



FROM THE POLITY

Shocking Exposé on the Bells

Dear Editors of The St. John's Collegian,

It is with a heavy heart and strained conscience that I write to address the mystery of the bells ("Ding Dongs? Merrily on High?: Mysterious Ringing Keeps Campus Awake"). Those with discerning ears will have noticed that the bells have a decidedly Phrygian ring to them. Recall that Socrates, in Book III of *The Republic*, claims that this mode forms souls to be courageous and moderate. And now for the shocking truth: our Assistant Dean, Mr. Abbott, in an intricate and ingenuous plot, is the one behind those bells. In brief: he has long been worried about the influence that years of music in the Ionic and Lydian modes (e.g.: Tay-tay) has had on so many of our students—and more than a few tutors; the mysterious bells have been designed to counter those effects. Not only do they ring in the Phrygian mode, but they do so at the precise times when the circadian rhythms of Freshmen make their souls most receptive to the influence of sound. Let me be clear: I do not doubt Mr. Abbott's devotion to the college or his exceedingly admirable intentions, yet I could no longer remain silent about this shocking (and tyrannical?) abuse of power. I also ask all members of the Polity to assist me in getting to the bottom of a question that now haunts me: was the Assistant Dean acting alone?

Your devoted comrade,

Mr. Hafliðson

MELLON HALL OFFICIALLY REOPENED WITH RIBBON CUTTING

Ceremony Attended by Local Dignitaries, Campus leaders, Celebrated Work Done to Improve Campus Spaces

After two years of renovations, the final part of the renovations of Mellon Hall begun in the winter of 2021 were finally completed last week. The patio, which has been under construction since this summer, was paved just in time to welcome alumni, donors and local leaders for a reopening ceremony that acted as a celebration of all the various sources of funding and work that made the renovations possible.

The idea to renovate Mellon, which had its last major renovation in 1989, was first initiated by former college president Pano Kanelos, to attempt to create new public spaces to form a hub for students, and draw them into closer community by making spaces like the Mellon Lobby and the Fishbowl more welcoming spaces for student use. The renovations also aimed to increase ADA accessibility, allowing both doors into the lobby area to be accessible and improving accessibility to the backstage areas, as well as to rebuild the building's ageing HVAC systems. They cost approximately ten million dollars, and were planned by David M. Schwarz Architects, a firm led by an alumnus of the college.

These renovations primarily impacted the FSK lobby, the fishbowl, the conversation room and the backstage areas behind the auditorium, all of which were substantially changed. The lobby, which before the renovation was one of the only interiors designed by midcentury architect Richard Neutra still intact on the east coast, lost many

of its original design features, but was made accessible and received furniture to make it more welcoming to student use. The Fishbowl, which was first installed during the renovation in the 80s, was given a more open plan, while the conversation room's ability to support technology was improved alongside its atmosphere as a welcoming space to hold conversations in. New facilities backstage include a studio theater, although all space that was usable to build sets and most of the prop storage space was lost, making the practical use of the auditorium more difficult for campus theater groups.

At the reopening ceremony, speakers included President Demleitner, Maryland Lt. Governor Aruna Miller, who spoke about the state's commitment to higher education, and State Senator Sarah Elfreth, who spoke about her role in securing St. John's a five million dollar grant from the state of Maryland that enabled the construction. Maryland is unusual in that it provides funding for capital projects for private Colleges, and St. John's matched this funding with fundraising from the college's recently completed Freeing Minds capital campaign to cover the costs of the project. Also speaking at the event was William Rowel, representing Mayor Gavin Buckley who was unable to attend the ceremony, and Delegate Council President Helen Felbek, who spoke on the student experience using the newly renovated spaces.

El'ad Nichols-Kaufman

This Week in Seminar

Freshman:

- 10/5: Plutarch: *Lives*, Lycurgus; Solon
- 10/9: Herodotus: *History*, I; II 50–53, 112–120; III 37–38, 66-87

Sophomores:

- 10/5: Virgil: *Aeneid*, V–VIII
- 10/9: Virgil: *Aeneid*, IX–XII

Juniors:

- 10/5: Hobbes: *Leviathan*, Chapters 30–31, 32 (first four paragraphs), 38 (selections), 39, 43, 46–47; A Review and Conclusion (last paragraph)
- 10/9: Spinoza: *Ethics*, Book 1 through proposition 29

Seniors:

- 10/5: Marx and Engels: *The German Ideology*, Part One; and "Theses on Feuerbach"
- 10/9: Marx and Engels: *Capital* (see main list for selections)

There will be no lecture due to the long weekend

Upcoming Events:

Thursday, 10/5

- 9:45 pm: Bonfire & Hoe Down, Planetarium

Friday 10/6

- 12:30 pm: Petting zoo, Upper Fields
- 9 pm: Selena screening, Mellon courtyard
- 8:30 pm: Reunion Waltz, Great Hall

Saturday, 10/7

- 8:30 pm: Rocky Horror Picture Show screening, Great Hall

Sunday 10/8

- 12:00 pm: Tea party and bouquet making, Quad

Monday 10/9

- 12:30 pm: All-College scavenger hunt, Quad

PUBLIC SAFETY OFFICE RELEASES ANNUAL REPORT

The report includes statistics on crimes committed on campus for the past three years, from 2020-2022, as well as fire safety reports for the same time.

In this year's public safety report, which is required by federal law to be issued every October, the following crimes were reported for the calendar year 2022: one burglary, seven drug related violations and eight liquor law violations. While for our campus that in 2022 had approximately 453 students and 190 faculty and staff, this may seem significant, it is indicative of large improvements from 2021. Officially reported cases of rape and sexual assault dropped from 17 in 2021 to none in 2022, drug violations dropped from 33 cases in 2021, and liquor law violations went down from 57 violations in 2021. However, it is always difficult to determine whether these changes can be attributed to changes in

enforcement, reporting, or in actual frequency of crimes.

The report also featured a fire safety section, which showed that all the residence halls had sufficient fire safety measures in place in 2022, including fire alarms, a full sprinkler system, smoke detectors, fire extinguishers, and evacuation plans and diagrams. The fire alarms on campus went off six times, once each in Gilliam, Humphreys, Campbell, Chase-Stone and twice in Spector, all of which were due to unintentional cooking incidents. Most of them took place in the afternoon or evening, except for one at 10:52 am. None involved a fire that actually caused any injury or damage.

The email which was sent out by the public safety office contained last years report, but this years report can still be found online in the Clery Act, Crime Awareness and Campus Security Act of 1990 section of the college website, or can be requested as a physical document from the public safety office.

Included in the report was detailed information on campus safety procedures and policies, with many detailed resources for students, and includes the campus sexual misconduct policy as an appendix.

El'ad Nichols-Kaufman

CAN'T YOU DANCE THE POLKA?

Oktoberfest Polka Competition features spirited dancing, fierce rivalry, and much stomping

Two Saturdays ago, the College saw the '23 St. John's College Oktoberfest Polka Competition. Decked out in dirndls and lederhosen, members of the polity amassed to witness the finest endurance test of the year. With flower crowns secured and sleeves rolled up, the dancers hit the floor with a well-timed stomp. Quickly, the crowd was culled. (The author of this piece and the editor were cut a very respectable fifth). The esteemed judges Mr. Dang and Ms. Hile called out movement changes over the din, pushing the dancers to new heights—quite literally, as a dizzying array of aerial moves were performed—and eliminating pairs left and right, until only four were left. As the twenty-five-minute mark was passed the competition grew fierce. All four pairs seemed evenly matched. First up, was Millie Ransohoff, fresh off a victory last year, and Paolo Medelius. Clearly having fun, they pranced around the dance floor with an infectious exuberance and a powerhouse of side-to-side sashays. Hot on their heels were Chris Thomas and Charlotte Nicholas, in it to win it. They maintained an even pace—focusing on endurance and conservation of energy—though not without style. Charlie Mahon and Lainey Rendelman made up the youngest pair, with Mr. Mahon being the only freshman to make it to the final four. They made for a powerful couple, striding across the floor with an athlete's focus. Finally, Logan Arendt and Maddie Minor completed the quartet. Cool as cucumbers

and with seemingly effortless grace, they played off the mishap as a shoe flying off with panache. As time ticked on, something had to give. The first to go were Mr. Mahon and Ms. Rendelman, disqualified—debatably unjustly—for not being able to hear directions. Next were Ms. Ransohoff and Mr. Medelius, felled to an unfortunate stumble. Despite the losses all were in good spirits, knowing that they had a few more years to try for the crown. The same could not be said for the remaining couples, all of whom were seniors. With the stakes thus raised the competition headed into its fortieth minute with neither pair giving any ground, and the tension rose to a point unmatched since the Calydonian boar hunt. Finally, around minute forty-four the judges called it, awarding—as they sailed through a final flip and spin—Mr. Thomas and Ms. Nicholas with their well-deserved laurels. With that the polka competition ended, leaving the victors to their spoils and the rest to rest their feet, and a beloved tradition to be laid away until next year.

Andy Manne

Aphorism of the Week

Look at the confidence of a chicken. How blessed are those who know that they don't know!

ABOUT THE ST. JOHN'S COLLEGIAN

The St. John's Collegian is the weekly newspaper of St. John's College Annapolis. We work to bring quick and timely coverage of important events going on, to help develop a more informed student body. If you're searching for more in-depth investigations and reporting, as well as essays, art and culture, check out the Gadfly, our affiliated publication, which is published once every three weeks.

Want to submit an article? We always need more writers, whether for opinion or reporting! Submissions for news articles should be between 300-400 words, while opinion should be kept short at 200 words. Just email enicholskaufman@sjc.edu with your article, and we will work to get it in print! Longer form articles and more in-depth exploration of ideas should go to the Gadfly, which accepts submissions at lbriner@sjc.edu.

Contributors for this issue:

El'ad Nichols-Kaufman, Editor

Ron Haflidson

Andy Manne