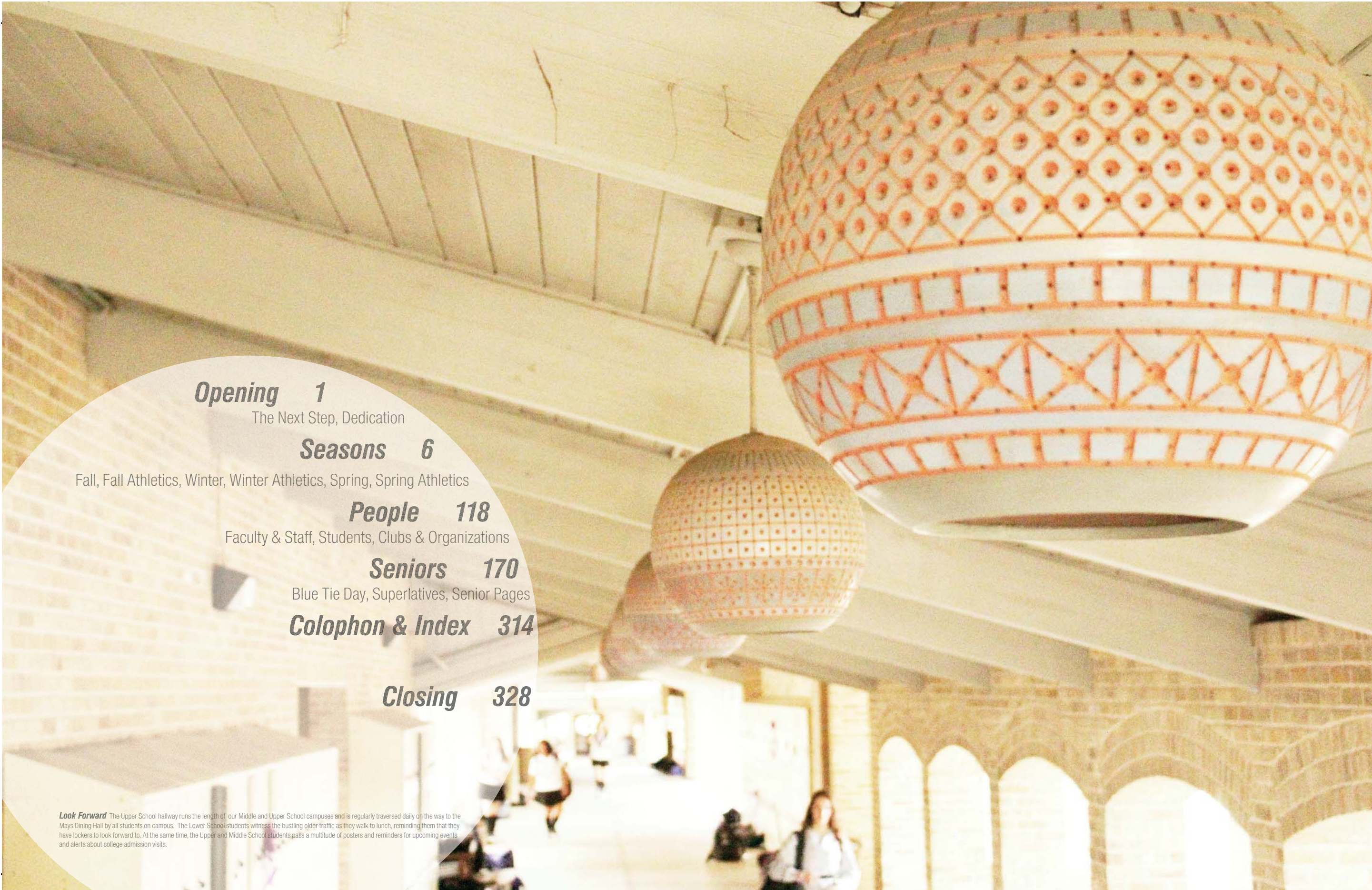


*The*  
**NEXT**  
*Step*

SAINT MARY'S HALL  
LA REATA  
SAN ANTONIO, TX  
2016 VOL. 89

*La Reata 2016*





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**Look Forward** The Upper School hallway runs the length of our Middle and Upper School campuses and is regularly traversed daily on the way to the Mays Dining Hall by all students on campus. The Lower School students witness the bustling older traffic as they walk to lunch, reminding them that they have lockers to look forward to. At the same time, the Upper and Middle School students pass a multitude of posters and reminders for upcoming events and alerts about college admission visits.

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**The Gift** The terra cotta mural from the class of 1968 proudly greets all visitors at the main office. This symbolic gift inspires students to consider how they will honor the future generations of Barons when they become alumni.



# La Reata 2016

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# The Next Step

The challenges that we face each day prepare us for our next steps in life. This year we faced a new grade, new friends, a new strength and conditioning period in Upper School, and 17 new teachers across the campus. Many of us stepped up to new challenges by embracing work in councils and taking on more service projects.

Seven of our experienced teachers transitioned to new, more challenging positions within our school; Bret Bigelow to Social Studies Department Chair, Deborah McInerney to Form 6 English, Kevin Pleshko to Form 8 English, Mark Remington to Upper School Government, Coach Ivan Mason to Middle School Fitness, Elsa Tonone de Sala to Upper School Spanish, and Jill Wagner to Form 5.

For many of us, this was a year of growth and personal challenge. Some of us took on so much that we wondered if we would survive the year. "I am taking harder classes this year. I'm nervous, but ready to work really hard," said Margaret Shetler (11).

While we honor the past, we look forward to our future. We set high goals to make it exciting and challenging for ourselves along the way. "I'm stepping up to a lot more homework. I feel okay about it. It's a challenge and I like challenges," said Marinna Nicoll (6).

In a year where we faced our 10-year reaccreditation and hosting the tremendous ISAS Fine Arts Festival, we pulled together to accomplish these lofty goals with camaraderie and patience. In the end, we took our next steps together and we wouldn't have it any other way.



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Top Left: Jacqueline Davis (7), Sophia Jaafar (7) and Lexi Dalrymple (7) have a conversation about upcoming council elections at lunch.

Middle Left: Jimmy Greenwood (12) presents his views Young Democrats and Young Conservatives present their views on the war on terrorism during an open debate.

Left Bottom: Tanzil Mohamed (9) receives her Honor Council tie during the Council Tie Ceremony.

Right: Owen Barta (M) practices stacking cakes during Back-to-School Orientation day.



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# FALL

## Celebrating Excellence

As the school year starts and students come together to laugh about their summers and make plans for the upcoming school year, things start to fall into place. Teachers learn new names and faces and new schedules are committed to memory. Once everyone gets settled, the business of learning and the comfort of a routine begins. In the middle of Fall, we host our annual Founders' Day celebration.

Founders' Day allows families, students, staff and faculty an opportunity to come together to celebrate our rich heritage of excellence. During our morning ceremony, we honored the Kelleher family with our Founders' Day Award which honors the commitment that they have for our school. Herb Kelleher, the founder of Southwest Airlines, spoke to the school about the importance of a quality education. With three members of the Kelleher family on our Board of Trustees throughout the years and four generations of the family as students, The Kellehers are certainly committed Barons!

Another tradition during this celebration is the honoring of Master Teachers. As Mr. Eades read the letters written about each teacher, the school hung on every word, guessing among those that they sat with as to who would win the prizes. This year Mrs. Amy Read took the honors in Lower School, Mrs. Patti Nicoll won as the Middle School teacher of note, Mr. Paul Gage won in the Upper School division and Mr. Joe Muller won as the Master Teacher At-Large. "I was so stunned and humbled," reports Mr. Muller after winning the recognition.

Everyone had a great time and the environment around the campus was full of kind words and smiles for the remainder of the week. The school had a fresh dedication to what they could do to make SMH stronger after the ceremony.



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# WINTER

crisp new beginnings

December is marked at first by a thunderous amount of music. The middle and upper school choirs, bands, and strings groups converge for the popular Winter Concert. Students have the opportunity to help everyone get into the holiday spirit by playing popular and clever selections to a nearly sold-out house. This year, everyone who came was impressed by the level of expertise the students exhibited on stage. "The show is a testament to our terrific music programs," said Fine Arts Director Bethany Bohall.

The Winter Concert was not the only way that the campus prepared for the holidays. The lower school also had a Montessori and Kindergarten concert and a lower school sing along in which students wore pajamas and sung along to special holiday favorites in the Coates-Seeligson Theater.

Despite all of the terrific sounds around campus, the end of the semester was marked by an eerie silence around upper and middle school. As exams rolled around, students worked through review days to master the content of first semester and finally took their exams in silence. "This year feels faster-paced. I am just looking forward to summer again," said Kobe Vo (9).

After the winter break, students returned ready to start fresh. Some students ended up with schedule changes, which presented new challenges, but overall everyone seemed ready to embrace another year and seniors started counting down their final days religiously. Each upper school assembly concluded with a countdown, which made many of the freshmen groan while the seniors cheered.

It was finally 2016. Time to start a new year and prepare for the second half of school.



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# SPRING

## Reflecting and moving forward

Spring is a time for self-reflection and renewal. Luckily, with an outdoor campus comes many opportunities to spend time outside, soaking up the sun and thinking about what a great year it has been.

Eighties day also arrived in the Spring and with it came a lip-sync battle during the pep rally. Students and faculty gave it all they had and performed numbers including "Bye, Bye, Bye", "Wannabe" and "I Will Survive". "It was really random, we just kind of picked our song and then said 'I'll go up here and do this' and 'you go up there and do that,' but it was really fun for us," said Maddy Shetter (12).

The Form 5 students also took to the stage to perform their production, *Museum of Historical Items*. The production is a crowning achievement for Form 5 since it is fully created, written and acted out by the students. Everyone had a memorable time acting out what might happen after hours in a museum.

The San Antonio Rodeo inspires Western Day and all of the Lower School Students took to Lewis Field to Country Western Line dance.

Bishops Day for Upper School brought watermelon relay races, Dollar Menu races and several other activities that pitted the Elliots against the Capers.

Each event made us think about the process that the season of Spring brings, reminding us that it's nearly time to take the next step in our lives. It's just around the corner. Time to get focused and count the days until the end of the year, while having a blast until the end.







# We Are SMH

Go Barons!

Finding "delight in simple things" has a different meaning for every student and faculty member on campus as they step into new roles each year.

For Lower School, this phrase may bring to the mind all of the fun activities at the playground like the swings, slide and monkey bars. In Form One, we are excited for our first year of elementary school. Form Two brings pizza parties and the first big essay. The "Big Chalupa" and "Big Enchilada" fill the Form 3 year with constant studying of multiplication tables and states and their capitals. The best day of Form 4 is the Roman Market, where students buy crafts with their "money" they have earned through class participation. Form 5 is the last year of Lower School, filled with fun events such as the Williamsburg trip, the Underground Railroad game and preparing for Middle School.

For Middle School, in Form 6, The Camp Lonehollow Trip is always a huge hit. In Form 7 students get to study Marine Biology while getting to play on the beach. Times flies and then it is time for Form 8, the year of the Sea World and Step-Up Day, where Form 8 students get the first taste of Upper School.

For Upper School, we all start off as Freshmen, whose eyes are large with curiosity and excitement for our future of the next four years. Sophomore year starts to become comfortable as we find where we belong through classes, friendships, and extracurriculars. Junior year is where APs, college searches and the SAT and ACT consume our lives. These three years then accumulate to Senior Year, where one gets into college and begins a new life.

Each year we mature and these "simple things" take on greater meanings. The list of simple things continues to multiply and grow without bound. This list also varies from student to student. One student's list may consist of holiday parties, art classes and out of uniforms on his or her birthday. Another student's list may include debate tournaments, formal and competing at SPC. Although students differ in their interests, it is nice to know that everyone at Saint Mary's Hall is part of a cohesive community and can be celebrated as unique, at the same time.







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# Seniors

2016

We have been waiting for years and now it is our time to shine. Senior year is marked with the best moments of our high school career, such as Blue Tie and Graduation. Alexis Castro says, "Blue Tie was awesome! I loved the parade and being on a float with my friends."

On Blue Tie Day, we wake up at the crack of dawn to prepare our float. From fire truck hoses, to parents dressed up in gorilla suits, this parade can get pretty crazy and fun. Each float lines up to go around the upper school circle and every senior is shaking with anticipation. We have been waiting for this moment for years, some of us our whole lives. Blue Tie. It's finally here. As soon as the parade starts, seniors begin to break out in water balloon wars with underclassmen, tossing out candy and throwing confetti. After the parade, everyone is soaked from the water balloons and ready to rush to the bathroom to clean up and receive their blue ties.

Once on stage, everyone looks pristine. We have made it. We have our blue ties. It is our time to rule the school. No day is happier for a senior. We are ready. We are present. We are the Class of 2016.

However, although we are rejoicing, it is also a stressful time with college applications, AP classes and the weight of stepping into the challenge of college. This is a year we as a class will all learn who we truly are. Catherine Staskawicz says, "Senior year is fun but it is very stressful as well, with college on the horizon. I am hoping this year will be a positive memory in my life."

After we graduate we will all go to college and discover a new version of ourselves. After we graduate college, life starts to become real with jobs, relationships, taxes and even someday our own kids who will one day be seniors, too. Life is crazy. Senior year is crazy. All that we can do is just buckle up for the ride.



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## The Next Step

Some of us are always anxious for the next step, but maybe it's more important to love where we are in the moment. Saint Mary's Hall allows us to dream big as we move through the ages of our lives, while we take delight in simple things. Always look forward to each day as a Baron. One day you will want to look back to these simple, yet challenging times in your life and you will realize that these days formed your future.



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