

# Starbucks odyssey: coffee, drugs and smooth jazz

“I used to work for a drug dealer,” I heard a voice say behind me. I nearly whipped my head around but caught myself. The words sucked the sound out of the small coffee shop. It was one of those moments when the music dies, the conversations stop, and that one thing you didn’t want anyone to hear slips out.

I was almost positive the voice would disappear now, blend into the background and slip away. Too bad. I wanted to hear more.

“You say those things so loud!” the barista hissed with an uncomfortable laugh as the ambient noise returned. She obviously knew him, but it sounded like she wished she didn’t.



My back was turned to the two, but I was close enough to hear every word. I tried to twist in

my swivel stool to get a better look at them. They were talking in a corner of the restaurant, far from everyone except one kid, swiveling.

“Yeah, well, that’s just what my life was,” the voice continued. “That’s part of my past. That’s who I was. When that’s your life you have to be used to having guns pulled on you, to security searches. Eventually I got involved with the guy who made the heroin down in Mexico.”

My eyes widened. This guy just wouldn’t stop. The music wasn’t masking his voice anymore either. In fact, now he was trying to talk over the music.

I quickly glanced over my shoulder and was able to get a good look at him. Black leather jacket, dark jeans, black beanie, huge earrings that stretched out the lobes of his ears. His story checked out.

He went on to talk about his trouble with addiction. Pot. Shrooms. Ecstasy. I was frozen, trying to listen without looking like I was listening, cringing every time a new drug popped up.

But it wasn’t even his crazy story that shocked me. It was his exhibition. He was putting on some sort of twisted show, performing his life’s story to Starbucks branch #682.

Why did he put himself on display like that? I guess it’s good that he wasn’t hiding anything, but he was so blatantly confessing everything. I didn’t get it. Why was he telling her this? Why was he telling all of us this?

He spewed his story on the coffee shop walls. He knew everyone could hear him. He knew everyone could see him. Every aspect of his life was loud.

He kept talking, but I was starting to lose interest. I could almost feel him sense that he was losing his audience.

He was putting on a show. He was trying so hard to be *that* guy, to wear *those* clothes, *that* jewelry. Live *that* life.

He looked like a bad actor, struggling to play a role.

His story unfolded over the soft jazz playing at the coffee shop. The music was complex and interesting. Subtle yet powerful. Natural. But then again, I couldn’t really even hear it. It was drowning under the story of a real-life Jesse Pinkman.

It slipped away, but I was left wanting more. Wanting to hear more. Wanting to know how *that* story ended.

# hot or not?

30-word thoughts on some recent events at 10600 Preston Road.

**Heating up | Graduate Hall**  
With the addition of new computers and the inscription of every St. Mark’s graduate on its walls, the recently renovated study hall room now boasts much more resourcefulness and school history.



**Icy | 7:30 a.m. meetings**  
This year, early morning meetings are occurring much more frequently, some in place of the busy ninth period slot. A problem arises, however, for those who have long commutes to school.

**On fire | Strength & fitness**  
With coach Kevin Dilworth now officially in charge of the school’s strength and fitness, students have the opportunity to participate in a fantastic strength and conditioning program in after-school P.E.



**Warm | New football field**  
The new football field has lived up to the hype thus far. Sporting a new logo with a lion and sword, it provides for a beautiful setting during football games.

EDITORIAL

## School photographer makes impressive debut

As the school has recently turned over a new leaf in many positions including Headmaster, Head of Upper School and Chaplain, a new photographer has also joined the community.

Scott Peak has done a fantastic job thus far, efficiently taking high quality photos for students and faculty.

He made an excellent first impression during senior photos and during Blue Shirt Day, putting in up to a couple hours of work at the school for each student at special discounted prices.

He also enabled families to decide on a purchase during the shooting sessions by putting the photos up on a television screen.

**However,** Peak is not the only one providing this great service — his entire team can get the job done well.

Even when Peak was out of town during certain photo shoots, one of his partners took the photos in his place and still did an outstanding job.

This kind of convenience and quality has been unparalleled in recent years, and we look forward to working with Peak for many years to come.

## HEARD IT HERE

1<sup>st</sup>

The voices of the first graders, the class of 2027.

## What is your favorite P.E. game, and why?

“Lion Ball, because you get to catch balls.”

— Collier Day

“Football, because I like to get touchdowns.”

— Braden Scott

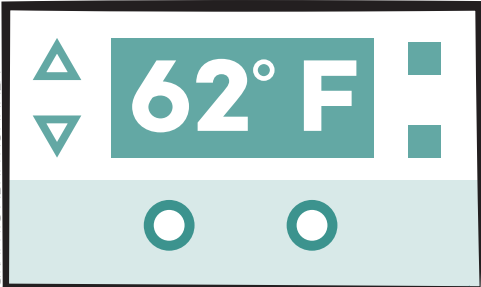
“Lion Ball, because I like making diving catches.”

— James Hoak

## WAKE UP CALL



**CHAPEL CHILL** The chapel thermostat sits at a cool 62 degrees, nearly freezing hymnals to hands and causing mass shivering among the unsuspecting students.



## BAD DREAM | CARTOON GRAHAM KIRSTEIN

