



# The Belles

of  
Saint Mary's  
College



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## SGA Fall Formal

By Ellen Zimmerman

The air was filled with excitement on Saturday afternoon before the SGA dance. All that could be heard on the halls were hairdryers running, showers going, and girls trying to find something to do with their hair and makeup. Girls could be heard yelling things like "Help! Where are my curlers!" and "My date is here and I haven't even done my hair!" Somehow we all got

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"Ladyhouse Blues" on stage at Saint Mary's (see review on page 4.)

By Katherine Cloninger

Although the high school and the college of Saint Mary's are located on the same campus, the high school students are offered a distinct advantage. High school students, for the most part, tend to agree the major transition was worth it. Saint Mary's exposes students to a college curriculum, as well as a college atmosphere, and gives the high school the opportunity to take advanced courses on the college level.

How do the students themselves feel about the workload at Saint Mary's, the presence of a college atmosphere, the level of difficulty, and the overall Saint Mary's advantage? In order to answer these questions, **The Belles** distributed a questionnaire that was answered by most high school students.

Question #1 stated: How does Saint Mary's compare, on the level of difficulty, to your previous school? Eighty percent of the students polled felt that Saint Mary's is considerably harder than their previous schools. In many cases, students did not feel that studying was necessary before and the teachers showed an obvious lack of interest. Some comments were as follows: "Saint Mary's is much harder and offers more opportunities." "Saint Mary's compared to my former school is 25% harder because of the college professors, and the overall prevailing college atmosphere." "Saint Mary's is a lot more difficult than my former school because the teachers expect so much more from you and everyone is required to be a lot more responsible." A small percentage felt that Saint Mary's is less difficult than their former schools. These comments included: "There is less academic pressure at Saint Mary's and homework assignments and projects do

not promote enough creativity and originality." "I find Saint Mary's easier because the assignments are not as challenging, and there is less pressure."

One aspect that must be taken into consideration is not everyone comes from the same caliber of school. For instance, 100% of those interviewed who came from rural high schools and boarding schools not noted for academic excellence believe that Saint Mary's is extremely challenging and are confident that they will be very prepared for college because of the Saint Mary's experience. However, respondents from urban public high schools, other boarding schools, and day schools were more divided. About 73% of this category stated that Saint Mary's offers more challenging work and the remaining percentage said that the work here is more or less equal to that of their previous schools. All felt they benefitted from the significant amounts of personal attention, as well as the demanding professors.

All of the 7.5% who felt that Saint Mary's is less difficult than their former schools came from top ranking prep schools known for stiff competition or schools designed for the performing arts.

Twelve and one-half percent feel that Saint Mary's is comparable to their previous schools. This percentage is comprised of students who attended challenging urban public high schools and other noteworthy boarding and day schools. Remarks were as follows: "Saint Mary's is about the same, depending on classes." "The workload at Saint Mary's is greater, but the work itself is not harder."

The next question asked, "In what ways have study habits changed?" Eighty-five percent of the students polled find them-

selves studying more at Saint Mary's. Two percent said they study less at Saint Mary's, while 12% study about the same as before.

One of the biggest transitions that new students face is a different method of studying. Most students are not as accustomed to the late night study hours at first, and have trouble managing their time well. Some take advantage of the adequate time between classes for studying, while the overwhelming majority of students use this time to sleep, catch up on soap operas, and visit the cafe. In this case, self-discipline is the answer to managing time well. Students also find it hard to study among distractions. For example, few students have previously had to put up with noisy neighbors, someone else's music blaring, the more than occasional drop-ins, and an annoying **Belles** staff member requesting completed questionnaire responses.

One question probably running through everyone's mind as they enter the college admissions process is "How prepared will I be for college after attending Saint Mary's?" About 86 percent of the students felt they would be adequately prepared academically. A few comments read: "After five years... about as prepared as I'll ever be." "Hopefully very prepared I know that I will be definitely more prepared for college than I would have at my old school, not only academically, but also socially." Many respondents felt there is a social benefit as well: "I know that I will be prepared socially. I feel I have an advantage over high school students who haven't been away. I'll know how to manage time and I'll be ready mentally."

## Exam Stress

By Elizabeth Stephenson

Exams are right around the corner, which means that a lot of the students at Saint Mary's will be buckled down to their books for a week or two. If you are smart and know how to prepare ahead, then exam stress most likely will not be a problem for you. But if you are like many of us who put off studying until a day or two before the exam, you will be suffering with the dreadful sickness of "EXAM STRESS." I went around school and asked many students what they do to relieve their "EXAM STRESS." In high school, the most common relief is eating and taking naps. So if you see girls who have put on a few extra pounds around exam time, the cause is probably "STRESS." High school students use some unusual ways to relieve stress:

Ellen Zimmerman said, "I forget that I own books, put on a good tape and sing my heart out."

Meg Tuttle said, "I talk to my boyfriend, John, and cry."

Lara Sykes, whose father is a pharmacist, takes stress tablets!

Alexandra Quilici said that she enjoys a

good book when trying to take her mind off studying.

Geni Wade and Catherine Coombs both replied in unison "What's studying?"

Katie Landry said that she gets a kick out of bothering her neighbors in the dorm.

Anna Brooks and Holli Donnell said they enjoy going for a run whenever their heads get too bogged.

Alix Dyer confessed that she screams and hits her roommate, and she believes it helps!

Meredith Taylor takes the wimpy approach and cries.

Ashley Ray throws her books, so beware!

Heather Smithwick said, "I smoke a lot, call my parents and bawl to them, then I get real hyper and scream."

Most college students claim that they get in their car and drive around; the truth hidden in that statement is PARTY! They have a little more freedom than highschool students, so they can do more. There was only one truly unique answer from an anonymous college student, which was, "I just hope I'll get married someday and it won't matter."

If you want to avoid exam stress al-

together, then the "big" key is to prepare ahead of time. Some tips from Ms. Gunter are:

1. Study in moderate intervals so that you don't get too tired too fast.
2. When studying more than one subject, take breaks between subjects so that you don't confuse the subjects.
3. Do not be intimidated by the word "EXAM."
4. Relax while you are studying, don't be tense.
5. Make sure you get enough sleep.

But if you are one of those people who just can't avoid procrastination, Mrs. Hicks suggests that you should:

1. Exercise — she believes that exercise is the best way to relieve stress of any kind.
2. Watch your caffeine intake because caffeine makes you nervous.
3. Eat regular meals and get plenty of sleep.

Obviously, studying ahead of time is the best way to avoid exam stress. If you are still stressed out over the prospect of exams, just keep in mind that they will be over soon and all that stress will be rewarded with a vacation.

