

The Quill

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Survival Guide to Freshman Year

A Guide to Starting a Successful Year

Steward Beckham
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Freshmen year is scary. It is filled with new obstacles along with new opportunities. From the first day of orientation, to the first freshmen football game, to the last day of finals, this year is faster, harder, and more eventful than ever before. Fortunately, I wrote this article to supply aid to our future Mount Men.

1. Become well acquainted with teachers.

Teachers can only help students to their full potential if they know a student's interests, as well as their strengths and weaknesses. Make sure you talk to your new teachers and make sure they know your goals.

2. Make a list of goals for Freshmen Year.

Lists are one of the oldest and simplest organizers. However, they keep you on track and remind you why your parents

pay for your education. Make a list of achievements and work furiously to earn them. A good book on how to develop an effective list is the *Checklist Manifesto* by Atul Gawande.

3. Start thinking about life after high school.

When the idea pops into your head that colleges look at your freshmen year, do not panic. This thought process is more blessing than stress.

Make sure that you realize freshmen year establishes the roots to your Saint Joe education. Try your best and plan ahead.

4. Ask Questions.

God gave us a mouth for a reason. Do not be afraid to use this mouth to find

answers to things that might otherwise leave you drawing a blank. Teachers love answering questions and love a student who is not afraid to ask them.

5. Figure out your hobbies.

The first step to building your leadership status is found here. By figuring out your hobbies you will be able to look at the numerous lists of clubs and sports and discover which one is best for you. This is also good training for when you look for jobs and internships. Everyone strives to be the best at what they do; however, the best have been doing it for a while.

6. The famous two words: Time Management

Managing time is like driving a car.

You can drive the car carefully and plan according to the environment, or you can rely on impulse. This is the most important skill to learn so you can successfully balance business and pleasure. Without time management, homework would be incomplete and sports practice would be missed. So please, use your planner, buy a calendar, and build yourself a routine now, because it only gets harder from here.

7. Have fun!

Finally, the last thing to remember is to have fun and enjoy your time at MSJ. Whether it's the football team or the literary magazine, design an environment that will facilitate your growth and gift you with friends that will last a lifetime.



Growing Up with Harry Potter

After a Decade of Excitement, the Cultural Phenomenon Comes to An End

Steward Beckham
Quill Editor-in-Chief

When the first Harry Potter movie came out, people were wondering how they could possibly make six more of these films. Dedicated fans of the popular best-selling franchise were jumping out of their seats at our favorite boy wizard, Harry Potter. Luckily, the challenge was met thanks to a fan base that refused to let the series falter or fall into Hollywood's graveyard of failed franchises. This past summer *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows Part II* made movie history by having the biggest movie release weekend in history.

This truly wasn't a surprise, though; everyone anticipated this movie and was ready to pull out their toy wands and Gryffindor robes to celebrate the end of the series. The story is centered on Harry Potter, a fictional character brought to life by J.K Rowling in 1997. Harry Potter, or "the Boy Who Lived", starts out as a wide-eyed pre-teen who is just discovering the world of magic. Harry is enrolled in the prestigious wizarding

institution known as Hogwarts, where he meets various characters like his soon-to-be best friends Ron Weasley and Hermione Granger, headmaster Albus Dumbledore, and the potentially evil Professor Severus Snape.

Throughout his time at Hogwarts, Harry faces numerous challenges and becomes closer to uncovering the truth about his mysterious past and its connection to the Dark Lord Voldemort. The series first gained popularity as the books were geared toward a child-dominated demographic. However, the books caught the attention of a diverse group of people all around the world. Soon, the popular book franchise turned into a movie franchise, gaining more money and viewership.

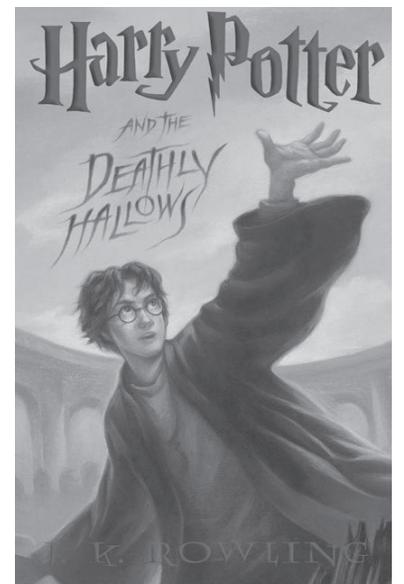
However, this coming of age tale holds a deeper meaning to the current generation because of the character development that took place over the years. Harry starts out as a young and relatively innocent young boy who is just being introduced to a world of

many possibilities. As the books go on, the tempo and themes change to darker and more realistic problems. This shift took place right when the main age group of readers were growing up and looking for more "adult" topics to read about and watch on TV or in the movie theatre. Harry faces challenges that surround murder, romance, and political corruption, taking away the child-like aura that filled the earlier novels.

While some readers dropped off, this age group who grew up with Harry Potter kept the momentum rolling with a huge thirst for more of J.K Rowling's magical universe. In North America alone, the *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows Part II* movie made \$92.1 million on its Friday release and would go on to make an estimated \$168.5 million for the whole weekend. I talked to some of my co-workers this summer and they described the movie as an "exciting experience that everyone should enjoy". This wasn't just from diehard Harry Potter fans, but also from casual moviegoers, who just

want to see a well-made film.

As fans prepared to say good bye to their favorite boy wizard, many celebrated the series by throwing movie marathons and re-reading the books. This proved that even though the character was originally thought up in England, his story touched a worldwide audience and will continue to do so.



'Ministry with Construction on the Side'

Spanish Teacher and Three Students Give Back This Summer

Mr. Adam Kauffman

Quill Faculty Contributor

Welcome back! I hope you all found fun and rest and are refreshed as we start a new year. Surely you all have been catching up with classmates asking, "what'd you do this summer?" Many of you, I'm sure, worked summer jobs, traveled with family, and/or got some well-deserved time to chill out at home. I'd like to tell you about my trip with my Church, St. John's in Columbia. I had taken part in the Appalachia Service Project (ASP) my four summers of high school and returned this summer as an adult leader. My trip was made richer thanks to three MSJ students: senior Tim Sylvester, junior Connor Dunnigan, and sophomore Eddie Seyfried.



Mr. Kauffman drills for a new porch.

much larger group stationed at Appalachia High School in Wise County, Virginia. From there, our church's eight crews and four crews from other churches staying at the school drove out to individual sites to serve various families in need. ASP has been serving families for more than 40 years by making homes warmer, safer, and drier; this is the main objective of the organization. The families served generally live below the poverty line with limited means to improve their lives.

I was on the same work crew as Eddie Seyfried. Along with our

four crewmates, we finished installing a working bathroom in our family's trailer home and building a small porch and set of steps that served as an emergency exit out back. "The trailer had a deck out front but nothing in the back," Eddie explains.

"[There was] just a door [and then a drop of] 5 or 6 feet, which would had been a potential danger to the kids if they opened the door. So the crew before us had built a frame/base for a mini deck/platform in the back. So we basically put down the flooring, put up the guard rail, and almost finished the steps. We had to dig holes for the step's foundation and mix cement and let it dry. We had problems with the ground because it rained almost every day so it was always muddy and everywhere. In the end we had done a pretty good job."

Our family consisted of three young girls and their grandparents. When we weren't out working, we were typically playing with the three girls, all of whom loved to be picked up and to play with us. Sharon, the grandmother, said that ASP's arrival and work on their home was the

answer to a prayer. I was truly humbled to think that I could be the answer to someone's prayer.

"My crew had a blast spending time with them," Eddie said of the three "energetic" girls. "I really had a great



Eddie Seyfried, Tim Sylvester, Mr. Kauffman, and Connor Dunnigan

experience with our family...they interacted with us all the time and were always so grateful for what they were doing. Also, they were very welcoming. Every week they had to let strangers come into their privacy and work on their home and they never complained.... Imagine if a stranger

came into your house and started taking things down and rebuilding things....it can be very nerve-wracking."

Tim Sylvester, who had been on ASP once before, is eager to do a third year. "Tex Evans founded ASP on the philosophy that it is 'a relationship ministry with construction on the side.' Especially in my experience, this has been the case. ASP isn't just rebuilding floors or re-tarring roofs, they're restructuring the lives of so many families in need throughout Appalachia. I can only hope that my involvement will make a dent in the problems that exist there, but I know that ASP will continue to make a difference in the lives of Appalachian families for years to come."

So what did I do this summer? I relaxed, for sure, but I also was blessed to make a difference in someone else's life. As we begin a new year, I encourage you to find a way to do the same by participating in some sort of service. Whether it is a week-long trip like ASP or a few hours with a Campus Ministry event, there are ample opportunities. Ask us about the trip; tell others about a similar trip you may have taken; find out if your church has something like ASP, or get your church involved in a similar project. The new Habitat for Humanity Club at the Mount needs members; talk to club president Tim Sylvester. This year, break out of your comfort zone and in the Xaverian spirit, dare to fall in love with the service of God.

shaped hole in our hearts. Many people, including Saint Augustine, try to fill their hearts with things like wealth, popularity, drugs, and friends, but until we fill that hole in our heart with God, we cannot love and our hearts cannot rest.

Peer ministry is very much about teaching, but it also has to do with learning. I have learned so many things regarding my faith by teaching others things such as techniques of prayer. As I was telling one of my students earlier in the summer, my favorite way to pray is with music in the background. I personally find daily prayer to be easier when you talk to God and not just recite rote prayers. While it is important to say specific prayers, you should be able to talk to God as if he is your friend and confidant.

I highly recommend peer ministry and suggest that you go to your church and sign up for it. As I have learned through my own experiences, there is something special about helping others deepen their faith; it is just such a good feeling. So go ahead and make that first step towards becoming the Catholic man you are meant to be!



Eddie with Caitlin

'Meaningful Opportunities to Share Faith'

Peer Ministry Produces Delectable Beverage?

Adam Kellermann

Quill Editor

Since we're in high school, we all have very busy lives. There is one thing, however, that we should always have time for: God. I started peer ministry this summer at my parish, Our Lady of Perpetual Help in Ellicott City. As a peer minister, I teach young people about the Catholic faith as well as model for them what it is like to lead a life of holiness. So you are probably wondering: why should someone become a peer minister? As Kristen Fisher, my church's director of youth ministry says, "It's very important to give high school students real and meaningful opportunities to share their faith with others."

Although your faith is a very serious topic, there are always very fun ways to teach it. An example that I really like is that we as Catholics are like milk, wholesome and pure. Through baptism God gives us grace, or in this situation, chocolate syrup. All Catholics are given grace, there is no way to earn it or deserve it. We can either do nothing with that grace and let the chocolate syrup sit at the bottom of the glass or we can stir it up and become chocolate milk. Using this great analogy,

Ms. Kristen explained that there are many ways to stir up the chocolate syrup and the milk. One of these ways is by sharing your faith with others, one of the things peer ministers do.

It is very important, as one of my fellow peer ministers said, to "have a solid network of friends who have the same beliefs as you." This is very hard to do in certain environments, such as school. But at church it is so easy to build these enduring friendships. The friendships that you will build through Church ministry last not only in the setting of church, but outside of church as well. In the very short period of time that I have been a peer minister, I have made several great friends and have been introduced to Hillsong, a religious rock band. My fellow peer ministers and I together enjoyed their recent concert at Meriwether Post Pavilion.

Many high school students believe they have found love but the truth is that you cannot love until you love God, for God is love. There is a quote from Saint Augustine that demonstrates this perfectly: "Our hearts are restless until they rest in you." This means that there is a God-