



RAIDER PRIDE

A State and National Award-Winning Publication

DECEMBER 2022

SV GIVES BACK TO THE COMMUNITY THROUGH ANNUAL EVENT

Nearly 350 senior citizens residing in the Seneca Valley School District attended the 24th Annual Senior Holiday Event on Dec. 20, at the intermediate high school. During their time at this free event, guests were entertained by the Seneca Valley Jazz Ensemble, Chamber Orchestra and Senior High School Madrigal Singers. At the conclusion of the performances, members of the National Honor Society served guests a sit-down holiday meal in the school's cafeteria.



We'd like to extend a big thank you to our event organizers, performers as well as the JROTC cadets who greeted and helped guests to their seats along with National Honor Society members who helped our cafeteria staff.



Wishing you warm and thoughtful greetings this winter season and happiness throughout the coming year! The Seneca Valley School District will be on winter break (no school for students or staff) from Dec. 23, 2022 – Jan. 2, 2023. Students will return to school on Tuesday, Jan. 3, 2023. ■



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DATES TO REMEMBER

Dec. 23 – Jan. 2	Winter Break, No School
Jan. 9	SVAOC End of First Semester; School Board Meeting Work Session, SHS Auditorium, 7 p.m.
Jan. 12	End of First Semester, Grades 7-12
Jan. 13	Staff In-Service Day, No School for Students
Jan. 16	Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, No School for Students
Jan. 17	School Board Action Meeting, SHS Auditorium, 7 p.m.
Jan. 31	Release of Report Cards, Grades 7-12

For more dates, visit:
www.svsd.net/WebCalendar

JANUARY

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

ZUMBATHON LEADS TO OVERWHELMING DONATION TO TOYS FOR TOTS

Students from Ryan Gloyer Middle School (RGMS) gave back to the community through their generous donations to Toys for Tots. On Nov. 22, RGMS held their 2nd Annual Zumbathon. Over 300 students participated in Zumbathon by donating one or more toys to Toys for Tots in Butler County. The event was organized by student council and lasted over two periods which consisted of non-stop dancing! As a reward for students exceeding their goal of 300 toys, RGMS administrators,

School Resource Officer (SRO) and a school counselor took a pie to the face. ■



GIVING BACK TO THE COMMUNITY

The Condor team at Ryan Gloyer Middle School (RGMS) held a food drive called Scare Hunger benefiting a local food pantry in Evans City. The team's goal was surpassed, and they generously donated 351 items which were used to provide a delicious Thanksgiving meal to families in need. Students at RGMS have been participating in the Scare Hunger food drive for the past



four years and look forward to continuing to give back to the community. ■



MAKING A DIFFERENCE

The FCCLA (Family, Career, and Community Leaders of America) and the Key Club at Ryan Gloyer Middle School (RGMS) teamed up with Chick-fil-A in Cranberry Township to host a variety of service events that would impact the community.

The first event was children's book donation called "1 Million Book Giveaway." Chick-fil-A purchased five different books to promote healthy and positive concepts such as kindness, emotions and sharing. The FCCLA and Key Club packaged and delivered 175 sets of books to children at Seneca Valley's Stepping Stones and preschool programs, Glade Run Lutheran Services, Somewhere Over the Rainbow, Rose E. Schneider Family YMCA, New Beginnings Child Care Center and Happy Faces Children's Center.

Students also participated in a coat drive which was held on the secondary campus throughout November. Boxes of donations were collected at RGMS and



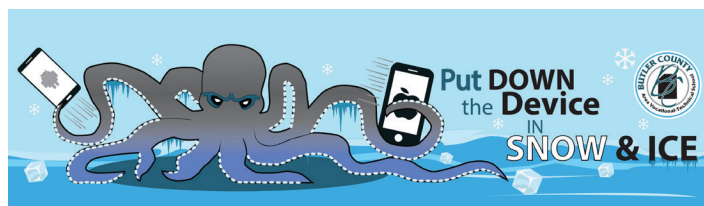
the Intermediate High School (IHS) then sent to St. Peter's Lutheran Church in Evans City and Light of Life Rescue Mission in Pittsburgh. Both of these organizations serve their surrounding areas by providing shelter, food and needed items for people in the community. ■

STUDENTS SHOWCASE THEIR ARTISTRY IN 'PAINT THE PLOW'

The Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) District 10 invited the public to vote on nine plows decorated by high school students in Armstrong, Butler, Clarion, Indiana and Jefferson Counties as part of the annual "Paint the Plow" program.

We are excited to announce that the winning "Fan Favorite" plow was from Butler County Area Vocational-Technical School. Seneca Valley juniors, Benjamin Frenchak and Viktoriya Semenenko took part in painting the plow along with students from Karns City High School and Butler Senior High School. All the school decorated plows will be used to maintain state-owned roads throughout Pennsylvania this winter.

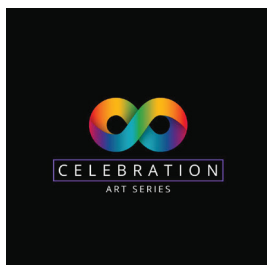
"Paint the Plow" is a statewide outreach aimed at promoting winter driving safety and fostering appreciation for high school art programs and student creativity. This year's theme "Put Down the Device in Snow and Ice" was chosen to draw attention to the need for motorists to give driving their full attention and eliminate distractions, like cell phones, especially during winter weather events.



NEW SERIES HIGHLIGHTS DIVERSE ARTISTS AND THEIR ARTWORK

A new program dedicated to celebrating artistic and cultural diversity has made its grand debut at SV!

The Celebration Art Series is a unique visual art exhibition series at the Seneca Valley Intermediate High School's (IHS) Big Gallery. The series will showcase visiting artists who represent the District's dedication to expand diversity, equity and inclusion within the District and community. This series is presented as a collaboration between the Art Club and the school's local chapter of SHOUT (Social Handprints Overcoming Unjust Treatment).



Mr. Jason Shorr, Seneca Valley Intermediate High School and Senior High School Art teacher, is working with Mr. Ashley Porter, Seneca Valley's Supervisor of Equity and Title IX Coordinator and Ms. Lisa Graham and Malika Christopher, Seneca Valley Intermediate High School Counselors and advisors for SHOUT, to collaborate and provide students with an opportunity to learn about a diverse assortment of art as well as diverse artists.

"The Celebration Art Series is the first of its kind in the Seneca Valley Big Gallery. We are always exhibiting local artists for the student community to see but this is the first series with a common theme. The artists represent diversity either with their art or related to their personal story. We have had two exhibitions so far and will focus on two more artists after the winter break into the spring," said Mr. Shorr. "Representatives from the art club and the SHOUT organization will be helping to choose the next two artists

and, in essence, help to curate the shows. This has been an exciting and unique opportunity for all involved."

This series is comprised of nine student representatives from the art club and SHOUT. The student committee is provided with a panel of local artists, then after their research and collaboration they select artists whose background and pieces reflect inclusion, equity and diversity.

Each artist is invited for an "artist talk" to discuss with students their background, processes, materials used in their pieces and career opportunities in visual arts. Each exhibit is proudly displayed in the Big Gallery adjacent to the IHS cafeteria for about 5-7 weeks.

The Celebration Art Series officially kicked off in November and will run through April of 2023. Mr. Shorr along with Mr. Porter, Ms. Graham, and Ms. Christopher plan to continue working with students throughout the remainder of the school year to develop this student-led series of local artists celebrating diversity. ■



SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICERS TEACH LIFESAVING LESSONS IN THE CLASSROOM

Students at Ryan Gloyer Middle School (RGMS) are not only getting lessons in the classroom but lessons in life with the help of Seneca Valley's school resource officers (SROs), Officer Chris Pipkin and Officer Chris Miller.

Officer Pipkin and Officer Miller have teamed up with RGMS Family and Consumer Sciences teacher, Ms. Kayla Robinson, to co-teach her Personal Development class on topics related to the Character and Child Development Units. Through these classes, students are learning about stress management, communication, teamwork and important lifesaving skills.

"I am extremely thankful for Officer Pipkin and Officer Miller's immediate willingness to come into the classroom. The students get very excited when they know our guest speakers will be showing up because it gives them the opportunity to interact with the SROs in a positive manner. We always promote building a rapport with our students, so this has been an amazing experience to improve on that while also giving the officers a chance to speak on valuable topics," said Ms. Robinson.

Officer Pipkin and Officer Miller teach students what to do in an emergency, then practice various ways the situation could be handled. Students have learned first aid skills like the Heimlich maneuver, Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) and even how to apply a tourniquet.

"Working with Ms. Robinson and talking with her students about the importance of safety has been fun and necessary. At all times we must practice safety measures because we never know the minute, the hour or the day when a dangerous situation will come upon us. I told the kids that no matter how aware and diligent they may be as far as practicing safety, there may be a day when they may have to exercise lifesaving measures to a stranger, a friend or a loved one," said Officer Pipkin.

Additionally, Officer Miller has been working with Ms. Angela Kotula, RGMS Librarian, as she teaches digital



citizenship lessons for both seventh and eighth graders.

"Together, we cover a variety of topics including digital footprints, how words and actions matter, and, in January, we will be discussing the dangers of online predators with our eighth graders," explained Ms. Kotula. "Having Office Miller co-teach these lessons with me helps the students understand the seriousness of the digital world, and they are provided with the opportunity to make personal connections with our school and community law enforcement officers."

"The digital citizenship lessons gave me a chance to speak with the students in a classroom setting and give real examples of how irresponsible social media use can impact the students' lives socially and legally," said Officer Miller.



Seneca Valley has a total of three SROs on the 7-12 secondary campus who are highly trained and certified police officers with the Jackson Township Police Department. These officers work closely with administration to assist with our security needs and have developed an excellent rapport with staff and students. They also work with students to encourage positive and productive behavior. ■

CREATIVE AND COZY SPACES

In 2021-22, Stan Zimmerman, Ryan Gloyer Middle School (RGMS) Art Teacher, helped a student build a faux fireplace as part of his senior project and for final installation in the RGMS Library. David Harmon, SV Class of 2022, was able to build the project with all supply costs completely covered by the Seneca Valley Foundation and the RGMS Library Club. This is a wonderful example of how the District continues to transform library spaces into Creativity, Innovation and Research Centers (CIRC), maker spaces, and multimedia rooms while still maintaining the library component. These have become unique areas that promote exploration, curiosity and reading.



STUDENT'S ARTWORK SELECTED AS HOLIDAY CARD FOR OMNI WILLIAM PENN HOTEL

The Omni William Penn Hotel holds an annual Holiday Card Art Contest to recognize creativity among school children in local area classrooms. Each year they choose a different school in the Greater Pittsburgh area to create a drawing, picture or design for their holiday cards. This year they selected fourth-grade classes at Connoquenessing Valley Elementary School (CVE) to participate!

This year's theme was "Holiday Wonderland," and the artwork was judged by the Executive team at the Omni William Penn based on creativity, originality and spirit of the season.

CVE fourth grader, Aayla Shorr was selected as the winner! Her picture was transformed into a holiday card that is being used by the hotel to send to all their vendors and customers. Ms. Shorr and her immediate family, along with her building, Principal Dr. Wentz and art teacher, Mrs. Humes were invited to attend the annual holiday "Light Up Night" event at the Omni William Penn on Friday, Nov. 18. That evening, Ms. Shorr was introduced and presented with a \$100 gift card, 50 holiday cards with her drawing and a framed proof of her winning entry. ■



Pictured L- R: Ms. Amy Humes, CVE art teacher, Aayla Shorr and Dr. Tina Wentz, CVE Acting Principal



Photo courtesy of Omni William Penn Hotel. Aayla was joined here by Omni William Penn Hotel Director of Sales and Marketing, Bob Page and Pittsburgh Steelers Pat Freiermuth and (the late) Franco Harris. Our deepest condolences to the family of Mr. Harris and the many fans who will forever remember this Pittsburgh legend.

LISTEN TO OUR PODCAST

Seneca Valley launched Voices in August of 2020. We now have over 4,500 downloads, about 70 downloads per episode!



Missed out? Listen to some of our past episodes below and be sure to subscribe to SV's Voices Podcast for future recordings.

- [Introducing the 24th Annual Senior Holiday Event with Mr. Varden Armstrong](#)
- [Learning about Neighbors for Neighbors with Ms. Annie Mersing](#)
- [Where is CIRC Today with Ms. Kelly Del Greco and Mr. Eric Fogle?](#)
- [Catching up with Nolen Fetchko, new Food Service Director](#)
- [My baby is headed to kindergarten – now what?™ Preparing for Kindergarten with Principal Ms. Kristen White](#)
- [Preparing for Fall with Ms. Holly Lingenfelter](#)
- [A Look Back on 2021-22 with Dr. Tracy Vitale](#)
- [Preparing for Fall with Mr. John Demkowicz](#)
- [School's Out, Camp's In with Mr. Steve Fortunato](#)
- [School's Out, Camp's In with Mr. Nii Sowa- Doku](#)
- [Mental Wellness Check-In with Dr. Jeff Roberts](#)
- [The Equity Experience with Mr. Ashley Porter](#)
- [Introducing SV SHOUT with Claire McCafferty and Vivian Palmer](#)
- [Introducing SV SHOUT with Jose Tinoco and Ms. Lisa Graham](#)
- [An Introduction to OPT with Mr. Matt Pournaras](#)
- [Good to Know: Safety and Security Information with Officer Abigail Evans](#)
- [Good to Know: Safety and Security Information with Officer Chris Miller](#)
- [Good to Know: Safety and Security Information with Officer Jason Young](#)
- [The Season of Giving with Mr. Mike Pelloni](#)
- [The Season of Giving with Ms. Megan Bonistalli](#)
- [The Season of Giving with Ms. Annie Mersing](#)
- [The Age of Information: How SV is Keeping up with the Times with Mr. Mike Stebbins](#)
- [The Age of Information: How SV is Keeping up with the Times with Ms. Kelly McDonald](#)
- [Back to School 101: Transitioning and Re-engaging Students with Ms. Christina Karmecy](#)
- [Back to School 101: Transitioning and Re-engaging Students with Ms. Tammie Limmer](#)
- [Additional Offerings with Synchronous Learning with Ms. Denise Manganello](#)
- [Joining the SV Team with Ms. DeeAnn Graham](#)
- [Joining the SV Team with Mr. Bob Ceh](#)
- [Joining the SV Team with Ms. Kyra Bobak](#)
- [Summer Programming Plans with Dr. Tina Francis](#)
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- [Summer Programming Plans with Dr. Marie Palano](#)
- [Performing Arts at SV: Proud of the Past, Excited to Move Forward with Ms. Bobi-Jean Alexander](#)
- [Performing Arts at SV: Proud of the Past, Excited to Move Forward with Mr. Bob Babick](#)
- [Performing Arts at SV: Proud of the Past, Excited to Move Forward with Mr. Aaron Magill](#)
- [Performing Arts at SV: Proud of the Past, Excited to Move Forward with Mr. Varden Armstrong](#)
- [2021-22 Program of Studies: A Review with Dr. Matt McKinley](#)
- [An Inside Look: How SV Handles Inclement Weather with Mr. Jim Pearson](#)
- [An Inside Look: How SV Handles Inclement Weather with Mr. Randy Miller](#)
- [An Inside Look: How SV Handles Inclement Weather with Ms. Linda Andreassi](#)
- [Serving as a Seneca Valley Foundation Board Trustee with Mr. Vic Conrad](#)
- [Learning about the Seneca Valley Foundation with Ms. Annie Mersing](#)
- [Introducing Raider Crate Part II with Sydney McMurray](#)
- [Introducing SV Raider Crate Part I with Antonio Amelio](#)
- [Finding our Groove with School Psychologist Dr. Latitia Lattanzio](#)
- [Finding our Groove with Secondary School Counselor Ms. Lisa Graham](#)
- [Finding our Groove with Elementary School Counselor Ms. Lauren O'Donnell](#)





PMEA DISTRICT 5 HONORS BAND

On Tuesday, Nov. 15, auditions were held for the 2022 Pennsylvania Music Education Association's (PMEA) District 5 Honors Band at Westminster College. District 5 is comprised of all school districts in Beaver, Butler, Lawrence and Mercer counties. To audition, students must be in at least ninth grade and prepare a piece from a predetermined solo list for each school year. These college-level solos are selected by the directors of District 5. Over 200 students auditioned for a band of 125 musicians. **Seneca Valley had 42 students earn a position in the Honors Band this year, more than any other school.** This year's Honors Band was guest conducted by Dr. M. Gregory Martin, Professor of Music Education and Associate Director of Bands at Westchester University. The three-day festival culminated with a concert in Orr Auditorium at Westminster College on Dec. 10, at 2 p.m. The Seneca Valley Band Directors at the secondary level include Varden Armstrong, Robert Babick, Sara Snyder and Brian Croach.



Participants:

Leanne Abel - Trombone
Paityn Armstrong - Clarinet
James Beck - Alto Sax
Lucas Boyle - French Horn
Noah Bracht - Tuba
Sydney Brower - French Horn
Nicole Brown - Bass Clarinet
Elora Dabravalskas - Trumpet
Kennaeya Fitzgerald - Clarinet
Andrew Golias - Percussion

Madeline Heere - Clarinet
Sylvia Heilman - Clarinet
Liz Hixon - Clarinet
Leta Hixon - Tuba
Isaac Hixon - French Horn
Peter Ko - Alto Sax
Sydney Kratsas - Tuba
Phebe Locante - Clarinet
Katie Mack - Oboe
Colton Marley - Trumpet
Haley McKinney - Clarinet

Braedon Mc Nally - Trombone
Camyn Meanor - French Horn
Bailey Milanovich - Alto Sax
Maggie Monahan - Clarinet
Patrick Monahan - Flute
Lauren Nowak - Clarinet
Steven Patterson - Clarinet
Jocelyn Repas - Clarinet
Susie Roscoe - Flute
Lola Schwendemann - French Horn

Bridget Scott - Trombone
Katie Sylves - Trumpet
Claire Thompson - Flute
Roy Tilton - Trombone
Zachary Tollerton - Trumpet
Kami Topf - Trumpet
Mackenzie Tunstall - Clarinet
Raymond Walter - Trumpet
Adrian Wrubel - Trumpet
Haihan Xu - Trumpet
Autumn Zacherl - Flute ■

THE BEST WAY TO SPREAD HOLIDAY CHEER IS SINGING LOUD FOR ALL TO HEAR

The SV Chorus was busy in December spreading holiday cheer! In addition to many concerts, the Show Choir and Madrigal Singers performed around our community and even at Kennywood!

Additionally, the public will have the opportunity to listen to our Senior High Concert Choir, Treble Choir, Men's Chorus, Madrigal Singers, and Quintets on KDKA radio (100.1-FM and 1020-AM) on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day! Choir director, Bobi-Jean Alexander said, "I'm very proud that KDKA reached out asking us to share the joy our students' music can bring!"

Even more great Choral music will be happening as we begin 2023. Seneca Valley will be hosting the Pennsylvania Music Education Association's (PMEA) District Chorus on Jan. 11-13, and PMEA

Jr District Chorus on January 20. The concerts will be held on Jan. 13 and 20 at 7 p.m. and the RGMS Library Club. ■





WINTER SPORTS SEASON UNDERWAY

The Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association (PIAA) winter sports season officially began on Friday, Dec. 2. The following is a brief recap on the start of the respective seasons.

Boys' Basketball: Boys' basketball travelled to North Hills for their Tip Off tournament and came away with a split, beating Perry Traditional Academy and falling to Hampton. Following the opening weekend, this senior-laden team has travelled to North Catholic and Fox Chapel, falling in both contests by one and seven points, respectively.

Girls' Basketball: The girls' basketball team hosted their annual Tip Off tournament and split a pair of games, beating Canon-Mac, and falling to McDowell. Since the opening weekend, the girls have lost a string of games hosting Plum and travelling to Fox Chapel and Baldwin. This young squad is led on the court by senior Anna Felitsky while classmate Chloe Leonard, recovering from a season-ending injury, will provide valuable leadership from the bench.

Ice Hockey: Raider Ice Hockey is off to a rousing start, currently sitting atop PIHL AAA standings with nine wins in their first 11 contests.

Swimming & Diving: At the time of this writing, Swimming and Diving were opening their seasons at Fox Chapel – their only meet prior to the winter break.

Boys' Wrestling: Boys' wrestling opened their season at the Hampton Duals and came home as the tournament runner-up going 4-1 on the day. They will head to the always competitive King of the Mountain tournament at Central Mountain and finish with their first dual match of the season at Butler prior to the winter break. One special note: congratulations to senior Tyler Chappell on eclipsing the 100-career wins mark on the opening weekend of the season!



Girls' Wrestling: A historic first occurred on the night of Dec. 13, as our girls' varsity wrestling team took the mats for their first-ever dual match at Canon-Mac. While results are not available at the time of this writing, we are excited about this new varsity sport and the enthusiasm, commitment, and talent of this inaugural roster.

In addition, all sub-varsity teams have started their seasons and are off to great starts. As always, I am so appreciative of our coaches and grateful for all they do for our student-athletes. As we pause for the winter holidays, may we cherish the time with family and friends. The Seneca Valley Athletics Department wishes all #SVRaiderNation a Happy Holiday Season.

Additional Honors Announced for Fall Sport Raider Student-Athletes and Coaches

While the fall season is in the books, the awards continue to arrive for Raider student-athletes and coaches.

We congratulate soccer senior, midfielder, Beaux Lizewski, honored as a High School All-American by the United Soccer Coaches Association.



In addition, we congratulate Beaux on his honors of Player of the Year by the Pittsburgh *Post-Gazette* and *Trib-Live*. In addition, Beaux was named to the Pittsburgh *Post-Gazette's* All-Area Soccer Team and the *Trib-Live* Boys' Fab 15 Soccer Team.



We congratulate soccer senior, midfielder, Connor Oros, named to the *Trib-Live* Boys' Fab 15 Soccer Team.



We congratulate Ollivia Congdon named All-State by the PA Volleyball Coaches Association.



We congratulate boys' soccer head coach, George Williams honored by his peers of the PA Soccer Coaches Association as Boys' 4A Soccer Coach of the Year.



We congratulate Luke Lawson named to the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette's Fabulous 22 Team. ■



ATHLETES OF THE MONTH, NOVEMBER 2022

The **Female Athlete of the Month for November** was girls' volleyball middle hitter, Ollivia Congdon. The junior team captain led her team over the last month with 23 kills, 15 blocks and 12 digs. She was a key contributor as the Raiders made a deep WPIAL playoff run, defeating Baldwin and Peters Township, before falling short in the semifinals to eventual champions Pine Richland. Ollivia was also voted first team all-section and first team all-WPIAL. For a stellar month, we recognize Ollivia as the November Female Athlete of the Month. Congratulations Ollivia!



The **Male Athlete of the Month for November** was senior boys' soccer goalkeeper, Ryan Krumenacker. Ryan's outstanding play in goal helped the Raiders to a second-place finish in WPIAL playoffs and a boys' 4A PIAA State Championship. He earned three shutouts over four games and made a crucial save on a penalty kick in the PIAA State Championship game helping spark the Raiders to a 6-0 win over Lower Merion. Ryan was also named to the all-section second team. We recognize Ryan as the November Male Athlete of the Month. Congratulations Ryan! ■



GIVING BACK ON GIVING TUESDAY

It has become an annual tradition for the Seneca Valley Foundation (SVF) to give back to SV staff on

“Giving Tuesday” even though this day is typically when non-profits make a plea for additional support. This year, the SVF surprised over 100 paraprofessionals across the district with a token of appreciation for their hard work and dedication to SV students. “It was a delight to see the Foundation recognize such a deserving group,” said Dr. Jeff Roberts, Director of Student Services and SVF Trustee. He continued, “The gift of an SV backpack was meaningful in that it symbolizes how much paraprofessionals must carry, both figuratively and physically, throughout the day as they support our students.” Thank you, Paras! ■



ANNUAL SUPPORT CAMPAIGN – MAKE YOUR YEAR-END DONATION TODAY

There’s still time for you to make a contribution to the SVF’s Annual Support Campaign! Your gift will allow us to continue making Seneca Valley Schools extra special. Donations can be made through the QR Code below, at <https://www.mightycause.com/story/Svannualsupportcampaign> or by mailing a check payable to the Seneca Valley Foundation and sent to the District Administration Center located at 124 Seneca School Rd., Harmony, PA 16037. **For more information, visit the SVF website.**

The SVF is a private, 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Contributions are tax-deductible to extent allowed by law. ■

The SENECA VALLEY FOUNDATION

We fund the extras that make Seneca Valley Schools extra special



Discover our Impact:
www.svsd.net/SVFoundation



Donate to our Annual Support Campaign Today!

MAKING SPIRITS BRIGHT

Santa's helpers have been out in full force with the hopes of making the holiday season a little brighter for Seneca Valley families. Local organizations including **Neighbors for Neighbors, Cranberry CUP, Cranberry Sunset Rotary** and the **Georgie Smigel Coldwell Banker Real Estate Group** shopped for days on end to fulfill wish lists of over 220 students this year. Each list contained about five or six items that students hope to receive this holiday season like books, cozy blankets, board games and more. Special thanks to our SV administrative staff and **General Rental Center** for helping transport gifts! ■



 **COLDWELL BANKER★REALTY**



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GEORGIE SMIGEL GROUP



SV WELCOMES HAINE ELEMENTARY ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL

During a Seneca Valley School Board Meeting last month, board members approved the appointment of Mr. Thomas McKelvey as the District's new assistant principal of Haine Elementary School in Cranberry Township. We very much look forward to having him join the staff at Haine in January.

A resident of Hampton Township, Mr. McKelvey will be coming to Seneca Valley after serving in various educator and administrator roles in several Beaver County school districts. He will be leaving Ambridge Area School District where he has been principal of Highland Elementary School for the past year. His previous roles at Ambridge include three years as principal of Ambridge Area Middle School and five years serving as principal of State Street Elementary. He also has previous teaching and administrative experience with the Woodland Hills School District and Beaver Area School District.

"Mr. McKelvey has demonstrated outstanding leadership skills in his previous administrative roles and will bring with him a wealth of experience, most especially in the areas of professional development, special education and community engagement," said Dr. Sean McCarty, Assistant Superintendent for K-6 Instruction. "We are fortunate to have him joining the team at Haine Elementary School."

Mr. McKelvey earned his bachelor's degree in Education with certifications in Elementary Education, Special Education and Middle School Science Education from Slippery Rock University, Slippery Rock, Pa. He earned his master's degree in Education with certifications in Educational Leadership: Administration and Supervision (K-12 Principal Certification) from California University of Pennsylvania, California, Pa. At the time of this writing, Mr. McKelvey was finishing his work on a Doctorate in Educational Leadership and Administration from Point Park University in Pittsburgh.

We asked him to tell us a little more about himself:

What attracted you to the assistant principal role at Haine Elementary?

The Seneca Valley School District is well known as a leader in the educational community for its innovative practices and for putting students' best interest at the forefront of every decision. When I first heard about the assistant principal opportunity at Haine Elementary, I was immediately interested in pursuing this opportunity to become a part of the Seneca Valley team, specifically serving the stakeholders at Haine Elementary. Meeting Dr. White and others from the District's leadership team throughout the interview process really solidified my perception of the District's reputation for educational excellence. I am excited to have the opportunity to serve as the assistant principal at Haine Elementary, and I look forward to collaborating with our students, staff, families, and overall community to foster a sense of lifelong learning as we work together to prepare our students to be productive and contributing members of the global community.

What is the best professional advice you have ever been given?

The best professional advice I have been given is to always stay true to yourself and your values. I believe that we are able to stay true to ourselves and our values by consistently acting with integrity, especially in difficult situations.



Pictured above: Tom McKelvey with his three children (L-R: Thomas, Caroline and David) and grandfather



What would be the title of your memoir?

The title of my memoir would be "The Pursuit of Contentment: Defying the Odds."

What is the one thing people would be surprised to know about you?

One thing people would be surprised to know about me is that prior to majoring in education and deciding to pursue a career in K-12 education, I had explored environmental biology and nursing as potential majors and career paths.

Mr. McKelvey replaces Mr. Jeremy Womer, who is now serving as assistant principal for Haine Middle School. ■



Pictured above: Tom McKelvey with his wife Kate McKelvey

CONGRATULATIONS, DR. TONY BABUSCI

Tony Babusci, Principal of Ryan Gloyer Middle School, successfully defended his dissertation and completed his Doctor of Education (EdD) with an area of concentration in education leadership in November from the University of Pittsburgh. "I am so grateful to the district for providing me the opportunity to continue my education. What I really liked about the coursework, research, and ultimately the dissertation is that the content is pragmatic and immediately applicable to my job and allows me to better serve our district and the students of Ryan Gloyer Middle School," said Dr. Babusci. ■



SV TEACHER RECOGNIZED AS A HOMETOWN HERO

Mr. Dan Dickey, Ryan Gloyer Middle School math teacher and track coach was recognized for his selflessness and heroic actions at the 10th annual event, Larry and Marty's Hometown Heroes; an evening honoring individuals who are making a positive impact in local communities.

Mr. Dickey along with Steve Tinker, head coach of the Avonworth Middle School track team, extracted injured passengers from an SUV that had overturned, rolled down a ravine and caught fire in Forward Township on the night of May 13. One of the passengers included a paralyzed 15-year-old who could not have exited the vehicle without help before it burst into flames.

Mr. Dickey was also recognized by members of the Seneca Valley School Board and Seneca Valley Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Tracy Vitale, at a School board meeting on June 6. To read the full story of Mr. Dickey's heroic acts, view the article in the [Cranberry Eagle](#).

HAIN ELEMENTARY STAFF: BEYOND OUR WALLS

In an effort to help the GRACE Project with rising cost of food items, the staff at Haine Elementary School had several jean's day fundraisers with a culminating event on Giving Tuesday. Staff members were challenged to raise \$500 with a generous match (up to \$500) provided by Principal, Dr. Kristen White. Staff members exceeded their goal and raised \$740. In total, the group was able to provide the GRACE Project with a donation of \$1,240!

According to their website, The GRACE Project in partnership with The Lighthouse Foundation began with one project called the Full Table Backpack Program in the fall of 2015. The program began with the hope to come alongside families in the Seneca Valley School District whose children may find themselves at the risk of 'Weekend Hunger.' These students receive free or reduced breakfast and lunches during the school year. We are excited to offer this program for students in K – 12th Grades in the SVSD schools. The GRACE Project has expanded to also now include support to students exploring Performing Arts through Band or Strings, a Drug Awareness and Education Program, and Academic Support.

Haine staff also participated in a second fundraiser to benefit the sleep in Heavenly Peace non-profit. Staff members donated 57 blankets to help meet the organization's motto of "No Kids Sleep on the Floor in Our Town."



Pictured to the left are Mars Chapter Co-Presidents Ed and Elaine Snyder picking up the generous donation from Haine Elementary.

SV SCHOOL BOARD REORGANIZES, SETS MEETING DATES

On Monday, Dec. 5, 2022, the members of the Seneca Valley School Board held a brief reorganization meeting where Ms. Kathy Whittle (Region 7, Evans City and Seven Fields Boroughs) was voted by fellow members to serve as Board President. Additionally, board members voted in Mr. Jeff Widdowson (Region 9 – Callery, Harmony and Jackson Townships) as Board Vice President.

Prior to ending the reorganization meeting, many members of the Board and Administration expressed their deep gratitude for the incredible leadership and support shown by Mr. Jim Nickel (Region 2 – Cranberry, West 1 & 2) and Mr. Eric DiTullio (Region 8 – Lancaster and Forward) during their time as Board President and Vice President. ■



**Ms. Kathy Whittle,
Board President**



**Mr. Jeff Widdowson,
Board Vice President**



From L-R: Seneca Valley Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Tracy Vitale, Dj Kirkland, Jr and Mr. Jim Nickel.



From L-R: Mr. Eric DiTullio, Dr. Denise Manganello, Ms. Valerie Damiani and Seneca Valley Superintendent of Schools Dr. Tracy Vitale.

SCHOOL BOARD MEETING INFORMATION AND DATES:

Board meetings are open to the public and are held at 7 p.m. in the Intermediate High School auditorium unless otherwise noted. The agenda development (work session) meetings are used for discussion and are typically held on the first Monday of the month. There are some exceptions due to holidays. See dates below. The Board can take action on items at this meeting if it is necessary. The regular action board meeting is held on the second Monday of each month unless otherwise noted and the Board votes on most or all that month's agenda items. School board meeting agendas and minutes can be [found at this link](#). Please note that board meeting minutes must be approved at the following month's meeting before they can be posted.

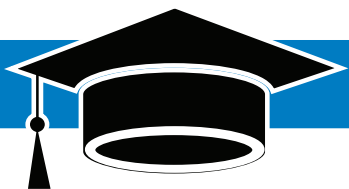
School Board meetings are open to the public and allow for public comment. The Board recognizes the value to school governance of public comment on educational issues and the importance of involving members of the public in Board meetings. The Board also recognizes its responsibility for proper governance of the district and the need to conduct its business in an orderly and efficient manner. For more information on public speaker guidelines, please visit [School Board / School Board Overview \(svsd.net\)](#).

For more information about any of the information published here, please contact the School Board administrative assistant, at (724) 452-6040, ext. 1638. If you require special accommodation to participate in the proceedings, please call the director of human resources at (724) 452-6040, ext. 1760.

The School Board approved the following meeting dates (all meetings begin at 7 p.m. unless otherwise noted). **Additionally, please note the January and February 2023 meetings will be held in the SV Senior High School Auditorium as the SV All-School Musical will be utilizing the SV Intermediate High School (SVIHS) Auditorium for musical rehearsals.** The March, April, May and June meetings will return to and be held in the SVIHS Auditorium:

2022-23 Work Sessions	2022-23 Regular (Action) Meetings
Jan. 9, 2023 (*this is the second Monday of the month)	Jan. 17, 2023 (*this is the third Tuesday of the month)
Feb. 6, 2023	Feb. 13, 2023
March 6, 2023	March 13, 2023
April 17, 2023 (*this is the third Monday of the month)	April 24, 2023 (*this is the fourth Monday of the month)
NO MEETING	May 8, 2023
une 5, 2023	June 12, 2023
July - NO MEETING	July - NO MEETING ■

*indicates a change in the traditional meeting schedule.



ALUMNI Q&A

Siona Sharma, SV '16, is currently working at the Global Fund to fight AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria in Geneva, Switzerland. She also works at Aid Pioneers e.V. and serves as their Chief Strategy Officer. 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: Over the last few years, I have begun building a career in global public health. I believe that once you guarantee a person, especially a woman, their right to health, it allows them to find independence in security in every aspect of life. In our community at home, healthcare may often be a privilege we overlook, but this isn't the case in many low and middle-income countries of the world, including in India, where I am from. I currently work at the Global Fund to fight AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria in Geneva, Switzerland. There, we think about how to make sure countries have the funding they require to address the causes of the world's highest disease burden. After work, I work at Aid Pioneers e.V.; I serve as their Chief Strategy Officer and lead a project to get resources to lawyers representing victims of abuse in Rwanda. Prior to this, I studied Global Health at Georgetown University and later worked in the public sector practice of McKinsey & Co. in both Washington D.C. and Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

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

At Seneca Valley, I was able to explore my interests in international affairs and politics with the teachers and programs that supported me, even if they didn't know how—especially through the Purpose program and Academic Games. I planted my foundations of professional independence then, when I often had to forge my own path and was then given resources to explore my interests. Personally, Seneca Valley challenged me with perspectives that I learned to both empathize with and use to develop my own values. We did not have the most practice looking at communities and the world outside of our own, but especially when I moved to D.C. and lived through the political changes of the last several years, I reflected on the community that raised me and how their perspectives, even if perspectives



I don't necessary identify with now, are still critical to remember in politics that often forget places like ours.

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

A: I valued the flexibility that Seneca Valley offered me in charting my path toward college; and more than this, I do think I was raised by teachers and alongside students who shared similar values for kindness and a strong sense of responsibility to our community. I carry these lessons with me to this day, regardless of where I am.

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

A: My favorite mentor was Mr. Dale Wagner, my Academic Games teacher in early middle school and Purpose teacher until his retirement. He always encouraged me to dream outside of the walls of our school, and he never questioned me while I did so. Now, having left SV and our corner of western Pennsylvania, I've found that Mr. Wagner gave me the vision for a career in public service that I have built upon over the years, but may not have been able to see in myself without him.

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

A: I was quite involved in Youth and Government, and with my peers from Seneca Valley, we led a delegation for our region. We grew from a group of two students to one of over 40, and I would always look forward to Monday nights spent debating and learning about political topics that I did not otherwise encounter in my daily life, considering the future of rural communities in the U.S. or implementing new healthcare measures for the public.

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

A: I would encourage teachers to open and expose their students' minds to perspectives from communities and the world around us, more than a decade-old curriculum may force through obligation. As much as I was raised with a strong sense of community, once I left, I realized there was a world of viewpoints, cultures and values that I'd not seen before—and it forced me to grow and reinforce my own principles in a way that I would have loved to explore much earlier on in life. I do believe in the power of teachers to influence not only what we, as students learn, but how we think. More than a nice thing to have, it is imperative for young people to practice curiosity for the communities that exist outside of our own to inculcate a sense of tolerance, compassion and responsibility for our global neighbors. ■



FYI

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. ■

988 SUICIDE & CRISIS
LIFELINE

No matter where you live in the U.S.,
you can easily access 24/7 emotional support.

Call or text 988 or visit 988lifeline.org/chat to
chat with a caring counselor.

We're here for you.



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.

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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.

School Based Mental Health

Frequently Asked Questions for Seneca Valley Parents



About Glade Run

Glade Run currently contracts and provides outpatient counseling services in several school districts located in Allegheny, Butler and Beaver counties, including Seneca Valley School District.

Glade Run operates three school-based outpatient program models: Mental Health Partnership (MHP); Therapeutic Classroom; and Modified Therapeutic Classroom. The school-based therapists conduct initial psycho-social assessments and then provide individual, family and group therapy as determined by the individual student's treatment plan.

What is School Based Mental Health (SBMH)?

SBMH refers to mental health services for school age youth addressing social, emotional and behavioral health along with the ability to cope with life's challenges. Services are delivered in the school setting during the school day and, if needed, can continue during the summer months.

Why is Seneca Valley partnering with Glade Run Lutheran Services to provide school based mental health services?

Seneca Valley cares about its students and recognizes the need to provide access to services that will support mental wellness within the classroom. Research demonstrates that students who receive mental health support achieve better academically. In addition, classroom behavior, on-task learning, and students' sense of connectedness and well-being all improve as well.

Who will be providing mental health services to my child?

School based mental health services will be provided by licensed therapists through Glade Run Lutheran Services.

As a parent, do I have any financial obligation?

Payment is based on individual insurance similar to your medical insurance. After completing the referral and during the initial phone call from the therapist, parents will be informed of any financial obligation prior to the start of any services.

Where will my child's services take place?

Services are delivered in approved spaces within the school. These spaces have been approved by the Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse (OMHSAS).

Will my child miss class or need to stay after regular school hours?

Appointment times are determined by the student, parent and school counselor and are typically during the school day unless the therapist, student and parent make other arrangements.

Can I participate in my child's therapy?

Therapy is confidential but Glade Run offers Family Therapy as well if the team determines it necessary and/or with a parent/guardian request.

How do I get started?

- » Referrals may be completed by parents/guardians, teachers, nurses, counselors/social workers or the student him/herself.
- » This referral is forwarded to Glade Run's outpatient referral coordinator, who verifies student insurance and forwards to the program supervisor for staffing.
- » At that time, the assigned therapist will contact the student's family to set up intake, which will take place at your child's school. This process is typically completed within 24-48 hours.

For more information about school based mental health services, contact us at 412-661-1827, ext. 113.



www.gladerun.org



HOLIDAY ACTIVITIES

Right around winter break, everyone's thoughts start to turn to the upcoming time off and family celebrations. In school, little kids are tracing their hands to make turkeys, while older students might be taking final exams. No matter what's on the schedule, it's a great opportunity to make a little space for some social and emotional learning that leans into the spirit of the season rather than skating across the surface.

Highlighting the history behind various winter holidays encourages inclusion and lets kids learn about different traditions from each other. Also, focusing on friendship, family, and kindness fosters the feelings of connection that we hope all kids experience, especially during this time of year. And planning some projects before -- or during -- the break can keep kids in touch with some SEL-inspired creativity. Check out the individual activities below, or print out these cards and drop them into a jar. Try one, two, or 10 to keep kids thinking and creating while school's out!

Activities to Learn About Holiday Histories

Since kids everywhere celebrate different winter holidays, it's a great idea to encourage them to embrace that diversity and learn about each other's traditions. Use the resources below to learn more about familiar holidays or discuss ones you might know less about.

- **Make your own dreidel** and find out if kids already know the rules. Then play together! (Grades K-2)
- For slightly older kids, you can use this resource to **read the rules, learn the symbolism, and make a dreidel** if you don't have one already. (Grades 1-3)
- After finding out about students' prior knowledge, use this short video from PBS LearningMedia so kids can learn more about **the origin and traditions of the Jewish holiday Hanukkah**. (Grades 2-6)



- Older kids can read this article from National Geographic about the **solstice** and how various cultures marked this time of year. (Grades 3-5)
- Learn more about **Kwanzaa's seven-day celebration** of African American culture and heritage with this video from PBS LearningMedia. Check out the supporting materials for more resources. (Grades 3-6)
- Learn about **Kwanzaa's history and meaning** from Education.com, and then do some research to learn more. Allow some space for kids -- or you -- to share what you know already! (Grades 4-6)
- Incorporate **Native American perspectives and histories into your Thanksgiving lessons** with resources from the National Museum of the American Indian. (Grades 3-12)
- Find **overviews of different winter celebrations**, including Christmas, St. Lucia Day, Three Kings Day, and more, in this article from Learning Liftoff, then encourage kids to talk about their own winter traditions. (Grades 5-8)
- Though some people know the Christmas gift-bringer as Santa, that's not true everywhere! Talk about the **different**

cultural characters who bestow presents around the world, and then explore some of the **other resources about Christmas** on the Why Christmas site. (Grades 5-8)

- If you want to dive into **how Christmas is celebrated around the world**, check out this article from the History Channel to travel to places like Sweden, Australia, Ukraine, and more. (Grades 6-12)
- Find out **why some people cut down trees** and bring them inside during Christmas by reading this article from the History Channel. Extend the learning by researching how politics, religion, and fashion shaped other traditions. (Grades 6-12)

Photo and article provided by Common Sense Media Page 18 ■



- 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 ■

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



Seneca Valley's updated app is more personalized, more customized and has greater mobile content!



SV Portal
Once you log in, you'll stay logged into your account. Now you're just a tap away from viewing grades, homework, school information and more.

SV Customization
Click on the settings wheel to customize the app on your device.

SV Calendar
Stay informed with access to one or more calendars all in one place. Add personal calendar notes.

www.svsd.net

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