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Senior Danny Koudelka p. 23



THIRD GRADE TEACHER FRANK JORDAN

I find that the school is a lot like a family. I'm teaching children of my former students.

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It's all in the family

THE START OF THE 2013 SCHOOL YEAR BEGAN WITH A RECORD NUMBER OF APPLICATIONS, 12 NEW FACULTY MEMBERS AND 111 NEW STUDENTS. LOOKS LIKE SCHOOL IS BACK IN ACTION.



PARKER MATTHEWS PHOTO

Five hundred and ninety one students — a record number — applied for enrollment here for the current school year according to Admission Office figures. That number represents applicants from 22 different states and 11 countries.

Admission Director David Baker cites the quality of education as a motivating factor for the record number of applicants.

"I believe our school community does an excellent job of telling the St. Mark's story," Baker said. "Overwhelmingly, families applying for admission to St. Mark's list 'current St. Mark's family' as their most significant source of information. While I do not know the motivation for each family, I do believe St. Mark's is a good investment regardless of economic trends."

A total of 851 students are enrolled this year — 111 coming from the applicants. Traditionally, the first grade class is the smallest, 32 students. Here is some advice given to the newest members of the Marksmen family, from some of their fourth grade counterparts.

► by **Daniel Hersh**, editor-in-chief and **Will Moor**, managing editor

BROTHERLY LOVE In the opening convocation Aug. 28, second grader Sebastian Scheiner embraces first grader Carter Mank during the opening hymn. The two lower schoolers were among the 851 students showing up for the first day of classes.

What was first grade like?

It's like you guys are my brothers from another mother. From lots of other mothers. — Antonio Quiñones

What's it like having new kids join your grade?

We had new kids, and we had to like adopt them into the St. Mark's family. — Josh Mysoré

Any advice on the cafeteria?

Watch out for running older people. They were just storming through the building, crashing through doors. — Mustafa Latif

On senior buddies?

On your first meeting with your senior buddy, don't call him a jerk even if he messes up your Lego project. — John Hubbard

On the school uniforms?

I loved it cause when I was at my old school, I spent probably 30 minutes just picking out what shorts I was going to wear. — Antonio Quiñones

It's cool at first, but then later through the year, it gets a little bit annoying. For me, my shirt would always come untucked, just at random times. So like five times a day, I had to tuck my shirt back in. — Cooper Ribman

On teachers?

Whenever you find a strict teacher, I'm not going to put any names down, but if you don't do what they say, boy are you in trouble. — Van Avayzian

I think some teachers try to act like they're scary and strict, but they don't do a very good job of it. — Beto Beveridge

On friendship?

If you have a best friend, you have to stick with him. You can't just like say one day, 'Hey I don't like you anymore buddy, so I'm leaving.' — Josh Mysoré

Even if you're best buds with someone, you don't always want to sit next to them. You don't always want them to chat with you. — Henry McElhaneey

On girls?

Run away from them. Don't pay attention to them. Next question. — Josh Mysoré

Avoid girls if you can, after a year they could easily dump you. — Abe Echt

What if you like a girl?

Wait. Can you please ask me a reasonable question? — Cooper Ribman

Centennial Challenge campaign nears \$100 million mark

By **Alex Munoz**
Copy Editor

THE CENTENNIAL CHALLENGE, A fundraising campaign targeting the development of Centennial Hall, the Robert K. Hoffman Center, faculty teaching positions and financial aid, is in its last year and is approaching its end date, June 30.

In its final year to raise its goal of \$110 million, the campaign will have stretched over more than three years since its public launch in fall 2009.

"There were several years of planning before that [its public launch] so it's a very long and complex process," Assistant Headmaster David Dini said. "We have never raised anywhere near the amount of money that we have up to this point. Nor have many other schools. On a relative scale, it's certainly one of the larger campaigns of its size and scope from a school of our kind."

Besides the construction of new buildings, the most targeted area of the Centennial Challenge is the development of the Master Teaching Chair Program, with a goal of \$20 million. Its effect has already been felt with the establishment of two new Master Teaching Chairs in the last two years.

"It has given us the ability to not only recruit teachers from other places to come here but also to promote our own teachers to those positions," Dini said.

Even many years after they graduate, alums choose to donate money to the school.

"I think it's the alums' relationships with their teachers," Dini said. "There's also a common bond that is shared among alumni here given the strength of the programs here and the strength of the overall experience here."

It was designed to reinforce the mission and focus on the teachers.

ASSISTANT HEADMASTER DAVID DINI

The goal of the campaign was not to change this common experience but to support its already existing benefits.

"It was really designed to strengthen the things we already had," Dini said. "It wasn't designed to change the mission of the school in any way. It was designed to reinforce the mission and focus on the teachers."

Although the fundraiser did not alter the mission of the school, it brought the community together.

"We're paying greater attention to what our aspirations are as a school and I think it's laid a good foundation for us for the future," Dini said. "When we started talking about a campaign of this magnitude, it seemed in many ways unachievable because the dollars were so great."

After lots of sacrifice and commitment, however, the fundraiser's success shows the school's success through ambition.

"It reinforces for us, as we look to the future, that when we have ambitious goals that with determination and hard work, we can achieve those goals — with good planning," Dini said. "If you do your homework and you're prepared just like you are in any class, and you're willing to sacrifice and put in the effort to do it and do it right, the sky is the limit."

Ready, set, go

Four weeks of thrills and spills await

At the end of every summer, Texans flock to Fair Park to eat fried food, play games on the Midway, go on rides and eat some more fried food. But how does it all come together?

Arts Editor Dylan Clark toured Fair Park three weeks ago with its president, Errol McKoy. For the past 25 years, his job has been to innovate, organize and make everything work for the biggest fair in the world.

Here's a behind-the-scenes look at the 126th State Fair, through the words of president McKoy:

Preparation is vital—year round. We're really preparing year round for the fair; it's such a large undertaking. Our permanent staff numbers about 40 people, and we'll start designing the next fair right when this one is over. The biggest challenge is getting enough people to help us assemble it. During the fair, we have 5,000 people working here.

More money than Disney World. On a typical Saturday night, we average around 250,000 people. Overall the fair generates about \$70 million in gross revenues, and that's really the way we look at our overall performance. In the month of October, the fair will generate more revenue than the biggest amusement park in the country: Disney World in Orlando. Our goal is to try to have a ten percent net profit, and we are able to plow that back into the next fair and building improvements in Fair Park. Over the last ten years, we've put back almost \$100 million into Fair Park. We take a city asset and make it better.

Giving back to students. Our charter says the State Fair exists to help promote agriculture and education, so we really work hard on those two things. We use part of our proceeds to provide scholarships. We gave out about 80 scholarships to high school students in the Metroplex last

year, and over the last 10 years we've put about \$20 million back into scholarships for students all over the city.

Longest party of the year. One of the keys is that we have 6.5 million people in the area. That's how we're able to generate the huge numbers we do. We're very proactive, and we try to keep the fair relevant by doing things that will continue to bring more and more people to Fair Park. We do everything we can to make this the longest — and best — party of the year.

The food lives up to the hype. I have to say my favorite food this year is the fried jambalaya. We had 50 submissions, and we had to select eight of them to go on to the finals. The fried jambalaya won, and it is going to be a huge success. [Most creative dish? The fried bacon cinnamon roll.]

The nightlife is back. We're lighting all up and down First Avenue, creating an electric boulevard of lights for nighttime. Our theme this year is "Big and Bright," and it's kind of a nighttime theme. We're doing that because the Chinese Lantern Festival is going to be such a key ingredient, and we're adding all the LED lights in Midway to make the biggest light and music show — ever.

A birthday fit for Big Tex. We are going to have some special treats for Texas. This is Tex's 60th, the Girl Scouts 100th, and its fair 126, so we've got some key dates to celebrate. But yes, we do have a couple of interesting little things for Big Tex that you'll hear about in days to come.

It all comes together. I like the design part of the fair. It's very rewarding for me to see the fruits of my labor come to fruition. To see it all come together on opening day is very rewarding.



MAKING IT HAPPEN People have been hard at work for weeks to get the fair ready for millions of visitors. After the fair ends, workers will come back in the month-long teardown of the Fair.

QUICK FAIR FACTS

- Fair opens today, runs through Oct. 31.
- Tickets are \$16 per day.
- Student tickets — good for Oct. 19 only — are available from Upper School and Middle School offices. They are free. No classes are scheduled that day, due to the St. Mark's Debate Tournament.



NOT THERE YET One of the most popular rides sits on the ground, waiting to be propped up.

MANLY STUFF

Here are five things any red-blooded male shouldn't miss at this year's State Fair, according to president McKoy:

1. Auto Show

"That's a guy thing, and we're going to have a lot of high performance cars in there. It's definitely going to be a highlight."

2. Midway

"We're going to have five new really actionable rides that will be premiering on the Midway, so there'll be some new things there."

3. Food

"I don't care whether you're 16, 17 or 76, you're still going to like the food. Our fried food is the best there is."

4. Laser Light Show

"Teens are going to really enjoy the nighttime activities at the fair this year, not only here but all around the fair."

5. Football games

"Texas vs. Oklahoma will be great — if you can get tickets."

WHAT'S NEW THIS YEAR?

- **Chinese Lantern Festival** 50 Chinese workers have been assembling this nighttime attraction for the last three weeks.
- **Top of Texas Tower** This 500 foot tower will be the tallest ride in the country, coming in May 2013.
- **Amusement Park** Also coming in May of next year, and running throughout the summer, Fair Park will have a 'cheaper, miniature Six Flags' to visit throughout the lazy summer months.

STATE FAIR story by Dylan Clark, arts editor | photos by Parker Matthews and Corbin Walp, staff photographers

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Photographers explore Asia, prepare for this year

By **Vikram Pattabi**

Staff Writer

ON A 13 DAY TRIP THROUGH Cambodia and Laos, 11 photography students, led by photography instructor Scott Hunt, traveled in search of experiences and the perfect photo.

The group, made of seniors Charles Thompson and Carl Dickson, juniors Halbert Bai, Max Wolens, Riley Graham, Blake Robins, Richard Eiseman and Andrew Gatherer and sophomores Robert Keeler, Mason Smith and Andrew Merchant, left for Cambodia on May 31. The trip included visits to both Angkor Wat and the Khmer Rouge Killing Fields in Cambodia and a boat trip up the Mekong River to Laos.

"Going to the school where the Khmer Rouge held prisoners before

killing them was a very powerful experience, very heart wrenching," Hunt said. "Being in an environment we're all so used to being a school with chalkboards and so on, you realize that these were the very rooms where people were tortured and killed and held against their will. Very powerful experience."

But the group shared other powerful experiences on the trip.

"The Angkor Hospital for Children was especially moving," Bai said. "Although we weren't allowed to take photographs in the hospital, our guide told us about the facility and their services."

Having led several similar trips in past years, Hunt believes they serve a purpose beyond providing great pictures.

"It's experiential education," he

said. "An opportunity for them to have experiences that will shape who they are and what's important, how other people live and how fortunate many of them are."

Hunt expects an exhibit of the trip in Nearburg Hall after Thanksgiving Break.

Meanwhile, the award winning program is also getting ready for the Association of Texas Photography Instructors (ATPI) fall contest and the upcoming Young Arts Competition.

The ATPI contest, which includes 17 categories, varying from nature shots to smartphone images, is open to students of all grades, while the Young Arts contest, which feeds into the Presidential Scholars program, is only open to sophomores through seniors.