

Hilton Sampson - Portfolio submission, Designer of the Year

The cover of our March issue died several dozen times before it lived.

Each iteration felt promising in the moment marked with bold typography, a striking photo treatment or an aggressive use of spot color. Then, the next morning would reveal its flaws under fresh eyes. Back to the drawing board. Again and again. The files on my desktop with abandoned designs grew so numerous it became difficult to navigate the home screen without losing myself. But somewhere amidst these dozens of renditions, something shifted. Our editorial team began to voice their thoughts, our advisor, Jenny Creech, offered redirects and new layout ideas, fellow editors contributed ideas that sparked new directions, each voice adding a layer I couldn't have conceived alone. And suddenly, after too many files to count, we had created a cover we could all be proud of, filled with details that could be traced back to each member of our editorial staff. That cover taught me a fundamental truth about design: collaboration is the most crucial aspect of creation.

When I first opened Adobe InDesign as a freshman, I saw chaos. Infinite menus, mysterious tools, panels that seemed designed to intimidate. The grid system felt like a prison rather than a foundation. I found myself most frequently navigating to the "Help" bar. But overtime, as my competency grew, these tools became a second language, a way to organize not just layouts, but ideas themselves.

The ReMarker's visual identity didn't emerge overnight. It evolved through hundreds of small decisions: adjusting margins by millimeters, testing font pairings until they felt inevitable, balancing photography with text until each page purposefully captured the reader's attention. Every issue taught me that good design is invisible—readers should never notice the grid, only feel its clarity. Under Jenny Creech's guidance, my knowledge of newspaper design blossomed. She taught me to trust the grid system while knowing when to break it, to understand that white space isn't empty but purposeful, that typography carries emotional weight beyond mere readability. Her approach of questioning every design choice until its purpose grew self-evident, while occasionally time consuming for me to honor, transformed my process from guesswork into intentional decision-making. In seeing readers interact with our publication, I've learned that good design creates connection—between reader and story, between visual and verbal. When a carefully crafted infographic clarifies a complex issue, when a thoughtful photo placement enhances rather than interrupts the narrative flow, when typography choices make dense articles feel approachable—that's when design truly becomes communication.

Working on the newspaper taught me to think systematically while remaining flexible, to honor tradition while embracing change. Every spread required balancing competing needs: artistic vision and practical limitations. And though working amongst high schoolers as peers and critics initially appeared daunting, the feedback of both my fellow staff members and Jenny taught me that critique isn't criticism—it's the collaborative process of making good work better. These skills extend far beyond the newsroom. Design thinking—approaching problems through iteration, considering the user experience—has shaped how I approach challenges across disciplines. The precision required in layout work has influenced my writing. The collaborative nature of creating cohesive issues has improved my teamwork. The responsibility of visual communication has further shown me the extent to which design shapes perception.

Design is decision-making made visible. Every choice—from font selection to photo placement—communicates something important, something we choose to share. Yet at the same time, the best design doesn't call attention to itself. It amplifies the message, clarifies the story, and just like our collaborative design process born from the collective insights of our entire staff, ultimately invites our readers into a conversation that extends far beyond the printed page.

I created a few shell designs early in the year for our section fronts. This was one of them - The vertical design is inviting to the reader and allows our staff to highlight our top story in the section, a column or secondary story and several other menu items. These section fronts hopefully invite people into each section with a sense of what they will experience on the following pages.

ISSUES

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 27, 2024

ST. MARK'S SCHOOL OF TEXAS

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NEWS IN BRIEF

CHOIR EVENSONG Led by Glenn Stroh, the first choir Evensong of the school year took place at school Sept. 15, which began with an organ recital then transitioned into the choir's main program. The choir's repertoire included Process and Responses, the Magnificat and Nunc dimittis. Looking ahead into the near future, the choir will sing the national anthem before the Homecoming football game on Oct. 4.

MCDONALD'S WEEK LEADERSHIP The week before Thanksgiving Break, students have the opportunity to visit the school's local McDonald's and grow closer as a community. For the junior class, McDonald's Week is an opportunity for the grade to bond through teamwork. There are several designated groups working under the guidance of Weston Chance, Sam Blumenthal and Dilan Kogantl, who lead the McDonald's Week Council.

COMMUNITY SERVICE The Clothing Drive collected new or gently-used clothing for donation to St. Vincent de Paul and North Dallas Shared Ministries from Sept. 9-20. Clothing items included baby's, women's, kids' and men's clothes. This year, pickup locations included the Lower School Circle, in front of Nearburg and the student parking lot. The initiative encouraged students to declutter their closets and donate to communities.

HEADLINES

Reviewing this month's news from around the world

WHAT HAPPENED: Alleged assassination attempt on former President Donald Trump.

WHEN: Sept. 15

RELEVANCE: As investigations are ongoing, Ryan Wesley Routh's alleged assassination attempt on Trump sparked scrutiny on gun laws.

WHAT HAPPENED: SpaceX's Polaris Dawn crew concludes historic spacewalk mission.

WHEN: Sept. 10-15

RELEVANCE: As the first-ever private spacewalk, this Polaris mission aimed to conduct research on human health during spaceflight.

FIVE MINUTES WITH

**Drama Instructor
Katy Tye**



"Some people like to do improv, generally, in class, and it's a different way to be creative than I think people are used to when compared to other arts like drawing or ceramics. Improv is asking your brain to think outside the box."

"I really like to let students kind of come up with their own stuff. A lot of directors are very 'you go here and do this and do that.' I don't like to do that, because I like to see what the students come up with, and when they're like, 'Oh, it feels really cool to cross that line.'"

"Theater is a collaborative art, and I think students are told too often how to create art instead of being encouraged to explore it in theater."

Zyn drives new nicotine craze

With a rise in Zyn usage amongst teens, these addictive nicotine pouches have led to calls for increased regulation, health concerns and public awareness.



With increasing concerns about the consequences that these nicotine pouches may have, experts warn about its nature and long-term impacts.

BY JOSHUA GOFORTH AND RONIT KONGARA

Fifty years ago, it was common to see students smoking and sharing cigarettes in school, the parking lot, parties or in any other social settings. Today, smoking has fallen out of style -- students half a century ago lived on the tail end of the age of widespread smoking, as eye-opening articles such as the Surgeon General's 1964 report linked cigarettes directly to an early onset of lung cancer and heart disease. According to the CDC, the percentage of adult smoking in the U.S. between 1965 and 2019 fell from 42 percent to 14.2 percent. But even as cigarettes disappear, nicotine has found a way to stay around.

The latest trend in the nicotine industry has spread like wildfire throughout the United States: oral nicotine pouches, meant to be placed between the gum and upper lip. One of the most popular brands of these pouches is Zyn. Though marketed exclusively for ages 21 and up, Zyn has made its way into the hands of teenagers, with around 400,000 adolescents nationwide using nicotine patches, according to the 2023 National Youth Tobacco Survey.

Upper School Counselor Dr. Mary Bonsu is no stranger to nicotine products and their effects on teens and young adults. As a member of the Marksmen Wellness Center Team, Bonsu has dealt with students struggling with nicotine addictions in the past, especially from vapes, and has educated students on such products through Health and Wellness classes.

"It's habit forming," Bonsu said. "The brain starts rewarding the person for using nicotine, and the more the reward systems are strengthened and the brain structures that are responsible for cognition, memory and emotion are damaged, the more easily people can form a dependence on it."

SEE **NICOTINE** ON PAGE 7

Student voters shape elections

BY CHRISTOPHER GUFFEY

As the Nov. 5 election approaches, student engagement in voting grows.

For Amy Peck, Parent's Association Voter Registration Chair and St. Mark's parent, ensuring that eligible students exercise their civic duty is of utmost importance.

Being the mother of a senior who is eligible to vote, Peck observed that in addition to her son's impending college decisions, this election has sparked a newfound interest in politics.

"The combination of this huge election year, plus the fact that Oliver is a senior and looking at colleges and being thoughtful about where he wants to go after St. Mark's, is causing him to be a little bit thoughtful about what's going on in the world, in our country and in our state," Peck said.

A student's vote is no more or less important and impactful than that of an adult in America. Peck said she believes it is crucial for students to take this election seriously and fully use their right to vote.

"It is your civic duty as an American," Peck said. "Many people around the world would love to trade places with an eligible voter here in the U.S. just to be able to live in a democracy that works. Our democracy only works if people show up to cast their vote. So we get what we get, and it's 100 percent dependent on participation."

For Peck, voting is an act that becomes easier and more habitual the more you partake in it.

She said she believes that beginning the voting process as early as high school can build a foundation for good voting habits in the future.

"Voting begets voting; it's a little bit like going to the gym," Peck said.

However, this election isn't just for the president. Students and voters alike will be given the option to vote people into various levels of government.

"You're not just choosing the president, you're choosing our senators," Peck said. "You're choosing all of your congressional representatives. Texas legislative people and even judges are on the ballot. It's an opportunity to vote for a whole lot of people who collectively impact how we govern in Dallas, in Texas and in the United States."

Local races also are on the ballot. "Other candidates for smaller positions deserve considerable amounts of attention too, because they will affect the current generation's parents and even this generation further down the line," Peck said. "It's the people toward the bottom of the ballot that actually impact your every day, your neighborhood, your county and your precinct, more than whoever is senator or president."

However, many new and unfamiliar names on the ballot can sometimes be daunting for many first-time voters, especially for students who aren't well-informed.

"You can't just show up on Election Day and wing it," Peck said. "There are a lot of names on the ballot, and you don't want to waste your vote if you don't know who you're voting for."

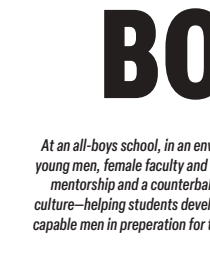
Peck emphasizes the importance of students being well-informed and making thoughtful decisions when casting their ballots.

In addition, she said she believes students should ensure they digest news information from reputable sources.

"Social media is not a valid news source. I would encourage everybody who's voting to go to real, trusted news sources and not through social media," Peck said.

REMARKER

FRIDAY, MARCH 7, 2025 • VOLUME 71, ISSUE 5 • ST. MARK'S SCHOOL OF TEXAS • DALLAS, TEXAS



As pictured clockwise from Top Left: Dr. GayMarie Vaughan, Isabel Cisneros, Lauren Logan, Dr. Mary Bonsu, Janet Lin, Nancy Marmion, Danielle Maxfield, Dr. Gabby Reed, Marion Glorioso-Kirby, Suzanne Townsend, Veronica Pulido and Lorre Allen. Photo Illustration by Hilton Sampson, Winston Lin, Matthew Hofmann, Joseph Sun and Peter Clark

BY HILTON SAMPSON, LINYANG LEE,
MATTHEW HOFMANN AND DOAN NGUYEN

As hundreds of Marksmen in their grey shorts and Oxford short-sleeve shirts flood the hallways between classes, Middle School math instructor Lauren Logan corrects loud behavior in the Centennial second-floor lounge.

Just downstairs, through the sound of rolling backpacks rumbling across tiled floors, Victor F. White Master Teaching Chair Dr. GayMarie Vaughan navigates a complex discussion about domestic violence statistics in Dallas County.

Down the hall, removed from the echoes of cheerful hallway banter, Upper

School Counselor Dr. Mary Bonsu listens as a student seeks advice about his first serious relationship.

Across campus, beyond the students engaging in rambunctiously competitive Spikeball games on the quad, Chief Financial Officer Suzanne Townsend sits in Nearburg, reviewing budget expenses that will shape the school's future.

Amongst the boys of 10600 Preston Road, women form an influential minority whose impact extends far beyond their numbers, shaping young men who will soon enter a world where gender diversity isn't the exception—it's the expectation.

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ON THE WEB

Visit smremarker.com for more exclusive content

- Marksmen Multicultural Night video
- Tennis team's first match on new courts
- Latin Certamen team tournament



In early February, our school opened a new athletic complex. We produced an 8-page special section insert into our February paper. We had a few days to get photos of athletes using the facility before we had to turn around for publishing. Since we've covered the building and what it would entail in terms of facilities, it was important to me to show athletes in the building for the first time. Our photographer caught this photo and I designed around it. The yellow spot color is great for the school uniforms and the front of the building is screened in the spot on the bottom - which is a design element I used throughout the section.

REMARKER ZIERK ATHLETIC CENTER

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 7, 2025 • ST. MARK'S SCHOOL OF TEXAS • DALLAS, TEXAS



Senior Luke Laczkowski finishes at the rim, scoring the first basket in the new Hicks Gym with a slam dunk.

Photo by Winston Lin

ZIERK ATHLETIC CENTER

The Zierk Athletic Center is one of the largest campus development projects in school history, made possible through the generous support of more than 100 community members. The project, progressing swiftly from its ground-breaking in May 2023, was completed just nine months after the topping-off ceremony in April 2024. On Jan. 21, trustees, alumni, parents, donors and project partners gathered to celebrate this immense milestone. The complex stands as a testament to the school's commitment to athletic development and excellence.

850
gymnasium seating capacity

12
swimming lanes

5
new athlete locker rooms

8
acres of campus

77,000
square feet

6
tennis courts

INSIDE REVAMPED SECURITY OFFICES, TENNIS COURTS PAGE 2 FIRST LOOK AT NEW AND IMPROVED LOCKER ROOMS PAGE 3 FIRST GAME ON TOM ADAMS COURT IN HICKS GYM PAGE 4-5 SENIOR NIGHT AT THE LEVERING POOL PAGE 6-7