

The STA Times

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**DEC.
2021**



Anything But a Backpack Day - Spirit Day

Photos By Anthony Tucker

STA had its first "Anything but a backpack day" on November 23rd! The great turnout resulted in some extremely creative ideas.



Here are your two Presidents on the right, really rocking out! Tudor Bita and Kai on the left carrying around a suitcase! Very practical!



Here is Bowen, bringing his iMac set!



Here is Kenan, rolling with it.



Jack Frost Poem

By Isabel Altamirano

She met a boy this winter
Jack Frost, and his mischievous grinning gaze
The chilling touch and frosted aura lingered
With the flakes gently caressing down her face.

He showed her many wonderful things
Kaleidoscope winds, powdered mountaintops, all of his lovely ways
But at dawn's light, Jack would turn away, his snow-stained wings
Leaving her tears hanging in the sun's rays.

She'd never felt a shiver like his before
His green eyes, with flecks of blue, purple, and red love
A soft palm on her cheek gave her breath, and a heart that soared,
Fluttering out of her chest, her crazed, star-crossed dove.

He gave her joy, a happiness she'd never felt
Cold, nimble, whisking into the sky like a frosted spell
Jack Frost, was his name, a dear boy who caused her tears to melt
Into fragments of ice, the only reminiscence left of a wistful farewell.





Things to Look Forward to in the New Year

By Kai-Yu She

With the New Year fast approaching, here are some events to look forward to in December.

Clubs:

We have many clubs that are up and running. Here are some of our clubs, when they take place and where.

1. **Debate club:** Meetings every Wednesday at lunch in room 219.
2. **Chess club:** Every Friday after school by the LRC.
3. **TEDx club:** holds meetings on Wednesdays after school, in the computer lab by the library.
4. **Robotics league club:** Tuesday after school.
5. **Cooking club:** Not a set date = email jkeong@aquinas.org for more information.

Important Dates

1. Christmas Break starts on Saturday the 18th, with a staff retreat (no school) on the 17th. This will last until January the 3rd, 2022.
2. There will be a Spirit Day on the 15th.
3. Speech Arts will be on the 16th.

Sports Within Our Borders

By Juliana Sestini

In mid November, we started our Volleyball Intramurals! For those of you who aren't familiar with what this is, it is a tournament taken place during lunch times where students have the opportunity to make teams with their friends and compete against their other classmates and teachers.

It has been amazing to see that we have had a turnout of 14 teams for this event! Teams have started, and we can see the enthusiasm from the school community rise.

On Dec 1st, the bleachers were packed as the Annihilators (the team consisting of some of the girls from the senior volleyball team) beat the Staff team. They call themselves Spiked Punch.

We are still underway with pool play, but Pool D has already finished. Congratulations to the Pink Panthers who got first place in their pool.



Love at First Bite



By Anna Gawronski

Hello fellow STA students and staff! As we draw nearer to Christmas, I hope you are all starting to get into the holiday spirit! I'm sure you are as excited as I am that Christmas breaks are coming up in just a few weeks! If you happen to get bored during the breaks, or you are craving a sugary treat, I got your back! I love baking, especially during such a joyful time of the year. My favourite dessert during the Christmas season is: (drum roll please..) SHORTBREAD COOKIES!!

The best part is, it doesn't take that long to make and has minimal ingredients!

Here is the recipe/ingredients you will need (bakes 40 small cookies):

- 300 grams of flour
- 200 grams of butter
- 170 grams of sugar
- 1 egg (optional, if you want softer cookies then use an egg, if you want a more crunchy texture, then don't use an egg)

IF YOU WANT TO MAKE CHOCOLATE SHORTBREAD COOKIES:

- Replace 250 grams of flour instead of 300 grams
- Add 50 grams of cocoa powder



Instructions:

1. In a bowl, cut butter into smaller chunks (it needs to be in room temperature)
2. Whip butter until it has smooth texture
3. Add sugar into the butter little by little and until completely combined
4. Sift flour bit by bit into the bowl, mix
*If you are using cocoa, sift it into the bowl little by little and keep mixing
5. Put mixture into the fridge to cool for half an hour
6. Take out the mixture, then place on parchment paper and start rolling it out, keep rolling until dough is about 5 mm thick
7. Preheat the oven to 375°
8. Roll dough into small balls and separate them evenly on parchment paper
9. Bake for 8-10 minutes and keep checking up on it
10. When light brown color appears on the cookies, take out and cool! Enjoy :)



Top 10 Gifts to Get Your Family and Loved Ones for Christmas

By Marianna Di Rosa



1. Hot chocolate kit



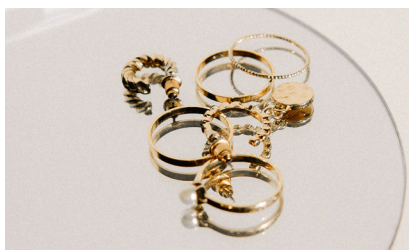
2. Skincare



3. Personalized ornaments



4. Jewellery



5. S'mores maker



6. Matching pajamas



7. Board games



8. Personalized coasters



9. Candles



10. Mugs





Christmas Movie Recommendation

By Juliana Sestini



Home Alone

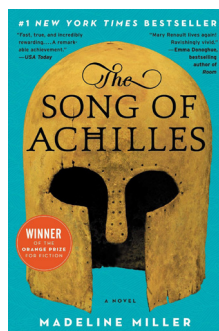
A classic! Every person who has the chance should watch this movie at least once in their life. A big family goes on vacation during the Christmas Season, but it seems that they have done the head count wrong. What's next? It is an extremely fun movie to watch with your family during the Christmas week.

Book Club Promotion

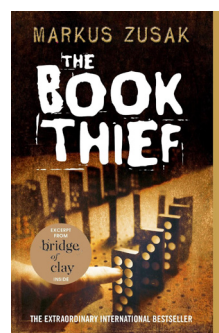
By Sophie Savage

"Books are a uniquely portable magic," as Stephen King said. Whether you are an avid reader or haven't picked up a book since elementary school, STA's new book club has something for everyone. A warm and inclusive environment, the book club does a variety of different things, from playing book-related games to talking about our favourite reads while sipping on delicious tea. Book club is an awesome way to meet fellow students with similar interests as you and find your next great read! And don't you worry about fitting it into your schedule! Book club meets during senior lunch hour, so it won't conflict with your extracurriculars. Come by the alumni room, sit, eat your lunch, and enjoy!

Looking for noteworthy book recommendations? Stop by the library to check out the Book Club Recommends section. Book club has worked together to curate a thoughtful list of recommendations for everyone. We discuss a variety of genres and topics, so you'll be sure to find something! To start your next reading adventure, here are 3 books recommended by book club.



The Song of Achilles
by Madeline Miller



The Book Thief
by Markus Zusak



Looking For Alaska
by John Green



Leisure - A Recipe for the Christmas Break

By Felipe Grossling

One of the things I look forward to most is the Christmas break. As a kid it was because that meant getting more presents, but now, as an old man, it means buying presents for others and making an agreement with my wife that we won't buy any gifts for each other (only to intentionally break that and buy something for her anyway). But I find myself yearning more and more for rest and leisure. Leisure is often defined as free time, but it is so much more than that. It is free time for a purpose. It moves towards fulfillment and something good. Have you ever come back from Christmas break and on your first day back feel like you need another break; more tired than you thought? Had you been enjoying leisure, or did you just not do anything for two weeks? Wouldn't it be better to come back from Christmas break lamenting and missing the break but nonetheless feeling rested? So perhaps here are some things you can *do* to maximize your leisure and truly rest - for if you do *nothing* during the break, you may have a muddled feeling of lethargy on your first day back as your body will be in a shock. So for the break, consider doing some of the following:

Exercise – this is something I need to discipline myself on, but we all know the benefits of taking care of your body. If you are your body, then exercise must be good not just for your physical health but your mental and spiritual as well.

Read – You're always going to hear me suggest this. Not only for the academic benefit but also reading a book is good to help you relax, develop your imagination, and to sharpen your intellect. Read!

Help the poor – Think about it, there are some people in this world (in this country!) who do not have money for adequate food let alone presents. It would do us a lot of good just to recognize how wealthy we really are. There are millions of people in this world who don't know if they will eat tomorrow.

Donate money/gift – Buy a present and put it in the box for those families in need. I remember going to an orphanage of disabled children in rural Mexico and handing this little girl a teddy bear. I will never forget that smile on her face. You have the capacity to do this. Why wouldn't you?

Visit the lonely – I can think of few things worse than being forgotten or disregarded. And there may be many of these folks who are probably in close proximity to you: a grandparent, an ill friend or family member, a neighbor who recently lost a spouse, etc. Loneliness due to lack of human connection is crippling – but you can help remedy it.

Go to Mass and Confession – Repent and believe in the Good News; that God became man to save us from hell. And if this is true, what better way can the creature offer himself/herself by praising and offering worship to God? That is the heart of what we do at Mass.

Pray – Let me just say, that prayer, experiencing the presence of God, will move your heart to do many or all of the things mentioned. And above all, it will do what is the first priority of why we even have a Christmas break; to prepare for the coming of our Lord.



Holiday Fuel

By Adelina Popa

The second the clock struck midnight on December 1st, all your local coffee shops left Halloween behind, embraced the holiday season and brought out all the Christmas flavours. With the Holiday season right around the corner and the temperatures dropping, you, my friend, are gonna want to have a festive drink to fuel you through this joyous season. So whether you are driving around looking at the lit-up houses, having a snowball fight, or watching a movie with your family, a toasty drink is guaranteed to make you merrier. If you are like me and always on the hunt for a new drink, then fret no more because I am here to tell you about all the possible drinks you can savour this season.

First and foremost, you can't go wrong with Starbucks. Starbucks never fails to impress everyone with its vast array of drinks, especially during the holidays, with a new addition to the family of beverages this year. Some of the drinks you can indulge in are the Peppermint Mocha, Caramel Brûlé Latte and the Chestnut Praline Latte. If you are interested in something a little stronger, try the Irish Cream Coldbrew. Lastly, the Sugar Cookie Oat Latte made its debut at Starbucks this year, and it definitely does not disappoint. Whether you like your drink warm or cold, the Sugar cookie Oat Latte gives the Holiday drinks a whole new meaning.

If caffeinated drinks are not your cup of tea, worry not because there are plenty of hot chocolates waiting to warm you up on chilly days. Our beloved Tim Hortons adds a spin to their classic hot chocolate by adding a hint of Candy Cane. That's right, you can spice up your days with a Candy Cane Hot Chocolate or a Candy Cane White Hot Chocolate. On the other hand, Delany's keeps their hot chocolate classic, topped with chocolate whipped cream, for all those who enjoy a traditional winter drink.

All the drinks mentioned above are sure to add flavour to your holidays. Still, if you like exploring new innovative flavours, Blenz Coffee is the place for you. With their limited edition collection of hot chocolates, you can choose between Tangerine Tiding, Hazel Nutcracker, Strawberry Festivus, or Minty Mistletoe. On top of their vast amounts of hot chocolate, you can also give their Gingerbread Latte, Eggnog Latte, or Chai Nog Latte a whirl.

As we head into our break, you can take it upon yourself to turn this into an activity and try all these drinks with your friends or family. This would make for a jolly holiday activity that will put a smile on your face and keep you toasty while the flavours of winter melt in your mouth. So go to your nearest coffee shop and let the festivities start off right.





Academic Recognition

By Rebecca Bond

I started the Friday of the first week of school like any other teenager: grumbling about having to leave the sweet warmth of my covers and getting into my uniform. However, once I had fully awakened as I ate breakfast, brushed my teeth, and bickered with my younger brother, I was growing more and more excited to say in a few short hours that I had survived the first week of school. I went through my first two classes, Drama and Science, where I took down the day's homework in my beautiful new planner my Mum had bought for me the day prior. I left Science thinking about how thrilled I was that my favourite kind of science -Biology- was first in the year plan. I then wandered into my third class, P.E Academy, where I promptly picked a fight with the wall, and lost. After lying on the ground for twenty odd minutes so that I didn't pass out, my Mum drove me to Lions Gate Hospital where I found out that I broke my dominant hand. So, while many people after the first week of school would say, "Hey, we made it to the end of the week in one piece!" I literally didn't, so I don't think I'm allowed to say the same.

The moment my hand made contact with the wall, there wasn't a sound, but the pain was instantaneous, jarring and sharp, just for a moment, a moment that felt like a minute, and then it wasn't there anymore. The numbness in my hand made it heavy. The moment was still catching up to me, but even through the initial surprise, my instinct was telling me to pull my arm close to my chest. I got up, and through the fuzz of adrenaline, walked to my teacher and let out a shaky, "I think I did something to my arm."

In the first few minutes that followed my accident, all that came to mind was, "This won't be good for the soccer game on Sunday." Even before I officially knew I had broken it, I had the dawning feeling that I wouldn't be able to play in my team's first proper soccer game since COVID-19 shut everything down. So as you can imagine, with both that and the numbness I was feeling, or rather, not feeling in my arm, I was in a little bit of shock, as one usually is after they face the consequences of their actions. For years, my Dad has always told me, "If you're falling, never stick out your hands to stop yourself." Unfortunately, this thing that I had been told since I was little slipped from my mind, and I instead decided that sticking out my arms as I ran at a wall with great amounts of speed would be a fantastic way to insure I didn't slam my face into the wall. Well, I didn't slam my face into the wall, but I did spend a good twenty minutes laying on the ground as I mentioned, making jokes and giggling to ensure that I didn't cry, which I did then end up doing a few minutes later.

Breaking my dominant hand had consequences, meaning that I couldn't do things like successfully strum on my ukulele, or participate in soccer games. Yet, perhaps the worst outcome of all, I couldn't flawlessly beat my Dad at Mario Kart Wii anymore.

CON'T



I could still dominate at the game, but only in the first round, soon after, the twisting and turning of the controller, and the pressure I would put on my thumb would equate to an uncomfortable wrist for a short time after. Soon after that, I would attempt to do my math homework using my left hand, where I would find out that becoming ambidextrous isn't as easy as talking about becoming ambidextrous.

However, I'm not usually one to let negativity bring me down, so I like to look at the positive things about the situation I've been put in. For one thing, when I do manage to beat my Dad at Mario Kart, I get to cheer and rub it in his face for hours that I could beat him even with a broken arm. And though it's been a hard process to learn to write neatly and quickly with my left hand, I will have that skill when my right wrist heals soon enough. Plus, my Dad is ecstatic that he has another lefty in the family now! Even though I can only play in my soccer practice, I can be the north shore's best benchwarmer and cheerleader, and I get to build connections with my teammates on the bench and at my practices. If I was only looking at the things I couldn't do, I wouldn't be able to focus on the things that I am learning that I can.

What I mean by this is that you should take a step back from bad situations, and try to see how you can make your outlook better. In everyday life, if you are having a particularly bad day, you can find solace in the little things that surround you. If you are in a particularly trying situation, you can take a step back and relax for just a moment, let yourself experience things that you enjoy without worry looming over your head, and soon you may find that your life will feel a lot more optimistic. For me, on the Friday when I was faced with this incident with my wrist, rather than getting upset at the situation at hand, I lit my scented candles, put on some music and I used this as a fitting opportunity to take a **break**.



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Teacher Sponsor

Mr. Felipe Grossling

Coordinator

Mr. Felipe Grossling

Editor in Chief

Juliana S. Sestini

Executive Team

Isabel Altamirano

Sophie Savage

Juliana S. Sestini

Article Writers

Isabel Altamirano

Rebecca Bond

Marianna Di Rosa

Anna Gawronski

Felipe Grossling

Adelina Popa

Sophie Savage

Juliana Sestini

Kai-Yu She

Anthony Tucker

Graphic Designer

Aubrey Ventura

MERRY CHRISTMAS!

