



Yes, it's not a bad gig, this Head of School thing. For starters, writing this column becomes easier and easier all the time. I get myself a latté, sit down at the computer for twenty minutes, and boast about

St. Mary's accomplishments – and there's no shortage of them. And the best part about it? All of these accomplishments result from great work by students, teachers, coaches, parents, and other friends of St. Mary's. I'm just the recording angel. So, where to begin? How about Coach Rick Jackson and the varsity basketball boys? They simply refused to lose. It was inspiring to see this team, in what was supposed to be just a decent year, make a run all the way to the State Championship game! Or how about Jahanna Beecham and her cast of thousands that produced *Seussical*? Many fans said it was the best high school production they've ever seen. The crowds got bigger and bigger with each performance. We sold out the auditorium for the last two shows and even ran out of tickets! We can mention the success of Mr. Su's Mandarin program and his establishing a brother-school relationship between St. Mary's and Zhengzhou Daxue Diyi Fushu Zhongxue, a 3,000-student K-12 school affiliated with Zhengzhou University. Then there is Global Solutions Day on which over sixty guest speakers visited the St. Mary's campus to make presentations

to our students on a wide variety of issues affecting our planet. How about the many St. Mary's students who performed traditional Chinese songs and dances and puppet shows as part of the grand Chinese New Year's celebrations in Jacksonville? Of course, we continue to have more than our share of outstanding academic achievement. There were just three National Merit Scholarship Finalists in Medford this year, these are students in the top one-half of one percent of seniors in America, and two of them, Ben Carr and Tommy Watson, are St. Mary's lads. But there is one long-term statistic we're especially proud of. Patrick Naumes recently completed an exhaustive survey of St. Mary's graduates from 1989 -2002. 86% of them have earned college degrees. To understand the significance of this 86% figure, please see the article about this on page 7. A core part of St. Mary's mission is to prepare our students, academically and morally, for success in college and beyond. It's great to see this happening year after year and day after day!

