

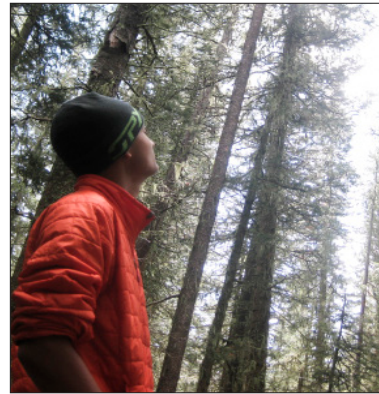
• pecos | august 6, 2014



Arm-in-arm, the entire group looks in awe at the beautiful Pecos wilderness. Throughout the course of the trip every student became closer with one another and with his leaders.

LETTERS FROM home

Freshman Kabeer Singh describes what may be the start of a new Pecos tradition, letter-writing.



ON THE HIKE Freshman Kabeer Singh (left) looks up at the sky. Slowly but surely the whole group (above) hikes forward up the mountain.

For every incoming freshman the Pecos Wilderness Trip provides each class a unique opportunity to come together and look ahead to their final four years at 10600 Preston Road. Although every Marksman has completed the trip, many myths have spread about the nine-day trip, epically about the notorious 24-hour solo.

"I had heard from many older kids that the solo wasn't the best part of trip, which made sense to me considering you get no food and no interaction with anyone else for 24 hours. But part of me was looking forward to the solo as an opportunity to reflect on myself. I would be able to think about what I had accomplished and what I hoped to achieve in the next four years of high school. "Once in the Pecos, our group had a pretty good idea of when the solo would occur. On the second night, we arrived at our campsite, and our leader, Flo '98, told us that we would stay at the campsite for the next three days, making us think our solo would be that third day. "The next day, however, we woke up and had pancakes for breakfast, which we all had earlier decided as our final meal before the

solo, so we were kind of confused. The next thing we knew, we were gathering our stuff and preparing for 24 hours of solitude. But as a group, we went into the solo in a positive mood, laughing with giddy anticipation.

"Right before my leader left to take the next campers to their 10' by 10' area, he handed me a closed envelope. At first, I was confused because I had not heard anything about a letter on the solo, but once I saw my parents' handwriting on the front, I knew exactly what was inside. "I didn't immediately open the letter because I wanted a little build up, but before I went to sleep, I read it and then pondered on it as I fell asleep. As soon as I woke up, I wrote a response to the letter, talking about how I wanted to take on the next four years and how I wanted to leave my mark on St. Mark's. "Once I got home from the Pecos, I gave my parents the letter I wrote to them and they put it, along with the letter to me, in a folder, which I have in my room. It's there that I plan to keep the folder, so I can look back at it in times of indecision, hardship or struggle."

— Kabeer Singh, as told to Will Diamond

We began the trip as classmates but as we walked down the mountain together, I knew that we were now brothers. — freshman William Hall



• two-a-days | august 4-22, 2014

tuning UP THE HEAT

Football players struggle through two-a-days.

AFTER THREE MONTHS of summer vacation, two-a-days provided players with a painful return to the football field. During the dog days of summer, sweat spilled and coaches pushed players to the limit, but players said the conditioning and extra practice during these sessions is invaluable.

Senior captain Corson Purnell stressed the importance of this year's two-a-days in particular because the team had an unusually scheduled game during the first week of school. Purnell pointed out that the team had to progress faster than previous years, but he added that the team stepped up and did just that. Due to plenty of scrimmaging, Purnell claimed the two-a-days were more affective and seemed to go by quicker than previous years.

Fellow captain Tommy Gudmundsson was candid about the team's goals for the year, emphasizing that the team got their priorities straight during summer training. "We're going for the big game this year," Gudmundsson said in reference to the elusive SPC Championship game. Through senior leadership, Gudmundsson is confident the team can accomplish big goals this season.

Though important, senior leadership is not the only key to victory, and both Purnell and Gudmundsson stressed the need for younger guys to step up.



HARD WORK Their bodies weary but their minds resolute, the varsity football team gathers around coach Bart Epperson following a strenuous two-a-day workout.

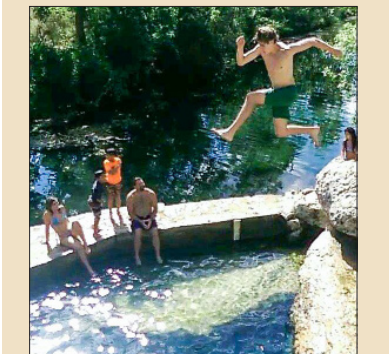
• wimberley | august 13, 2014

bonding WITH CHAMPIONS

FOR THE THIRD YEAR in a row, the cross country team attended a four day training camp, Aug. 13-17, in the hills of Wimberley, in preparation for the upcoming year. The team trained every morning and visited a local lagoon, The Blue Hole Lagoon, where they enjoyed many water related activities. This was the kick off to a season in which members were facing the pressure of being defending SPC champions.



TEAM BUILDING Team members engaged in a plank exercise to test their cohesiveness. Using three 8 foot planks, the crew had to navigate through the playground without touching the ground.



COOLING DOWN Plunging into Jacob's Well, junior JT Grass jumps into an 80 foot spring full of chilly water to cool off from the heat in Wimberley.



HEATING UP Exhausted after a tiresome workout, team members gather around the only shade available from the 100 degree August heat the track emitted.

• fifth grade orientation | august 14, 2014



NEW YEAR Junior Drew Baxley wistfully reminisces about his Middle School days as he guides fifth graders through team-building activities.

TO begin AGAIN

Telos members help new fifth graders adjust.

Max Chuang, a Marksman since the first grade and new student Brett Honaker were asked for their thoughts on the fifth grade orientation, which marks the beginning of their Middle School careers. Brimming with excitement, they spoke of this experience, and shared what they hope to accomplish in their first year of Middle School.

Did you learn anything new about St. Mark's from the orientation? MC: I learned where the classrooms were. I also learned about the new privileges and responsibilities we have as middle schoolers now.

As a new student, what did you think of the kids in your grade? First impressions? BH: Some of them were very friendly. They saw that I was new and immediately welcomed me and made me feel at home.

What are you looking forward to the most this year? BH: I'm really looking forward to having a lot of fun this year and making a lot of new friends. MC: I'm looking forward to some more challenging classes. I'm also really looking forward to all the freedom we get as middle schoolers.

What was the hardest thing to find in the scavenger hunt? MC: Probably the science room. BH: There were actually two things that I really had trouble finding: one was the nurse's office, and the other was the Exploring Asia classroom.

What is your primary goal for the first year of Middle School? MC: To make more friends and not get any referrals. Oh yeah, and to also get honors for all my classes. High honors. That's important. BH: Well, I think it's really the same with everyone: Learn.

PECOS peaks Most memorable part of the Pecos?

1 Sitting around the campfire and getting to know each other. —freshman Niteesh Vemuri

2 Fishing on the Alpine lakes. —freshman Carson Crocker

3 The long and scenic hikes. —freshman Cal Rothkrug

4 The solo because we got to rest. —freshman Michael Liang

5 Eating the delicious camp food. —freshman Kevin Feng

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