

### **SMALL HANDS CAN CHANGE THE WORLD**

Kindergarten students in Mrs. Ciara Was' classroom celebrated diversity by participating in a variety of activities on Thursday, Jan. 12, in anticipation of Martin Luther King Jr. Day.

Discussions about Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. were followed by the reading of "The Color of Us" by Karen Katz and a unique art project. Students chose their own skin tone color paint to create their handprint. The handprints were then cut out to make a huge heart bulletin board showing how all the beautiful, diverse skin colors make a piece of their classroom family.

Mrs. Was also conducted an egg activity where she cracked both a standard white egg and a brown farm egg to show students how we may have different outsides but are the same on the inside!

#### MESSAGES OF COURAGE LINE HALLWAYS AT HAINE MIDDLE SCHOOL

Students and teachers at Haine Middle School (HMS) honored Martin Luther King Jr. Day by creating a giant hallway display depicting Dr. King's famous 'I Have a Dream' speech combined with student responses of what courage means to them. Story continued on page 2



Story continued on page 2



The make-up day for the Jan. 25, school closure/snow day will be made up on **Friday, Feb. 17**; therefore, SV staff members and students are to report to school.

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#### DATES TO REMEMBER

Feb. 6	School Board Meeting Work Session, SHS Auditorium, 7 p.m.
Feb. 13	School Board Meeting, Regular Session, SHS Auditorium, 7 p.m.
Feb. 17	Snow Make Up Day #1 – School will now be in session for students and staff. This is to make up for the school closure (due to inclement weather) on Jan. 25, 2023.
Feb. 20	Staff In-Service Day, No School for Students

#### For more dates, visit:

www.svsd.net/WebCalendar

#### CULTURE JAM... CELEBRATING DIVERSITY IN A UNIQUE WAY

On Friday, Jan. 13, Mr. Ashley Porter, Equity Supervisor and Title IX Coordinator took several students to The Ellis School in Pittsburgh to participate in the 19th annual Culture Jam – a student-led and produced conference focused on diversity.



This exciting conference welcomed 50 high school students from across the region. It's designed to empower students to have courageous conversations alongside their peers and offer them opportunities to connect and ignite the sparks of authentic change within their own schools.

Culture Jam was an impactful event for all who attended. "This was a great opportunity for our students to engage with their peers from around the Pittsburgh area. They participated in student-led workshops related to a variety of diverse backgrounds, cultures and experiences," said Mr. Porter. "Next year, our students will not only participate, but they will also lead workshops and discussions."

Story continued on page 2

FEBRUARY							
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#### SMALL HANDS CAN CHANGE THE WORLD Story continued from pg. 1

Read the full story in the *Cranberry Eagle* - Haine's youngest students learn about, celebrate diversity - Cranberry Eagle.









#### CULTURE JAM... CELEBRATING DIVERSITY IN A UNIQUE WAY

Story continued from pg. 1

This year's theme, "You've Got the Power," focused on the importance of self-advocacy and how it equips us to better advocate for others in our communities.

"I think Culture Jam was an amazing way for students from different areas to connect and share our differences. It was a great learning experience for me as a student who does not see much cultural diversity in school to connect with students and share my thoughts on complicated topics not commonly spoken on," said senior Kayla Brooks.

"I really enjoyed going to The Ellis School and the way the event was organized. It was fun meeting new people who had similar thought processes and discovering new ways that people strive for equality and the rights of others," said junior Jose Tinoco.

#### MESSAGES OF COURAGE LINE HALLWAYS AT HAINE MIDDLE SCHOOL Story continued from pg. 1

Each student received a strip of paper with specific words from MLK's famous speech on it. At the bottom of each strip of paper was space for students to answer at least one of the three questions:

- What does courage mean to you?
- What is the most courageous thing you have done?
- Who is someone that you think is courageous and why?

After student responses were collected, a giant display was created and filled the hallway with impactful messages of hope and courage that intertwined with Dr. King's 'I Have a Dream' speech.

HMS faculty members came up with this wonderful idea that transformed the hallways. The Learn, Explore, Act, Develop (LEAD) committee members included HMS teachers Mr. Eric Fogle, Ms. Ellie Lahm, Mr. Tyler Mesisca, Ms. Noele Reynolds, Ms. Ronelle Rowe and



Ms. Tabitha Waltman along with HMS counselors Ms. Jennifer Shipe and Ms. Kristen Kress.





To learn more, watch a short video of the display: https://svtube.svsd. net/play?id=u4w6kbgyn2

#### THANK YOU FOR YOUR SERVICE

Monday, Jan. 9, was Law Enforcement Appreciation Day, and we'd like to recognize the police officers who protect and build rapport with our students on a daily basis. Here's a look back at just some of the photos from throughout the beginning of the school year.

We appreciate you and thank you for your service!

















#### **DECK THE HALLS WITH MUSIC**

Band and orchestra students at Ehrman Crest Middle School (ECMS) were excited to continue their "Deck the Halls with Music" this past holiday season; especially since it was their first time holding it at Ehrman Crest! In addition to spreading some holiday cheer by playing in the hallways to greet students and staff upon arrival, they collected money for local foodbanks. Thanks to many charitable donations, a total of \$491.17 was donated to a variety of foodbanks.



#### STUDENTS SPREAD HOLIDAY CHEER AT PASSAVANT NURSING HOME

The Tiger team at Ryan Gloyer Middle School (RGMS) participated in an annual holiday community service project in conjunction with Passavant Nursing Home. Several students and their families showed their generosity and kindness by donating approximately 1,500 items for the residents of Passavant Nursing Home, which were used as gifts for the residents during the holiday season.

About 60 students stayed after school with teachers from the Tiger team to deliver the donated items and went to the nursing home to visit with the residents and spread some holiday cheer.





Staff members and administration of Ryan Gloyer Middle School (RGMS) held a Food Gift Card Drive throughout December. Gift cards to Giant Eagle, Aldi, Shop-n-Save, Bilo and Walmart were collected in \$10 increments. Thanks to the overwhelming participation from RGMS students and staff, about \$7,000 worth of gift cards were dispersed to RGMS families in need to help fill their table during the holidays. The top seventh and eighth grade homerooms that collected the most donations won a special visit to watch the Pittsburgh Penguins practice at UPMC Lemieux Sports Complex.



#### COMMUNITY CONTRIBUTIONS MAKE LASTING IMPACT FOR SV'S NO COST TO SHOP

On Thursday, Jan. 19, Seneca Valley's No Cost to Shop (NCTS) store received two very generous donations, one from the Zelienople Area Business Association (ZABA) and the other from Eva Bryn Shoetique, totaling \$6,250!

ZABA collected donations from last year's Miracle on Main Steet, which totaled \$5,000 and Eva Bryn Shoetique sold one-of-kind ornaments over the holidays garnering \$1,250 toward No Cost to Shop.

Michelle Eppinger, NCTS Coordinator and Seneca Valley Senior High School special education job coach paraprofessional accepted a check for each donation on behalf of No Cost to Shop.

These selfless acts of kindness will make an impact on many and help students prepare for a special event, formal occasion or provide everyday casual wear, with all items available at no cost!

No Cost to Shop is located in the senior high school for students in grades 7-12 who are in need of clothing, food or other items. Students can set up a private time to shop and take what they need – no lines, no checkout. During this shopping experience,



students can take items ranging from shoes and accessories to hygiene products, haircut gift certificates and take-home food bags.

Learn how Seneca Valley's No Cost to Shop is helping students and how you can donate. Visit our website, No Cost To Shop / About Us (svsd.net) or listen to our latest podcast episode.

#### **SIGN ME UP!**

Secondary student course registration for the 2023-2024 school year is underway with a fresh new look, more courses than ever (426!) and five condensed pathways.

"I can't say enough about our information technology (IT) department and the work they do with the district's online program of studies," said Dr. Matt McKinley, assistant superintendent of 7-12 instruction. "They have been phenomenal, and what I think you will now find on our website is very user friendly."

Completely developed and maintained in-house by the SV IT Department, a revised **program of studies** (POS) can now be found under the District's Academic channel on the homepage. The POS features summaries and detailed curriculum for K-6, 7-8, 9-10 and 11-12 courses that are offered in traditional and cyber settings.

The District is also pleased to announce that we are expanding our partnership with Robert Morris University (RMU) and offering four new College-in-High-School (CHS) courses, which includes CHS Financial Accounting, CHS Managerial Accounting, CHS Diverse Voices in U.S. History, and CHS Narrative Film Production. These and the other 35+ CHS courses at SV allow students to simultaneously earn high school and college credit by completing these courses while in high school, a wonderful, two-fold benefit, Students can take CHS courses and challenge themselves while also enjoying a cost savings as most CHS courses at SV are free. The District is also expanding the CHS Biology course to also serve as an Advanced Placement (AP) course, which gives students options for this advanced level of study. What's the difference between AP and CHS? Learn more here: Program of Studies / Advanced Placement vs. College in High School (svsd.net)

Other new opportunities found in the POS are the products of the District's ongoing team efforts to stay on top of the evolution of the workplace and the world in which we live, and adjusting what we offer accordingly, as seen in the three new secondary courses for the 2023-24 school year:

- 1. Introduction to Accounting
- 2. Dance Explorations

3. CHS Healthcare Concepts and Medical Terminology

We're also pleased to announce that the program of studies will also now list all special education courses with course descriptions. And to contain all the academics noted above, the District is presenting a leaner, more definitive group of five career pathways, a change from the original 16 pathways and career clusters.

"These combinations are related to and complement one another," explained Dr. McKinley. "Students are encouraged to pick a pathway that matches their abilities, skills, and interests. And they can change pathways at any time and as often as needed."

The five SV Career Pathways are:

- 1. Arts, Communication & Media
- 2. Business, Management & Information Technology
- 3. Education, Public Safety & Law
- 4. Health, Medical & Human Services
- 5. Industry, Engineering & Technology

#### THOUGHTFUL DONATIONS CONTRIBUTED TO THE CLUB HOPE FOUNDATION

Before winter break, Connoquenessing Valley Elementary (CVE) kindergarten students listened to the story "Kindness to Share from A to Z" by Todd & Peggy Snow. The students made snowy owls and donated them to Club Hope Foundation Inc. This organization provides encouragement, services, and hope to patients and families affected by a cancer diagnosis. The snowy owls will be added to bags of hope that are distributed to cancer patients receiving chemotherapy at centers in Butler, Lawrence, Beaver and Allegheny Counties. The kindergarteners were excited to spread kindness and brighten the patients' day.







#### **HEARTFELT LESSONS**

Kindergarteners at Ehrman Crest Elementary recently worked on a special art project. Students made one heart that was filled with thumbprints that were all the same color. They talked about how it was nice, but it would be so much better if there were many colors. Each student got their specific color and went to everyone's table to add their thumbprint to the heart to make it more like we are – diverse!







#### **SPREADING KINDNESS**

First graders at Haine Elementary recently demonstrated kindness by making cards for the Children's Advocacy Center of Butler County. They enjoyed creating cards with positive messages, words of encouragement, and support for others!







# JOIN THE SENECA VALLEY TEAM!

## **ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT POSITIONS**

Seeking knowledgeable applicants with strong interpersonal and communication skills for permanent 12-month (\$30,636/year salary) administrative assistant positions. Requirements: Must pass the district administrative assistant test when scheduled. High attention to detail required. Must be able to multi-task in fast paced work environment. Submit required information to <u>www.svsd.net/Employment</u>.

"One of my favorite things about this job is the variety. No two days are the same, and it is fun for me to problem solve and try to help power through the little wrinkles that pop up. I also really enjoy working with all my coworkers, knowing that we are all trying our hardest to make this the best educational experience possible for our students. It is a great job for working moms since we have time off during Thanksgiving, winter, and part of spring break to be home with our kids, and my superiors are very gracious and flexible with my schedule when I have unexpected childcare issues."

Heather Ruppert, Administrative Assistant Ehrman Crest Middle School

"Every morning I look forward to coming in to work. Each day brings a new challenge, a fast pace, and an opportunity to work with wonderful staff and students. Administration is supportive, and my coworkers are amazing.

I am still able to be home shortly after my older children get home from school. My schedule is ideal for being present for my family, while providing amazing health care coverage and financial support." Emily Ladd, Administrative Assistant

hily Ladd, Administrative Assistant Ehrman Crest Middle School

#### **APPLY TODAY!**

To learn more and apply, visit www.svsd.net/HumanResources or call (724) 452-6040

#### Benefits of working at Seneca Valley:

- Competitive wages and benefits
- Outstanding professional development
- Commitment to supporting diverse faculty and staff
- Inclusive and motivated students and engaged families
- Commitment to community service
- Exceptional facilities

The Seneca Valley School District is committed to advancing equity and embracing diversity and inclusion in the workplace. EOE.

#### SV'S HIGH SCHOOL MOCK TRIAL TEAM RAISES THE BAR

The final verdict? Seneca Valley's High School Mock Trial team went undefeated in the University of Pittsburgh's Cathedral Classic, a mock trial competition featuring 49 teams from across the state. At the conclusion of the event, only three teams went undefeated, including Seneca Valley, winning all four of their trials and ultimately earning them a third-place finish in the annual tournament.

Additionally, Kacy Christensen, a junior, won the Best Attorney Award out of nearly 150 student-attorneys who competed.

"In the past few months, our mock trial team has spent countless hours preparing for this competition," said Miss Christensen. "I loved seeing how we all came together to support each other and how we pushed each other to become better. The trials were an amazing experience for us to form a closer bond and celebrate all of our hard work. I am so proud of all of my team and I can speak for all of us that we are so thankful for the support of Ms. Nassan. We are excited to work even harder for our upcoming competitions!"



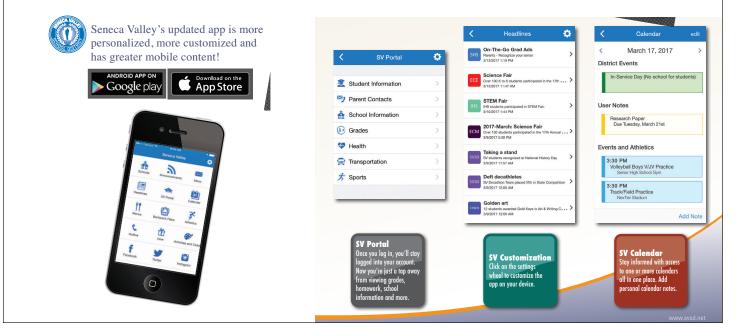
Pictured L to R: Leo Slacker, Calleigh Foulkrod, Jacob Hensler, Julia Acker, Sydney Kratsas, Kacy Christensen, Grant Hoover, Nick Porter, Sonya Dietz, Benjamin Carnino, Friyana Sepai, Lilly Hudac and Julia Gibilisco

The SV Mock Trial Team comprises of students in grades 9-12 in the gifted program and is advised by Ms. Brieana Nassan, intermediate high school gifted support teacher.

Members of the SV Mock Trial Team include Leo Slacker, Calleigh Foulkrod, Jacob Hensley, Julia Acker, Sydney Kratsas, Kacy Christensen, Grant Hoover, Nick Porter, Sonya Dietz, Benjamin Carnino, Friyana Sepai, Lilly Hudac, Julia Gibilisco, Katie Mack and Morgan Dunn.

"Although we are considered a mock trial team, it honestly feels more like a family. I'm so proud of everyone and the time they give up, including Ms. Nassan, but this is only the beginning. We are back to work preparing for the State Regionals at Butler, and I wouldn't rather it be with any other group," said senior, Grant Hoover.

## Download the new and improved **SV MOBILE APP**





By Varden Armstrong, Performing Arts Coordinator

#### **SV CHORUS HOSTS PMEA EVENTS**

This January, the Pennsylvania Music Education Association (PMEA) District Chorus and Junior High District Chorus events were hosted by the Seneca Valley Choral Department. More than 40 school districts participated in these events. Dr. Ryan Beeken was brought in from Wichita State University to guest conduct the high school choir. The beautiful and uplifting song selections were performed magnificently by the choir which received an exuberant standing ovation from the full house audience. "We want to



thank our SV administration, staff, faculty, booster organization and students. Their support allowed 192 high school students and 264 middle school students from Beaver, Butler, Lawrence, and Mercer counties to collaborate and create beautiful music for an experience they will never forget," said Bobi-Jean Alexander, High School Choir Director.

Seneca Valley participants in grades 10-12 included: Ayla Alexander, Connor Benson, Josh Cantella, Hunter Connell, Peter DePasquale, Ella Gemperlein, Sofia Hartman, Elizabeth Hixon, Isaac Hixon, Leta Hixon, Elia Honeycutt, Marissa Hotton, Jackson Hugus, Graham Logue, Colton Marley, Anya Maschmeier, Natalie Palmer, Christian Schuster, Josie Sherman, Giulia Siegfried, Madi Tomo, Dorothy Vogel, Callum Williams and Emma Zelesnak. The Pennsylvania **Music Education** Association (PMEA) Junior District Chorus held on Jan. 20. was dedicated to the late Seneca Valley graduate, Donald Exline Hixon, Jr. As a PMEA District 5 President. Mr. Don Hixon was instrumental in creating what has become the annual Junior High Festival. The directors of



District 5 chose to hold this year's festival in his honor after his untimely passing from an aggressive form of cancer last January. Don's oldest son was Seneca Valley's Prom King last year, and five of Don's children remain in the Seneca Valley District. They have successively participated in many PMEA events including All-State, All-Eastern, and All-Nationals thanks to the musical Hixon family and the constant support of their amazing mother, Tammy Hixon. Don was the District 5 crowned 'King of Pop Music.' In tribute, the musical selections for this year's Junior High Festival were all choral arrangements of popular music. A new choral piece of "Don't Stop Believin'" was commissioned for the concert finale.

Seneca Valley participants in grades 7-9 included: Josie Biertempfel, Luke Birckbichler, Nathan Capizzi, Matt Cornely, Trace D'Ambrosio, Aydan Danylo, Elaina Donahue, Ali Eckenrode, Andrew Foster, Calleigh Foulkrod, Jacob Hensler, Quintin Hixon, Dom Hoffmaster, Autumn Holmes, Aiden Kephart, Jordan Lauer, Cole Mahaney, Jacob Maietta, Lily Maschmeier, Julia Miller, Aidan Newman, Chi Norman, Billie Rape, John Rieger, Chloe Robertson, Morgan Roithner, Jude Segulla, Matt Sickle, Jill Snyder, Gavin Sperry, Morgan Stanton and Madelyn Tresky.

Students are led by Bobi-Jean Alexander, Claire Barker and Chessa Crum, secondary choral instructors.

#### SENECA VALLEY'S ALL-SCHOOL MUSICAL

The All-School Musical is excited to present *Disney* and *Cameron Mackintosh's Mary Poppins*. One of the most popular Disney movies of all time is capturing hearts in a whole new way: as a practically perfect musical! Based on the books by P.L. Travers and the classic Walt Disney film, we hope you will have a supercalifragilisticexpialidocious good time.

Don't delay in purchasing your tickets to see the show at the Seneca Valley Intermediate High School Auditorium.

- March 2 & 3 at 7 p.m.
- March 4 at 2 p.m. and 7 p.m.
- March 5 at 2 p.m.

Tickets go on sale on Feb. 12. Visit the website for more information. http://www.showclix.com/event/ sv-mary-poppins



#### **SV PERFORMING ARTS SPREADS MUSIC "CHEER" TO YOUNGER STUDENTS**

During the month of December, the Seneca Valley Performing Arts (SVPA) department resumed the annual tradition of performing in many of the elementary and middle schools within our District. The Senior High School Madrigal Singers and Chamber Orchestra traveled to Connoquenessing Valley Elementary (CVE) and Ehrman Crest Middle School. Additionally, both Jazz Ensemble I and Jazz Ensemble II traveled to Rowan Elementary and Haine Middle School. These performances were a highlight for both the younger and older students. Everyone enjoys the opportunity to reminisce about where they attended elementary and middle school and the younger students set their sights on what they can be a part of as they move toward the secondary campus. Another unique performance was held at Ehrman Crest









Elementary in one of the new collaboration spaces. Woodwind players from the SV Wind Ensemble performed for all of second graders. "Making connections with younger students and celebrating the growth of our accomplished musicians





is a wonderful way to spread musical cheer prior to the winter break. It is a tradition that we are so pleased the district continues to support," said Varden Armstrong, Instrumental Music Director and Performing Arts Coordinator.

#### STUDENTS UNVEIL FINAL FILM PROJECTS

On Thursday, Jan. 19 and Friday, Jan. 20, the SV Documentary class held its annual final project screenings. The 10 professional films ranged in topics from living with multiple sclerosis and mental health during quarantine to the evolution of the SV band program and the history of American currency. The film premieres were the



culmination of months of work both in and out of school where students had to conduct research, find experts to interview and spend countless hours editing their content into a compelling story. The 14 students in this class spent most of the first nine weeks learning the basics of camera technology, interviewing techniques, and more advanced editing to prepare them for

SVTV & SV DOCUMENTARY CLASS PRESENT THE 2022-23	LIAM BATHER & AIDEN EUBANKS Glimpses into Perseverance MASON LOEFFLER & TOBY NICKLES For the Dream: The Zellenople Memorial Skate Park
	1/19 JASON GIBSON What is a Club?: An Exploration of After School Activities
Documentary	EVELYN VOGEL Shifting Geors: Three Generations Restore an Antique Truck
Screenings	BLAKE ALTMAN The New Normal: Living With Multiple Sclerosis
2- UNIQUE SHOWS 10 DIFFERENT FILMS THURSDAY 1/19 & FRIDAY 1/20	KAYDENCE KILHOF The Next Chapter: Breaking Down the College Admissions Process MASON AHL Mental Health and Quarantine, How it Affected Us 1/20 ARDEN KIELY & LEANNE ABEL Key Changes: The Evolution of the SV Band Program
Support the arts, learn something new, & see the culmination of months of student work on a variety of topics!	CALEB MAGILL & CHRIS MALOBERTI Tales of the Herces of Yesterday. Keeping WWII Vets' Stones Alive XZAVIER DORNETTO From Colonials to Crypto: The Evolution of American Currency

their final projects on a topic of their choice. When asked about finally being finished with her film, senior Arden Kiely said, "It just feels really satisfying to see all of our months of work made into something that we can be proud of." The films will be uploaded to SVTV's **YouTube** and **Vimeo** channels in the coming weeks.



By Heather Lewis, Seneca Valley Athletics & Activities Director

#### WINTER SPORTS UPDATES

#### **BOYS BASKETBALL**

Overall record: 5-7

Section record: 2-2

Leading scorers:

- Luke Lawson (13.4 ppg)
- Connor Oros (13.3 ppg)
- Andrew Roy (10.5 ppg)





#### **GIRLS BASKETBALL**

Overall record: 3-11

Section record: 0-5

Leading scorers:

- Natalie Hambly (9.0 ppg)
- Emerson Peffer (7.4 ppg)
- Allison Sevin (7.6 ppg)



#### **SWIMMING & DIVING**

#### Boys

Overall record (boys): 3-2

Section record (boys): 1-0

Key performances-top 10 WPIAL times (boys):

- Gavin Blazer 50 free, 100 fly
- Isaiah Clerkley Diving
- Sam Hersick Diving
- Logan Hockenberry 100 breast
- Jeremiah Laslavic Diving
- Connor Seeley 200 free, 100 back
- Haihan Xu 50 free, 100 free, 500 free, 100 breast, 200 IM
- 200 free relay
- 200 medley relay
- 400 free relay

#### Girls

Overall record (girls): 3-2

Section record (girls): 1-0

Key performances-top 10 WPIAL times (girls):

- Isabella Kling 200 free
- Chloe Petersen Diving
- Alissa Wilson 200 IM
- 200 free relay
- 200 medley relay
- 400 free relay



#### **BOYS WRESTLING**

Overall team record: 6-5 duals record

Section team record: 1-2

Key performers this season:

- Tyler Chappell 18-5
- Connor Smith 16-6



#### **GIRLS WRESTLING**

Overall team record: 0-2

Key performers in this inaugural season:

- Genevieve Citrone started her career with a fourth-place finish at the nationally recognized Powerade Tournament. At the North Allegheny tournament, she placed 1st winning four of her five matches in a round-robin. The four wins were all by pin.
- Khloe Hollinger a first-year wrestler, had an outstanding performance at the North Allegheny tournament placing 2nd with four wins.
- Isabella Leighty a team leader in this inaugural season who continues to work back from injury.
- Natalie Tofanelli holds a record of 7-3 and currently placed 3rd at the North Allegheny tournament.



#### **ATHLETES OF THE MONTH, DECEMBER 2022**

The Female Athlete of the Month for December was Bella Kling. The junior swimmer had a great start to the year with podium finishes in two events in the first meet of the season. She placed first in the 200-meter freestyle and third in the 100-meter butterfly. Bella's times in both events have already qualified her for the 2022-23 WPIAL Swimming and Diving Championships. For her stellar performance, we recognize Bella as the December Female Athlete of the Month. Congratulations Bella!

The Male Athlete of the Month for December was junior boy's wrestler Connor Smith. Connor has amassed a record of 13-4 at the 114-pound weight class through the tournament portion of the wrestling season. He placed second in the statewide King of the Mountain Tournament, which included a victory over last year's PIAA fourth place finisher. Connor also placed seventh at the nationwide 67 team Powerade Wrestling Tournament. We recognize Connor as the December Male Athlete of the Month. Congratulations Connor!





#### **COLLEGE COMMITMENTS – CLASS OF 2023**

Raider student-athletes continue to make their college commitment official through the winter months. We congratulate these seniors in achieving their goals of continuing their athletic and academic careers at the next level. Each of you are tremendous representatives of Raider Athletics and we are very proud of your efforts in the classroom, in competition and in the community.



Name	Sport	College/University	Major
Eli DeWitt	Cross Country	Robert Morris Univ.	Business Management
Virginia Fronk	Soccer George	Mason Univ.	Environmental Science
Lucas Lambert	Football	Robert Morris Univ.	Organizational Leadership
Luke Lawson	Football	U.S. Naval Academy	Engineering
Aiden Lyczek	Football	U.S. Naval Academy	Econ. & Mathematics
Amelia Stohon	Volleyball	Pitt-Greensburg	Psychology

### ANNUAL SUPPORT CAMPAIGN SUCCESS

With your support, the SVF's Annual Support Campaign was a huge success! Through many generous contributions, we raised over **\$23,700**. These funds will be used to continue our important mission in supporting Seneca Valley's students and staff.

Thank you to the following donors:

#### Platinum Level (\$1,000+)

Central Maintenance Mr. & Mrs. Vic & Debbie Conrad

#### Gold Level (\$500 - \$999)

Allegheny Safe and Lock Ms. Elizabeth Allen-Boyle Ms. Lynn Burtner Ms. Amanda Kile - Dedicated to Ms. Harding, Ms. Kramer, Ms. Fornadel & Mr. Tucciarone

#### Silver Level (\$200 - \$499)

Ms. Kyra Bobak Ms. Trisha Butschle Mr. & Mrs. Bob and Erin Ceh Dr. Mallory Eyles Ms. Lindsey Kisucky Ms. Kristen Kress

#### Bronze Level (\$20 - \$199)

Ms. Susan Baker Ms. Patricia Ball Ms. Janet Becker Ms. Margaret Beggy Ms. Kimberly Blakley Ms. Mary Boburczak Ms. Rebecca Bosco Anonymous Ms. Carolyn Bromberg Anonymous Ms. Angela Cardillo Anonymous Ms. Elizabeth Cavicchia Mr. Bruce Clark Ms. Melissa Cornibe Ms. Whitney Corrigan Ms. Valerie Damiani Ms. Corrin DoVidio Ms. Rebecca Finch

Anonymous Ms. Heather Lewis

Ms. Bridget Miller Mr. Randy Miller Ms. Cathy Mowery – *In memory of Mr. Jason Wehrle* Mr. John Pappas Ms. Emily Rihely

Ms. Amanda Mallin Mr. James Nickel Mr. Michael Ozdinec Dr. Marie Palano Ms. Janice Plutnicki Dr. Jeffrey Roberts

Ms. Lisa Fornadel Mr. Steve Fortunato Anonymous Mr. & Mrs. Jeff and Jodi Hassen - In memory of Richard (Dick) Meredith Mrs. Kristin Henry Mr. Michael Henry Ms. Anita Hershberger - In honor of the Elementary Intervention Team and Dr. Marie Palano Ms. Jessica Kerr Ms. Sharon Kramer Mr. Thomas Lavelle Ms. Holly Lingenfelter Ms. Megan Lizewski Mr. Mike Manipole Anonymous Ms. Jenifer McMurray Ms. Tammy Micco

Mr. Taylor Schmidt Mr. & Mrs. Terry & Kristie Shulsky Mr. Dean Walker Kelly Weston Ms. Elizabeth Williams

Ms. Faye Nelson Ms. Madeline Nowak Anonymous - In memory of Regina K. Kraus Ms. Christine Roe - In memory of Ashley Roe-Snvder Ms. Mary Rogers Lemke Ms. Heather Sibeto Ms. Samantha Stewart Anonymous Mr. Christopher Titus Ms. Tracy Vidnovic Anonymous – In honor of SV Marching Band Directors Mr. & Mrs. Jeff and Joan Widdowson Ms. Elizabeth Wimer Mr. Stephen Wolfe Ms. Chrystal Zinkham Ms. Shannon Zolkowski



THE GIFT OF HOPE, THE PROMISE OF EXCELLENCE

PennaFlame Industries Dr. Tracy Vitale

Mr. Russ Sarver Ms. Linda Starosta Ms. Claire Zovko

#### SV APPLAUDS SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS FOR SERVICE, DEDICATION

In honor of school boards' commitment to our students, schools and communities, January is once again designated School Director Recognition Month.

Pennsylvania public schools educate nearly 2 million students, including the nearly 7,400 students here at Seneca Valley. The nine members of our school board are a vital part of the district's administrative team, making informed decisions that lead Seneca Valley and provide opportunities for every student to succeed.

School directors, who are unpaid, devote an average of 10 hours each month to the challenging and complex responsibilities of board business, including voting on budgets, adopting policy and conducting comprehensive planning.

As citizens and parents, the success of our schools is a collective interest. We recognize the time and dedication of our School Board and thank them for ensuring our schools remain a pathway to opportunity for every student.

To learn more about Seneca Valley School Board members, please visit School Board / School Board Members (svsd.net).

## 2023 SENECA VALLEY BOARD OF SCHOOL DIRECTORS:

Ms. Kathy Whittle, Board President Evans City and Seven Fields Boroughs, Region 7

Mr. Jeff Widdowson, Board Vice President Callery and Harmony Boroughs and Jackson Township, Region 9

Ms. Leslie Bredl Cranberry Township East I and II, Region 1

Mr. James Nickel Cranberry Township West I and West II, Region 2

Ms. Susan Harrison Cranberry Township West III, Region 3

Mr. Frederick Peterson Jr. Cranberry Township West IV and West VI, Region 4

Mr. Timothy Hester Cranberry Township East III and West V, Region 5

Mr. Mike Jacobs Zelienople Borough, Region 6

Mr. Eric DiTullio Lancaster and Forward Townships, Region 8





Ms. Kathy Whittle

Mr. James Nickel

Mr. Timothy Hester



Mr. Jeff Widdowson



Ms. Susan Harrison



Mr. Mike Jacobs



Ms. Leslie Bredl



Mr. Frederick Peterson Jr.



Mr. Eric DiTullio

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#### SV ALL-STAR: SCHOOL BUS DRIVER GOES ABOVE AND BEYOND THE CALL OF DUTY

For January, we are pleased to announce the newest member inducted into the SV All-Star Club, Ms. Jane Casey, bus driver for ABC Transit, Inc.

The SV All-Star Club is an awards program developed by the District to express our gratitude to Seneca Valley classified employees (administrative assistants, paraprofessionals, maintenance, cafeteria) and bus drivers who are often the unsung heroes of our schools. We recognize a new member of this elite all-star club each month.

Ms. Casey is a proud SV alumna and has served the Seneca Valley School District for 14 consecutive years. She began her career with AJ Myers in 2008 then transitioned to ABC Transit, Inc. to continue her route where she serves all the schools on the secondary campus (Seneca Valley Senior High School, Seneca Valley Intermediate High School and Ryan Gloyer Middle School) as well as Connoquenessing Valley Elementary (CVE).

Mr. John Demkowicz, Director of Transportation said, "Ms. Casey continues to help with activity routes, athletics and school trips. She speaks with love and compassion of her experiences watching the children she transports grow from young children into adulthood."

Mr. Demkowicz has received numerous emails from parents about Ms. Casey's generosity and kindness and how she goes out of her way to support students.

One parent wrote: I wanted to take a minute to let you know how appreciative we are of Ms. Jane. For the last few years, she has driven my elementary school son to CVE and my older three kids to the SV high school campus. She is unfailingly kind, welcoming, and professional. She always greets the kids with a kind word and a smile when they get on the bus, and my daughter (currently a senior at SV) has mentioned how much she enjoys chatting with Ms. Jane in the afternoons as they're waiting in the bus line to drive home. Ms. Jane also helped my daughter identify a Senior Project and proudly informed me that the project is ready for review to fulfill graduation requirements.

The parent went on to share: *The reason I'm writing now is* because of a recent event. My son, currently a sophomore, was in the fall production of The Addams Family at SV. Not only did Jane put up a playbill to help promote the show, she and her husband gave up some of their precious weekend hours to come see the kids perform. Her thoughtfulness and generosity in supporting our child like that means so much to him and to us. It was WAY beyond the call of duty and demonstrates how much Jane cares about her students and goes the extra mile to make them feel seen and to feel special.



Pictured from L-R: Mr. John Demkowicz, transportation director, Dr. Tracy Vitale, Superintendent of Schools, Ms. Jane Casey, and Ms. Kathy Whittle, Board President.

We are so lucky, grateful and tremendously appreciative of Ms. Jane and the care and compassion she shares with our Seneca Valley students. Ms. Jane is a wonderful person to have in the lives of our students. She keeps them safe, gets them to school reliably, and most importantly, cares about them.

#### **STAFF OF SV**

Be sure to check out the latest 'Staff of SV,' a light-hearted feature that was created to share with our followers the more human-interest side of our staff that parents and students don't always get to see. This month features Mackenzie McGuire, Seneca Valley Academy of Choice (SVAOC) Teacher and current hockey referee for NCAA Division I Women's Hockey, Women's Professional leagues and men's college and Junior hockey. Read more at www.svsd.net/ StaffofSV.





#### **'I LED THE PLEDGE'**

Seneca Valley School District's School Board meetings were held on Jan. 9 and 17. We were pleased to continue the tradition of inviting elementary students from Seneca Valley's K-4 schools to lead the members of the School Board and public in saying "The Pledge of Allegiance."



Vanessa Stott with, from L-R, Mr. Jeff Widdowson, Board Vice President and Dr. Tracy Vitale, Superintendent

For the Jan. 17 regular session meeting, we were joined by Connoquenessing Valley Elementary (CVE) third grader, Ruhan Boopathi. Ruhan's favorite subject is math, his favorite sport is soccer, and he plans to be a scientist when he grows up. When



Ruhan Boopathi with, from L-R, Ms. Kathy Whittle, Board President and Dr. Tracy Vitale, Superintendent

For the Jan. 9 work session meeting, we were joined by Haine Elementary fourth grader, Vanessa Stott. Vanessa's favorite subject is science, and she hopes to be either an archaeologist or a family doctor when she grows up.



Vanessa Stott with, from L-R, Mr. Jeff Widdowson, Board Vice President, Dr. Kristen White, Haine Elementary Principal and Dr. Tracy Vitale, Superintendent

asked about his classroom at CVE, Ruhan exclaimed to the School Board, "Mr. Rupik is the best teacher ever!"

Both of these students did a fantastic job leading the pledge!



Ruhan Boopathi with, from L-R, Dr. Tina Wentz, Connoquenessing Valley Elementary Acting Principal, Kathy Whittle, Board President, Dr. Tracy Vitale, Superintendent and Mr. Scott Rupik, Connoquenessing Valley Elementary third grade teacher



#### **ALUMNI Q&A**

Brittany Kristophel, SV '04, is currently working at CORE (Center for Organ Recovery and Education) as a Medical Laboratory Scientist & Kidney Perfusionist. We asked her to catch us up on what she is doing and how Seneca Valley influenced her life and career.



#### Q: Catch us up. Tell us what you're doing today:

A: After high school, I continued my education at PIMS (Pittsburgh Institute of Mortuary Science) and Point Park University where I got my BA in Funeral Service, minor in Psychology, and associates in Business all within three years. I got my first job as a funeral director & mortician in 2007 at Robert A. Pumphrey Funeral Home in Bethesda, Maryland. In 2010, I decided I wanted to further my science education and moved back to Pennsylvania. I went to Slippery Rock University from 2010-2014 where I got my BA in Medical Technology. I've been a Medical Laboratory Scientist & Kidney Perfusionist at CORE (Center for Organ Recovery and Education) for nine years.

COREs lab is a high complexity reference lab that does infectious disease testing on all local tissue/eye donors, local potential organ donors, and other potential organ donors from out of state organ procurement organizations on the east coast. I work in all areas of the lab which include serology, immunology, molecular NAT testing, immunohematology, microbiology, point-of-care, frozen section biopsies and kidney perfusion. Some of the infectious diseases I test for are Syphilis, Hepatitis C, Hepatitis B, HIV, Cytomegalovirus, Epstein-Barr Virus, Toxoplasmosis, West Nile virus and Chagas.

I'm responsible for placing donor kidneys on a Pulsatile Perfusion Pump, understanding sterile technique, renal anatomy and monitoring perfusion temperature, flow rate, resistance and pressure. Kidney perfusion typically happens if the transplant surgeon is busy transplanting other organs, to give time for the recipient to get to the hospital, or surgeon may request a kidney to be pumped so they have an idea how the kidney is going to function prior to transplant.

#### Q: Please share with us some information about your family.

A: I've been with my amazing husband Zach Kristophel for 13 years and married for seven years. We have a fur baby and her name is Stormy. Stormy is our "child," she is extremely spoiled, and we love her way too much! She is a Bernedoodle and is three years old. Some of our favorite pastimes are fishing, hiking, camping, kayaking, traveling, playing scrabble and spending time with family.



#### Q: How did Seneca Valley help you become the person you are today, both personally and professionally?

A: Our family moved to Cranberry Twp. in 2002 from a very small town in Elk County (Ridgway), and I was going into 11th grade. My previous high school had grades 6-12 all in the same building with a class size of maybe 60 students; talk about a culture shock when I started at Seneca Valley. It was a struggle, but I had to put myself out there and learn really quick how to make new friends. Let's



just say my crash course in meeting new people and the journey to make new friends had an impact on my current communication skills in life. I'm very outgoing and have no problem striking up conversation and making friends with just about anybody.

## Q: What do you think makes Seneca Valley such a special place to learn and grow?

A: Variety of classes and extracurricular activities available for students. Seneca Valley offers multiple types of art classes, sciences, languages, astronomy, etc.

#### Q: Who was your favorite teacher/coach/SV staff member?

A: Mrs. Hadley! She was my absolute favorite teacher and was a big influence on me for choosing my professional career in the sciences. Everything I learned in her classes helped prepare me for my future careers and hobbies in life. Examples include dissections, anatomy and life cycles of aquatic insects.

## **Q:** What is one of your favorite memories from your time at Seneca Valley?

A: I would have to say my favorite memory would be taking what we learned about aquatic insects and water quality in biology class and going down to the creek to look for those insects, clams and fish and testing the water quality. I love hands-on learning and not sitting behind a desk all day listening to a teacher lecture.

## Q: If you had one message for teachers or staff, what would it be?

A: Keep it fun for the students and find ways to keep them engaged and entertained.

#### Q: What do you wish other people knew about Seneca Valley?

A: This is a hard one, but it goes back to my previous response. Seneca Valley is a very large school district and offers such a diverse selection of classes, sports and clubs.

#### FYI

January is Mental Wellness Month, and the SV school district is committed to supporting every student through mental wellness programs and additional support services. Community resources are also available in addition to our school psychologists, school counselors, behavioral specialists, school administrators, and Youth Education Support Services (YESS) teams in each building.

#### Therapy

Therapy is recognized as a supportive service to address mental health concerns or behavioral problems. Services offered in the District and in the community emphasize mental wellness to ensure that our youth can successfully access their education.

#### **Supportive Learning Measures**

Seneca Valley School District offers specialized programming for students with significant mental health concerns. The elementary and secondary levels each have specialized classrooms to support students who are transitioning to and from alternative placements. A specialized classroom is also available at the high school level to support credit-deficient students who are working toward fulfilling graduation requirements. If a student is deemed eligible for specialized services through an evaluation, support can also be provided through an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or Section 504 Service Agreement.

#### **Crisis Response**

The Crisis Response Team is comprised of staff members and community agencies, such as the Center for Community Resources (CCR) and Glade Run Lutheran Services (GRLS). The Team is responsible for facilitating the school's response to any crisis by following established protocols that are rooted in best practices.

To learn more about the district's mental wellness resources, visit Student Services / Mental Wellness (svsd.net)

\*Note: Confidentiality is held with the utmost integrity when dealing with personal matters.

\*\* If you or someone you know is in need of crisis intervention, please call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-8255.



The 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline (formerly known as the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline) provides free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, across the United States. The Lifeline is comprised of a national network of over 200 local crisis centers, combining custom local care and resources with national standards and best practices.



# **IT'S OKAY TO ASK FOR HELP**



Calming the Chaos of Mental Health Care Care Solace connects students, staff, and their families to care. At no cost to you, Care Solace will quickly and confidentially find available mental health and substance use providers matched to your needs.

Find the right help at the right time.



Q

### 24/7/365 MULTILINGUAL SUPPORT

A multilingual team is available 24/7/365 to help you understand options, call providers on your behalf, and schedule an appointment.

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Please note: Care Solace is not an emergency response service or mental health services provider. In the event of a life threatening emergency, call 9-1-1 or the National Suicide Hotline 1-800-273-8255.



# NEW YEAR, NEW TECH HABITS: 11 TIPS FOR SETTING SCREEN TIME RULES WITH YOUR KIDS

Why have any screen time policies /rules for our kids anyway? Devices provide endless entertainment, connection to others, relief from FOMO (fear of missing out), a sense off competency that comes from leveling up in a game, and much more. But at a cost. Allowing the "treat" side of tech (vs. the "tool" side) to overly consume our children's time is not in their best interest, nor that of our families or schools.

That's why having policies /rules around tech is valuable and worth the work.

At times your kids may want to refrain from participating. But don't give up. Make sure you have some protected time to talk about science, love, and all the reasons why this is important.

#### Why now?

Katherine Milkman, a researcher, and author of *How To Change*, has found that people are particularly motivated to change behaviors after a "fresh start," such as the New Year or the start of a new month. As humans, we love the idea of a clean slate.

#### **Avoid scare tactics**

A couple of headlines are making their way through the press, and while you may want to share them with your kids, be sure to be clear that these are association studies. What to make of each association will take time to decipher, so we must be careful to avoid drawing conclusions prematurely. These findings include associations between video gaming and obsessivecompulsive disorder and between social media and cognitive control.

These papers come from the ABCD study, a coalition of researchers across the country studying kids over time and doing brain scans. We will continue to see more headlines about these associations.

#### 11 rules /policies to consider

Below are eleven tech-policy examples to consider talking about with your kids and making some decisions. As a parent, you may need to make some



executive decisions if you can't agree on things together.

Finally, deciding on policies depends on many things, like your child's age, so l've provided different variations.

#### 1. "You show, I observe" time, once a

**month** — This involves having your teen scroll on their social media for a few minutes while you sit with them. You get to see what comes up and you don't react or critique, just observe. And then a day or two later is when you can reconvene to debrief a bit. Not to be judgmental or mad, but to think together about some messages and dynamics you both noticed on your teen's social media.

Pointer: try to schedule a day, like the first of each month, in which this will occur somewhat regularly.

- 2. Same as above but do this exercise twice a month.
- Same as above, but with social video gaming platforms and specific games, such as Roblox, Discord, Legend of Zelda, Minecraft, etc.
- 4. Everyone inventories their own screen time. Steps for conducting a family screen time inventory:
- a. Agree on a time to share findings, such as at two dinners from now
- b. Determine the method for tracking screen time that works best:

- Check device settings to see if time spent gets recorded
- Estimate time spent on different apps (e.g., Instagram, Facebook, TikTok, Snapchat, YouTube, Netflix, email) based on an average day
- Log screen time for one day and estimate for the week
- c. Each family member records their own screen time using the chosen method.
- d. At the agreed time, share findings with the rest of the family.
- 6. Maximum of 1 hour at a time of video game play without a break.
- Matching offline activity time for an equal amount of time engaged in online entertainment. For example, after scrolling TikTok for 20 minutes, maybe they help with cooking for that same amount of time.
- 8. Devices away at meal times.
- 9. Devices away at dinner, but if eating other meals alone, like breakfast, it is okay.
- 10. Devices away in the kitchen at dinner time, i.e., when making dinner and while cleaning up after dinner.
- 11. Devices out of the bedroom for sleep every night of the week.

Article provided by Screenagers



- Watch video highlights from our 24th Annual Senior Holiday Event
- Learn about recent lab happenings at SV's Center for Biotechnology Research
- SV senior Will Stimmel raises money for UPMC Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh through his senior project titled "Will's Kicks for Kids"
- Breakfast is now FREE for all students. Click to learn more: Food Services / General Information (svsd.net)
- SV offers voluntary student accident insurance. To learn more and apply, visit: Backpack Fliers / Education/ Resources (svsd.net)
- Effective October 1, Pennsylvania will increase the income threshold for all applicants to 200 percent of the Federal Poverty Income Guidelines (FPIG). With this change, more than 420,000 additional Pennsylvanians in more than 174,000 households will be newly eligible for SNAP and will receive, on average, \$63 a month. To learn more, visit Wolf Administration

#### Marks Hunger Action Month by Expanding Eligibility for SNAP Benefits, Securing Food Assistance for More Pennsylvanians

- The FBI has an awareness campaign to educate the public about the consequences of making hoax threats of violence to schools, events and other public places. The Think Before You Post campaign serves to remind everyone that any threat is taken with the utmost seriousness and will be quickly and thoroughly addressed by law enforcement. Hoax threats are not a joke; they are a crime.
- Seneca Valley residents 62 years of age or older are invited to apply to become a member of the Seneca Valley School District Gold Card Club. Membership entitles card holders to attend home athletic events, music, dramatic and other school productions. To apply for a gold card, please visit Parents/Community / Gold Card Club (svsd.net).
- Reality Tour is an accessible substance prevention program that



delivers information to get parent and child on the same page

- Substance Abuse Prevention for Parents - CANDLE, Inc. (candleinc.org)
- Subscribe to our YouTube Channel!
- Drive for SV! Sign-up bonuses are now being offered.
- Join the SV Team! Watch here or visit www.svsd.net/HumanResources to learn more and apply.
- Visit Niche to view SV rankings

#### SV PRESCHOOL REGISTRATION

Seneca Valley Preschool registration for 2023-24 is now open. The Seneca Valley Preschool is part of the Seneca Valley Senior High School Child Development program. Monitored and guided by the teaching staff, high school students study the growth and development of children from birth to age five and use this information to assist in planning and teaching age-appropriate preschool lessons.

Enrolling your child in the SV Preschool program will provide them with an opportunity



to participate in hands-on learning experiences while working one-on-one with high school students. The program runs every week on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday from mid-October through mid-May. The AM session is 8:55 – 10:55 a.m. and the PM



sessions is 11:50-1:50 p.m. Cost is \$180/year. Children must live in the district or have parents who work for Seneca Valley. Children must also be toilet trained and three years of age on or before September 1. Enrollment forms can be found on the preschool website,

#### www.svsd.net/preschool.

Acceptance is on a first come basis. If you were unable to attend registration day on Monday, Jan. 30, and spots are still available, completed paperwork and the registration fee can be dropped off at the senior high school.



CAMP NBERRY

Camp Counselors Camp Coordinator