



REMARKER
STUDENT
NEWSPAPER

NEWS Habitat
for Humanity
houses p. 7



ARTS Senior
Hansen Kuo at
Purple Cow p. 13



SPORTS Fresh-
man Caleb
Crowe p. 20



PRESIDENT GEORGE W. BUSH
I think the largest goal is to
provide space and support
for an institute that will be
an action-oriented place
based upon principles
that will have a long-
term effect on improving
humanity. **Page 18**

ST. MARK'S SCHOOL OF TEXAS | DALLAS, TEXAS | VOLUME 59, ISSUE 4 | FRIDAY, FEB. 8, 2013

BUSH CENTER

PROMOTING Peace

WHEN THE FINAL PHASE OF THE BUSH CENTER OPENS IN APRIL, THE FORMER PRESIDENT'S WISH IS NOT JUST TO COMMEMORATE HIS PRESIDENCY. GEORGE W. BUSH GIVES HIS TAKE ON THE NEW EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTE.

GEORGE W. BUSH PRESIDENTIAL LIBRARY AND MUSEUM

PRESIDENTIAL POSITIONS From left: President George Bush takes the oath of office after being elected in 2000. Posing for photos, Bush sits at the Peace Corps in Botswana. Shortly after 9/11, Bush throws out the first pitch before game three of the 2001 World Series in New York. Bush greets returning soldiers. Bush inspects Hurricane Katrina's aftermath in 2005.

SITTING ACROSS FROM HIM on the other side of a large desk on the 14th floor of a 20-story office building just off Northwest Highway — far removed from the one he occupied in the Oval Office at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue — was a lot less intimidating than I had anticipated.

The 43rd President of the United States, the guy who took down Saddam Hussein, was plopped in a black chair, his brown leather shoes resting on the corner of a surprisingly empty mahogany desk. He wore a blue, short-sleeve Polo shirt and sweater, and he didn't feel the need to sit up too straight in his chair. I was thrown off guard when he first reached out to shake my hand and said, in that inimitable voice of his: *What position do you play, Meat?*

CONTINUED, PAGE 18

► by **Paul Gudmundsson**, managing editor, additional reporting by **Daniel Hersh**, editor-in-chief | photo by **Michael Doorey**, head photographer

Among lowest in 10 years

Budget for 2014 offers 3.5 percent tuition increase

By **Vik Pattabi**
staff writer

FOLLOWING A BOARD OF Trustees meeting Jan. 8, the tuition increase for next year will be 3.5 percent, and other budget goals focus on remaining the same as the current year.

Although the tuition increase is up from last year's increase of 3.25 percent, it remains one of the lowest of the past ten years. Other major budget points — including planned number of students for next year and the percent of endowment drawdown — will remain the same, with the goal of financial sustainability again in the coming year.

"Our tuition increases in the past ten years have averaged 4.23 percent yet over the last five years, they've only been 3.3 percent on average," Director of Finance and Administration Suzanne Townsend said. "How much we increase tuition affects how much we're able to provide in salary increases and how we address the increasing cost of benefits."

The planned budget for next year is conservative in its revenue estimates, allowing the school to continually increase the more than \$100 million endowment.

"There are many schools, even locally, who charge more for their tuition because they have to, because they have to pay everything out of that," Townsend said. "We don't have to."

Other goals of the budget include professional development, financial aid and the implementation of new master teaching chairs through the Centennial Challenge campaign.

"If it were not for the good planning [of the faculty and staff], we wouldn't be as successful as we are," Townsend said.

Dallas Mayor Rawlings selected to speak at commencement

By **Alex Munoz**
copy editor

DALLAS MAYOR AND FORMER Pizza Hut CEO Mike Rawlings has been chosen as the commencement speaker.

"Graduation is a moment a lot of us have been idolizing since we were little," Senior Class President Dylan Kirksey said. "Our class is definitely excited about commencement. And I know I am too."

As class president, Kirksey also helped pick out the speaker. The speaker is selected to deliver an inspirational message to the graduates, so he must be able to specifically connect with the student body here.

"We narrowed it down to a few possibilities, but ultimately we — the class officers, the class sponsor, the headmaster and the head of Upper School — decided on Mike Rawlings," Kirksey said.

The graduation speaker provides some of the last advice to the graduates before they "commence" their new lives as alums, so the decision to choose **CONTINUED, PAGE 5**

SIXTH ANNUAL LITERARY FESTIVAL

Billy and the gang: writers share love of words

The sixth annual Literary Festival attracted some of the top talent in American literature and journalism. Former U.S. Poet Laureate Billy Collins was joined by Sid Balman '76, Curtis Sittenfeld and Marion Winik in bringing excitement and insight to the halls of this school.

When the four writers who came here for last month's sixth annual Literary Festival departed the school, they left Marksmen with hearty laughs, fond memories and a rejuvenated Literary Festival experience.

Former Poet Laureate of the United States Billy Collins joined international journalist Sid Balman '76, noted novelist Curtis Sittenfeld and essayist Marion Winik to visit classes and interact with students in both a well-received assembly and a reception.

Victor F. White Master Teacher David Brown, who worked with junior Ryan O'Meara, Literary Festival chair, and sophomore William Sydney to coordinate and carry out the festival, was pleased with the outcome.

"We got writers who not only educated but also entertained," Brown said. "The combination of genders and genres was a success."

For Brown, it was special to have as notable and distinguished a poet as Billy Collins visit the school. Collins, who was also the Robert E. Dennard Visiting Scholar, helped to bring a new level of accomplishment and wit to the walls of Decherd Performance Hall.

"It was surreal at times," Brown said. "We had a literary celebrity here. It's something I won't forget. His poetry is easier for students to understand than the usual poetry they are assigned. Combining his intelligence and humor really entertained our students."

Collins, who led a poetry reading as part of the Dennard Visiting Scholars Program, started studying poetry as a teenager despite its lack of respect at the time.

"When I was in high school, to write poetry was to become unpopular," Collins said. "Poetry was something that didn't have value."

His father brought home poetry magazines, and Collins's initial forays into poetry blossomed into one of the most successful poetry careers in modern history. Still, becoming United States Poet Laureate in 2001 came as a huge shock.

"It was a big surprise for me, I never even had an expectation," he said. "I wasn't in the majors; I thought I was still playing triple-A ball. Then the Librarian of Congress contacted me."

Collins's unexpected triumphs in poetry may go unmatched in the near future, but anyone can aspire to relate real life as effortlessly as Collins seems to.

"Poems are a reminder of how amazing it is to be alive and how fleeting that is," he said. "It says 'I'm here, I find myself at the conjunction of these events and that's special.' Poems are a declaration of presence."

BILLY COLLINS'S ADVICE FOR YOUNG POETS

- "Every poem is a start from scratch and your 501st poem isn't much easier than your first."
- "Small things, like pieces of fruit or salt shakers, are keyholes into big things."
- "The way to start writing is to read the poems you feel jealous of, read them so you can write poems that will make those writers jealous of your writing."
- "Some poems are un-teachable and should just be read, not analyzed."
- "You start to write by imitating. My advice to young poets is to read as much as you can and begin to emulate writing."



ON THE JOB Former Poet Laureate Billy Collins sat in on a poetry discussion with multiple senior English and Philosophy classes. The group talked about the importance of poetry in education, and Collins discussed his book *Poetry 180*, a compilation of poems from many authors which are meant to be accessible and enlightening to students. Collins also visited other classes and read selections of his work to the entire Upper School as part of the Robert E. Dennard Visiting Scholars program.



1 Curtis Sittenfeld

Author of *The New York Times* best-selling *Prep* and *American Wife*

What has been the high point of your career?

"I interviewed Michelle Obama for *Time* magazine at the Democratic Convention. I like her a lot as a person, so that was cool. Also, my book *American Wife* was an answer on *Jeopardy* so that was cool."

What is your advice to an aspiring writer?

"I would say read a lot, especially in the genre you want to be a writer in. Also, you don't need to be in a rush. **It's not gymnastics** — you don't peak at 20. Any writing you do will be enhanced by life experiences, so you don't have to be a professional writer by 23 or even 33."

What has the written word taught you?

"Being a professional writer is the easiest when I'm organized and consistent about it. I can get it done if I'm not, but I enjoy the process more and put out better work if I am **organized**. Some writers are binge writers, but I try not to be. I think it is important to always pay attention to what is going on and be observant of the world."



MAKING IT HAPPEN The authors spent time in various classes throughout the day. Curtis Sittenfeld (top) read and discussed her novel *Prep*, which is assigned to various Upper School English classes. She, along with Marion Winik (left, middle) and Sid Balman '76 (right, middle) took part in the annual Literary Festival Panel (left) during a special assembly Jan. 11.

2 Marion Winik

Author of *Above Us Only Sky* and the upcoming *Highs in the Low Fifties*

What inspires your writing?

"I write true stories about other people involved in my life. One of the things I'm always learning about is the right way to do that. My son, who is 22, has recently become **very annoyed with me** for writing about him so much. It's an ongoing lesson I'm still working on. I always quote *Charlotte's Webb*, when they say of Charlotte that 'It's not very often that someone comes along who's a good writer and a true friend,' so my mission is to be a good writer and a true friend."

What was your vision of your career from high school?

"I always wanted to be a writer, but I wanted to be famous. I wanted to be on television and have a talk show. I almost went to **Harvard Law School**. I applied and got in but at the last minute I realized that I really didn't want to go to Harvard Law School. I wanted to go to law school, but I didn't want to be a lawyer. Lawyers interpret and deal with rules all day, and I hate rules! It would be very frustrating."

What is your advice for an aspiring writer?

"Everyone is going to say this: **read**. Everyone will say reading is important to writing, to me, reading is writing. The things happening in your brain while you read are making you a writer."

3 Sid Balman '76

International journalist, author of numerous articles for *United Press International*

When did you first realize you could have a future as a writer?

"It wasn't until I was in college that I got turned onto something other than sports. When you start to realize that you're going to have to make a living, you have to do something that you're going to enjoy. I read this book, ***On the Road by Jack Kerouac***. That lit a fire under me and kind of got me started thinking about the wider world of writing."

What has been the high point of your career?

"The height of my career was a time of fundamental change in the world. I was a fly on the wall to historic things. I was there for the first summit between the Soviet Union and the United States.... I saw the Berlin Wall fall... **I played cards with Bill Clinton** in the back of his airplane. I would really have to point to my body of experiences than one big one in particular. You get exposed to these incredible things, and that's really what I was aiming for."

What did St. Mark's teach you?

"If St. Mark's taught me anything, it was the **power of perseverance**. I remember when we graduated just how sad I was to be leaving here and my friends. It was such a special moment in our lives. You'll achieve like you did here but you'll never have quite the same feeling among you and your friends. It's a special time."