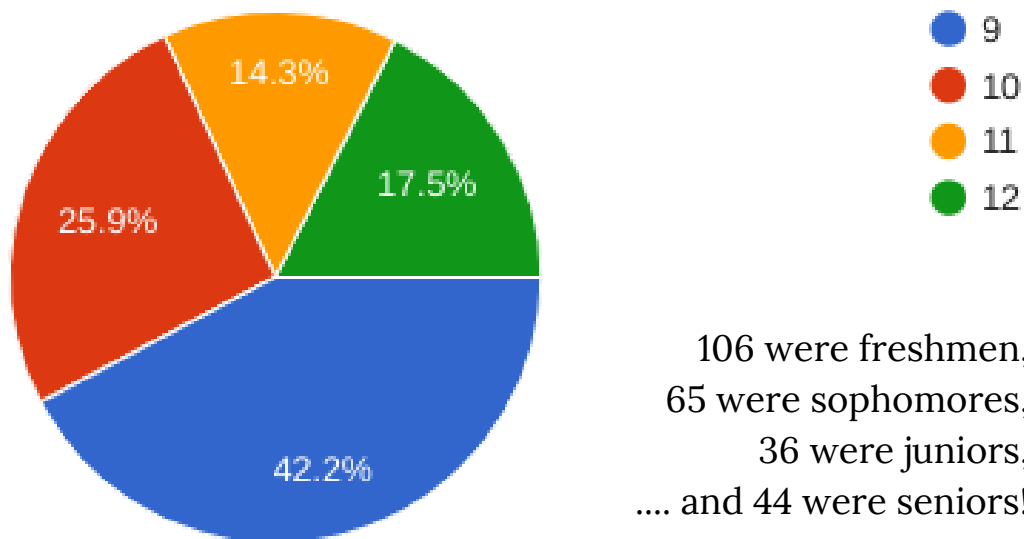
Witches can also be traced back to late 1600s New England. The Puritans who lived in Salem had a growing paranoia of the dark forces, stemming from beliefs around the Devil. Thus, when three girls said that they were having odd visions and convulsing, the Puritans pinned the blame on witches. The mass hysteria that followed led to the infamous Salem Witch Trials, which led to the deaths of 25 people. During trials, those accused of witchcraft were forced to defend themselves against spectral evidence provided by those who claimed to be inflicted by their curses. This evidence included dreams and visions, which was hard for those accused to dispute.

SF's Favorite Halloween Movies

BY ELEANOR DOCHERTY '27

Writer Eleanor Docherty sent out a poll to the student body in October about our favorite movies! Here are the results.

Out of 251 responses...



SF's favorite Halloween movie is *The Nightmare Before Christmas* with 67 votes!

A Note from the Editors-in-Chief

Dear Readers,

Thank you for reading our October edition! Everyone who worked and contributed to this month's edition couldn't wait to present our hard work to the St. Francis community. We're so excited to serve as *The Mandolin's* Editors-in-Chief this year and continuing the legacy of student-led journalism and graphic design at St. Francis.

Love,

Stephanie Olvido ('25) and Mercy Collier ('26)

Writers

Trinity Ito
 Georgianna Williams
 Delaney McGahan
 Matilda Myers
 Olivia Wedding
 Ada Fruin
 Mercy Collier
 Gemma Frisch
 Arianna Crowe
 Neha Vasanthan
 Sana Sarkari
 Eleanor Docherty
 Deslyn Galang

Publicists

Savannah Hamilton -
 Head Publicist
 Sophia Hendrix - Head
 Publicist
 Lena Moggan
 Cassidy Butler
 Emi Martin

Editors

Brittney Rios
 Kate Hwang
 Julianne Nguyen
 Stephanie Olvido
 Mia Nelson
 Matilda Myers
 Sophia Hendrix
 Maria Consolini
 Hailey Barok
 Thomasina Nicholson
 Emi Martin

Graphic

Designers

Sophia Hendrix
 Savannah Hamilton
 Cassidy Butler
 Georgianna Williams
 Katie Koo
 Rosie Lara
 Thomasina Nicholson -
 Cover Page Artist
 Emi Martin - Cover Page
 Artist