The Blue Blazer

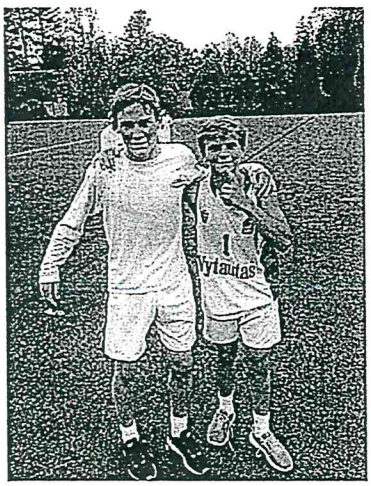
Friday, December 21, 2018

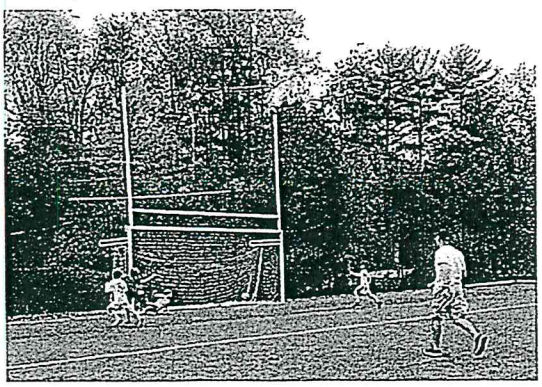
Volume 6 THE EYES AND EARS OF GRIFFINLAND Edition 4, A1

White Christmas!

Heading into two-week break, White team owns early lead in year-long Blue-White competition

TOP: Christian Polis descends the final hill in the second grade Turkey Trot. He finished in first place for second grade and helped lead the White team to a victory in the annual before-Thanksgiving race. BOTTOM (L-R): White team captains Larry Horning and Joey Ries celebrate after White tops Blue in the soccer game, 8-5. Fifth grader Nate Bednarz scores for the White team. Jack Sullivan is lifted up by his fellow eighth graders. Story on Page A3. *Photos by JACK SULLIVAN.*





Inventors, unite!

With engineering unit, Lower School uses models to solve real-world problems

Dear Griffins,

Recently in science, we have been learning about engineering. All the different types and the many ways that they help improve our day-to-day lives.

In class, we broke up into groups: mechanical, military, civil, aerospace, robotic, environmental, and electrical engineers.

We created our very own inventions!

Our goal was to design something that would help people and solve a real-world problem. Each of our creations make the world a better place.

We first had to identify a problem, then we made a plan, sketched a blueprint, and finally built a model of our invention. Our models were built entirely out of recyclable materials that we brought in from home!

We worked and played hard with our teammates and are very proud of our final product.

Although our inventions do not yet exist, maybe future engineers (or Griffins) could make our ideas come to life and make the world a better place.

Sincerely,

1st and 2nd Grade

YOU. DON'T. KNOW. JACK.

Weekly brain teasers, gut busters, and fun compiled by Jack Sullivan

LOGIC PUZZLE: A woman is crossing the street that a big truck is driving down. The truck's headlights are not on, the streetlights are not on, the moon is not out, and none of the surrounding buildings have lights on. When the truck reaches the woman, it stops. How did the truck driver see the woman crossing the street?

RIDDLE 1: I have a city, but no houses. I have rivers, but no water. I have lakes, but no fish. What am I?

RIDDLE 2: I speak with no mouth and hear with no ears. I am nobody, but I exist in open spaces. What am I?

JOKE OF THE WEEK: The teacher looked up and said, "George, I hope I didn't see you looking at Walter's exam!" George replied, "I hope you didn't, either."

Puzzle and riddle answers will appear in the next edition of The Blue Blazer ...

ANSWERS FROM EDITION 3

LOGIC PUZZLE: T (one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten)
RIDDLE 1 A: Make sure it's a match. RIDDLE 2 A:A reflection.

MEETING ... Mr. Oliver

Where are you from? Silver Spring, Maryland.

Where did you go to school? University of Maryland.

Why did you want to teach? I like watching kids grow.

What are some your hobbies? Lacrosse, guitar, Call of Duty Black Ops 4.

What is your favorite food? Tally Ho
Where did you go to high school? Springbrook High School
Where did you go to elementary school? Westover Elementary

-- interview conducted by Patton Gormley, Miles May, and Brendan Sullivan

2018

Turkey Trot

Top 3 finishers by class

1st Grade
Collin Bryan
Connor Bednarz
Keiran Corbett

2nd Grade
Christian Polis
Christian Tomasso
Ryan Arata

3rd Grade
Emmett O'Donnell
Sam Jubb
Oscar Boulanger

4th Grade
Nik Mundy
Danny Weller
Dylan Behrens

5th Grade
Billy Weller
Charlie Tomasso
Joe Tuohey

6A
Lucas Scribner
Jack Mundy
Patrick Kane

6B
Patrick Colbert
Landon Hugo
Brendan Gallagher

7A
Liam Rolle
Jack Sullivan
Freddy Fowler

7B
Devin Geary
Andrew Chaconas
Johnny Gardiner

8A
Mac Christmas
Seamus McNally
Joey Ries

8B
Charlie Taylor
Larry Horning
Colin Burns

-- compiled by Ray Huke

Bednarz's two goals help White blast Blue, 8-5, in spirited soccer match

By JACK SULLIVAN
Senior Editor

After the entire school sang the National Anthem in a display of Griffin unity, everyone was ready for the beginning of the Blue-White season.

White was the heavy favorite; however, following scoreless games for the 1st and 2nd graders, Patton Gormley scored the first goal for Blue during the 3rd grade game, quickly followed by a second goal from Miles May, also of the Blue team -- and it appeared this might be the year for Blue.

White tied the game up with two goals during the 4th grade game by Johnny Willis and Nick Mundy, but Blue scored another goal and felt strong going into the Upper School games.

At that point in the game, Blue captain Mac Christmas said, "I feel great. We're showing great teamwork, and I think we are on course for a win".

His confidence may have stemmed from the several pre-game practices that he hinted the 8th grade Blue team may have held in secret.

The Blue team's energy remained high even after White team 5th grader Nate Bednarz scored two goals in the Upper School opener. The back-and-forth continued when 6th graders William Harper (White) and Patrick Colbert (Blue) scored goals.

White captain Larry Horning said of the Blue team, "They have no teamwork and are poorly led."

Going into the 7th grade game, the tension was so thick you could cut it with a knife. To break it, the 8th grade White team created a human gym and bench-pressed each-other. Defense was at a premium in the 7th grade games, with only one goal tallied, scored by White team member Johnny Gardiner.

In the 8th grade game, the White team strengthened their lead to 7-4 with a goal by White captain Joey Ries. The 8th grade Blue team tried to mount a comeback, with Christmas scoring a goal to cut into the lead, however, White answered with a goal of their own for a final score of 8-5.

The White team victory proved once again that they are the dominant force in Blue-White soccer.

After the game ended, Blue team students had much to say, especially about Mr. Bednarz's "obviously biased calls".

"The real problem would be if they were not complaining," Mr. Dugan said.

Said Mr. Gerrish: "Though the White team may have won the scoreboard war, the Blue team definitely won the spirit war",

Said Mr. Meert: "Though we may treasure them, spirit victories do not count on the field."

Overall, this year's Blue-White soccer game was a great showing of Mater Dei spirit.

A Kiwi holiday hello
from two Griffins in New Zealand!

By LUCAS IRWIN
Foreign Correspondent

As a first grader at Mater Dei, I was really excited to have Mrs. Ellen Zugel as my 2nd grade teacher. I had heard from lots of 2nd graders (now 8th graders,) and the other teachers at Mater Dei about her. But unfortunately, I was in the first class to not have her after she left. I knew she had moved to New Zealand, but I didn't know why.

There definitely were some things that had never been explained or understood about her move to New Zealand, for me at least. For example: why did she choose New Zealand for her trip, why did she stay, and how were things over there?

And, as it turns out, since she lives so close to Gisborne (where I am living with my family this year), so I figured – why not go get the answers for myself? Also, I thought it would cool to meet her. Here's the interview I recently did with Mrs. Zugel (it starts off after we've said hello and sat down to talk).

Lucas Irwin: *I was hoping you could tell me more about your life in New Zealand, your work, where you live in NZ, your husband, and just how things have been for you? How did you end up here?*
Ellen Zugel: Well, I wasn't actually planning on staying, which is kind of the funny thing to begin with; I was going to come here for nine months and help a friend of a friend, Malcolm (who is now my husband), with the busy season at his lodge. I was going to use this as my "home base" to travel around New Zealand. But obviously, I ended up really liking New Zealand (and my husband), so I have become a partner with him in running his lodge in Napier, New Zealand.

LI: *Why did you pick New Zealand for your sabbatical?* **EZ:** I was originally going to go to Africa and had been there before; but I couldn't go for as long to Africa, and it was going to cost me more money. I also had a friend who was staying with Malcolm at the time, and as we were talking, I asked if Malcolm still needed some help, which he did. And that's how I ended up going to New Zealand instead of Africa.

LI: *What were some major differences between the U.S. and New Zealand that you noticed when you first arrived?* **EZ:** That they don't really use the short "e" in words, so yes is said like yees and come sit down at my desk sounds like deesk. Also, there's no real Mexican food here, I think mainly because NZ's not right on Mexico's border like the U.S. is.

Lucas Irwin's interview with former Mater Dei teacher Mrs. Zugel is continued on page A4.

An interview with Mrs. Zugel, continued from A5:

LI: Right, they don't have Chipotle or really any sort of Mexican food, which stinks. **EZ:** You also can't find a medium rare burger, and there's really no such thing as a milkshake; their thick shakes are just not the same!

LI: What are some of your favorite memories from Mater Dei? I'm sure you think of the school often. **EZ:** All the time! And I tell stories on a pretty continuous basis. I miss my boys most of all, and I had really fabulous teachers to work with. But we really did have a lot of fun in the classroom, and I had my dog in the class.

LI: I heard there were a lot of pets in your class! **EZ:** Yes, we also had a rabbit, who was fine with the dog, so we would sometimes let it wander around and follow me down and back to the Xerox machine, but he was the oldest bunny EVER because he was supposed live 5-7 years and instead went on to live to 14! But I was definitely the dumping ground for pets that were acquired without parental discussions.

LI: What do you think is/are your favorite memories from Mater Dei? **EZ:** My kids, really, I miss being in the class with my kids. I really enjoyed teaching Religion in second grade because I think a lot of boys at that age are not as advanced in their thinking, and they had some really deep questions about getting First Communion and Reconciliation. And I loved helping them through that process. I didn't have all of the answers, so we'd have a list of Father Bill questions that we would ask Father Bill.

It was awesome meeting with Mrs. Zugel, and she really misses all of you at Mater Dei. The name of their lodge is the Breckenridge Lodge, and they have a website, if you want to see more information about it.
I'll check back in later in the school year with more info and stories about my adventures in NZ! – Lucas

Fifth grader Polis wins Caulfield Award

BY BILLY CANNON
Editor in Chief

The Halloween Parade at Mater Dei, once again, consisted of an exciting assortment of characters throughout Grades 1-8. In the 1st grade, there was a giant pool party supervised by Mater Dei's very own Mr. Oliver. In the 2nd grade, a few Washington Capitals took home the top prize, with some toy soldiers and the MD Class of 1960 joining them on the podium.

In 3rd grade, Dora the Explorer and her pal Diego snatched first place, followed by Mater Dei Mall-Walkers and Dumb and Dumber.

In Grade 4, Back to the Future was top, and fast-food restaurants and Share a Coke finished second and third.

The Upper School's youngest class saw a Transformer, a Scuba team, and the Iditarod land in the top three. Sixth grade was won by Mr. Bob Ross, followed by Pringles and a Peloton instructor. Seventh grade kept it up with the best of Will Ferrell, a cast of characters from The Office, and Hell on Wheels.

The eighth graders' last Halloween parade was a good one, with Fortnite skins taking home the top prize. In second was a "Dilly, Dilly" skit. Taking third was another skit, this one involving a Mater Dei mom walking right past the sign warning them about the "Walk of Shame."

But when all was said and done, Constantine Polis and his Transformer in the fifth grade won the Caulfield Award. Polis said later that the costume took him about 60 hours to make.

Fifth grader Constantine Polis poses in his homemade Transformer costume, which won the Caulfield Award. Beside him is the Caulfield Family, after whom the annual Mater Dei Halloween award is named.

JOIN THE BLUE BLAZER

WE WANT YOU!

- A Chance to Contribute to the Mater Dei Community
- An Easy Workload
- Come to Griffin Hall at Lunch on Wednesdays
- All Griffins are Welcome!

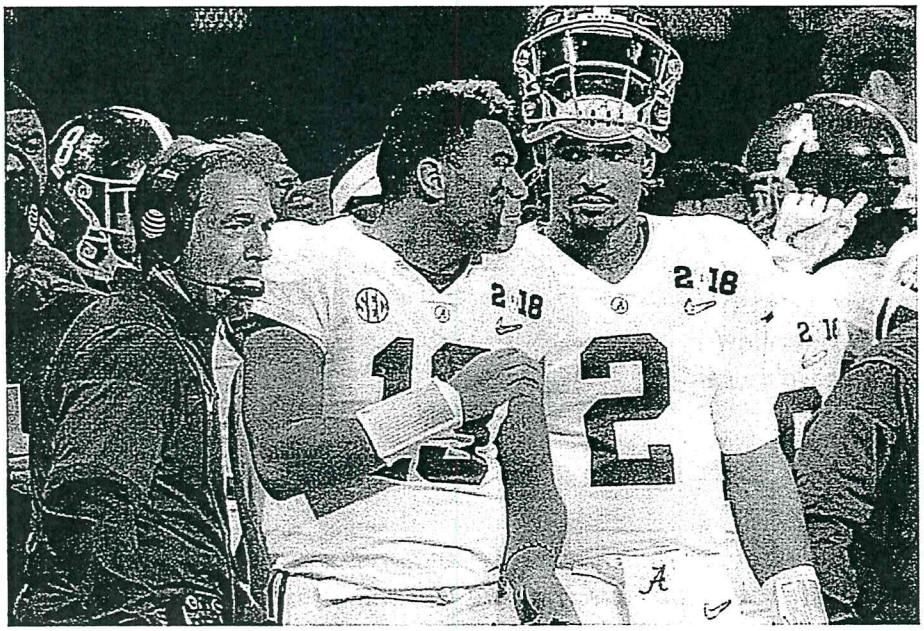
BE THE EYES AND EARS OF GRIFFINLAND!

'Bout to be 'Bama (again)

By BILLY CANNON
Editor in Chief

Well, the votes are in, and after the dust has settled on another college football season, the 12-person College Football Playoff committee has decided on its four teams: Alabama, Clemson, Notre Dame, and Oklahoma.

The committee has excluded the Pac-12 Conference and the Big 10 Conference from this year's playoff, and, more and more, there is clamor to expand the playoff to eight, or even 16 teams. The Big Ten champion, Ohio State, finished the season ranked sixth in the nation after a one-loss campaign, and the Pac-12 champion, the Washington Huskies, finished just inside the top ten of the final College Football Playoff poll. Other exclusions include two-loss Georgia and undefeated UCF, who, at 25 games, holds the nation's longest win streak. They will look to keep that alive in the Fiesta Bowl against LSU.



NOTABLE BOWL GAMES

Peach Bowl: 10 Florida vs. 7 Michigan

Fiesta Bowl: 11 LSU vs. 8 UCF

Rose Bowl: 9 Washington vs. 6 Ohio State

First Responder Bowl: 25 Boise State vs. Boston College

Camping World Bowl: 16 West Virginia vs. 20 Syracuse

Pinstripe Bowl: Miami vs. Wisconsin

Camping World Bowl: 20 Syracuse vs. 16 West Virginia

Holiday Bowl: 22 Northwestern vs. 17 Utah

Citrus Bowl: 14 Kentucky vs. 12 Penn State

In the first CFP matchup, Heisman winner Kyler Murray leads fourth-ranked Oklahoma against Heisman runner-up Tua Tagovailoa (pictured above with Jalen Hurts (2) and coach Nick Saban) and the No. 1-ranked Alabama Crimson Tide. Murray is Oklahoma's second straight Heisman winner (Baker Mayfield won it last year), but he plans to pursue a career in the MLB (he was the Athletics' first round pick). In what could possibly be the final football game of his career, he looks to lead the Sooners to an upset over the dominant Crimson Tide. The Crimson Tide defense has allowed less than 31 points in every game this year, and in that game against Arkansas, the Tide put up 65 points. I predict the Tide to roll over the Sooners, 48-36.

The second game is what everyone is talking about. The second-ranked Clemson Tigers, ACC champions, take the field against the undefeated, third-ranked Notre Dame Fighting Irish. Notre Dame does not have a conference, and, therefore, is not a conference champion. But the duo of QB Ian Book and running back Dexter Williams has allowed Notre Dame to stomp on teams such as then-11th-ranked Syracuse, 36-3. Freshman quarterback Trevor Lawrence leads the Tigers, as well as running back Travis Etienne, perhaps the best back in the nation. I predict a great, well-fought game, and the Tigers will come out on top, 37-35.

The national championship game will, once again, feature Clemson and Alabama. After last year's Alabama-Georgia championship game, the rivalry that occupied the two championship games before that will take center stage once more. Over the past three years, Alabama leads 2-1; the two teams clashed in the semifinal last year. I predict that running back Damien Harris will have a breakout game for the Tide, but will be equally matched by Clemson's Etienne. Clemson boasts a monstrous defensive line including Clelin Ferrell and Christian Wilkins, but the rushing (and passing) skill of Tagovailoa will be too much for Clemson. Alabama will win, 44-38.

Pope Francis: "May we be surprised by Jesus this Christmas"

VATICAN CITY – Make space for wonder and surprise this Christmas, Pope Francis urged Wednesday, explaining that the first Christmas had many surprises – including that God came into the world as a tiny baby.

The Blessed Virgin Mary was surprised by the Angel Gabriel at the Annunciation and Joseph was surprised by the angel in his dream, which told him to take Mary as his wife, the pope said Dec. 19.

To welcome the Savior there are no powerful people, no ambassadors, just simple shepherds, surprised by the angels while working at night.

"But it is on the night of Christmas that the biggest surprise comes: The Most High is a small child," he said. "To celebrate Christmas, then, is to welcome the surprises of Heaven on earth."

Speaking at his weekly general audience, Pope Francis reflected on the surprising elements of Christ's birth, and the way each Catholic can replicate the feelings at the first Christmas in his or her heart by making room for silence.

"Christmas is preferring the silent voice of God to the noisiness of consumerism. If we can be silent in front of the crib, Christmas will be a surprise even for us, not something seen before," he said.

"Be silent in front of the nativity," he advised. "This is an invitation for Christmas, take some time. Go before the nativity and stay in silence."

Francis noted that since the beginning of Advent, the Gospel warned against becoming weighed down by the "anxieties of daily life." "These days we rush, maybe as we never have during the year. But this is the opposite of what Jesus wants," he said.

We blame the fast-pace of the world, but Jesus did not blame the world; Jesus asked his followers to keep watch and pray.

It is easy to get wrapped up in consumerism and in parties this time of year, preferring "the usual things of the earth over the news of Heaven," he warned. "If Christmas is just a nice traditional holiday, where we are at the center and not Him, it will be a lost opportunity."

We will celebrate Christmas well, "if, like Joseph, we will give space to silence; if, like Mary, we say 'here I am' to God; if, like Jesus, we will be close to those who are alone; if, like the shepherds, we will leave our enclosures to be with Jesus," Pope Francis said.

"It will be Christmas, if we find the light in the poor cave of Bethlehem."

On the other hand, he stated, it will not be Christmas if people look only for the "shimmering glow of the world," filling themselves with presents and fancy meals, but do not help "at least one poor man."

"Christmas is the payback of humility over arrogance, of simplicity over abundance, of silence over hubbub, of prayer over 'my time,' of God over my ego," he said.

"Every one of us has, hidden in our heart, the capacity to be surprised. May we be surprised by Jesus this Christmas."

-- Catholic News Agency