



# RAIDER PRIDE

A State and National Award-Winning Publication

NOVEMBER 2023



## SV SELECTED AS NATIONAL 'LIGHTHOUSE' SCHOOL SYSTEM

Seneca Valley School District is one of only four school districts across the country recognized as a 2023 Fall "Lighthouse System" by AASA, The School Superintendents Association, the nation's premier organization serving school district leadership across the country.

Seneca Valley, along with the other selected designates, is a member of [AASA's Learning 2025 Network](#), a cadre of more than 150 demonstration systems representing learner-centered, future-driven urban, suburban and rural school districts engaged in working together to help drive education policy and, ultimately, improve student learning.

Grounded in the foundational work of the [AASA Learning 2025 National Commission](#) and inspired by the commission's report, [An American Imperative: A New Vision of Public Schools](#), the AASA Learning 2025 Network aims to transform education, enhance student achievement and ensure no learner is marginalized.

"We are honored to be chosen as an AASA Learning 2025 Lighthouse System as it is a prestigious recognition of our commitment to innovative, forward-thinking and effective approaches to education," said Dr. Tracy Vitale, Superintendent of Schools. "It acknowledges that we are effectively shaping the future of education, and we look forward to sharing our insights and experiences with the wider educational community."

In addition to Seneca Valley, other new AASA Learning 2025 Lighthouse Systems

include: [Beaver Area School District](#), Beaver, Pa., [Hermiston School District](#), Hermiston, Ore., and [Montrose County School District](#), Montrose, Colo. The four districts will be honored in February during a Learning 2025 luncheon where each superintendent will be presented with a crystal lighthouse and banner.

"Using the word 'Lighthouse' should not be seen as a label, but rather a concept for school districts to learn and grow with one another and give voice to educational leaders who want to be part of shaping the conversation and practice around the future of education," said Mort Sherman, senior associate executive director, AASA. "AASA is distinctly positioned to represent leaders across the country, drawing from our vast set of resources, and personalizing and customizing our service to each school district."

Systems were reviewed based on strategies and recommendations developed by the commission. Redesign component indicators included:

- Social Emotional-Cognitive Growth
- Future-ready Learners
- Cognitive Growth Model
- Learners as Co-authors
- Diverse Educator Pipeline
- Early Learning
- Technology-enhanced Learning
- Community Alignment

The AASA Learning 2025 Network aims to empower superintendents and their teams to drive the change and enhance student outcomes in their district and across the country through access to personalized tools, support and opportunities. Learn more at [aasa.org/learning2025](https://aasa.org/learning2025). ■

**AASA**  
THE SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS ASSOCIATION

Learning 2025  
**LEARNER-CENTERED  
FUTURE-DRIVEN  
EDUCATION**

**LEARNING 2025  
LIGHTHOUSE  
DEMONSTRATION  
SYSTEM**

**Social Emotional Cognitive Growth**

Innovation by Design: Creating Bold Spaces that Support Teaching, Learning and Student Well Being

**SENECA VALLEY  
SCHOOL DISTRICT**

Recognized 2023

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### DATES TO REMEMBER

Dec. 4	School Board Reorganization Meeting, IHS Auditorium, 5 p.m.
Dec. 9	ACT Testing, SHS, 7:30 a.m.
Dec. 20	Senior Holiday Event, IHS Auditorium, 12:30 p.m.
Dec. 25 - Jan. 2	Winter Break, No School

For more dates, visit: [www.svsd.net/WebCalendar](https://www.svsd.net/WebCalendar)

### IT'S AN HONOR!

Click here to view the  
**2023-24 First Nine  
Weeks Honor Rolls for  
grades 7-12.**



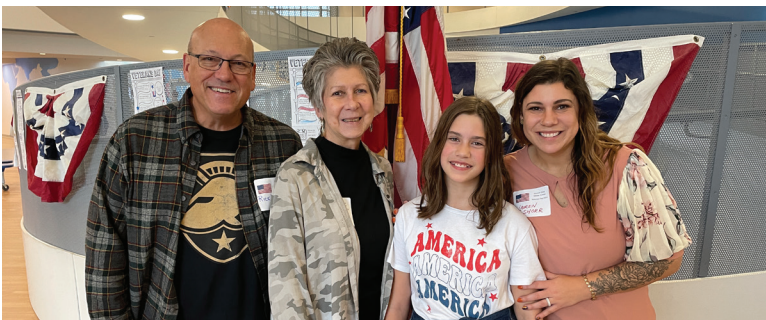


## ECMS HOSTS VETERANS RECOGNITION BREAKFAST

Ehrman Crest Middle School (ECMS) hosted a Veterans Recognition Breakfast on Thursday, Nov. 9. The breakfast consisted of about 45 veterans along with the students who invited them as their special guests.

Veterans and students enjoyed a delicious breakfast while listening to the ECMS Band perform "The Star-Spangled Banner," followed by students reading poems and handwritten letters about veterans. The ECMS Orchestra and Chorus also gave special performances.

Shoutout to Ms. Angela Cardillo's second grade class from Rowan Elementary School for making the placemats used at the breakfast! ■



## A PATRIOTIC WELCOME

Students in Ms. Bobbi Lyn Cooper's kindergarten class at Connoquenessing Valley Elementary School placed American Flags along the inner entry circle to honor veterans this Veterans Day. ■



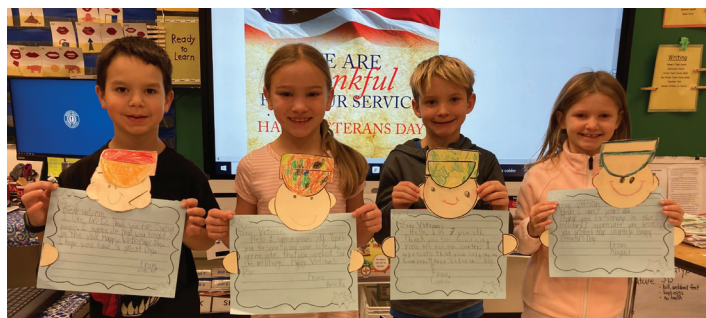


## HEARTFELT THANKS

Several classes at Rowan Elementary School and Haine Middle School created Thank You letters and posters for veterans at The Waters Senior Living in Warrendale. Students made the cards for veterans representing Navy, Army and Air Force branches. Each student was excited for and thoughtful in their special designs and letters.

At Haine Middle School, students designed their artwork while discussing the importance of Veterans Day. They learned that many of their classmates have parents who are on active duty or have served in the past. Students were excited to research military ranks and take a photo with Haine's own veteran security guard, Mr. George!

Kaylee Martin, Active Life Manager at The Waters and SV '18 graduate, stopped by to pick up the cards and thank students for their heartfelt creations. See the reactions of the veterans below! ■





## PREPARING FOR WINTER WEATHER

As winter is almost here, and snow has made a brief appearance, we want to review our 2023-24 plans for inclement weather closures, also known as snow days.

The **first and second** inclement weather school closures will work as traditional snow days so that students can enjoy the days:

- \* Should the first closure occur before Feb. 16, 2024, we will use Friday, Feb. 16, 2024 as the first makeup day for the closure.
- \* Should the second closure occur before March 18, 2024, we will use Monday, March 18, 2024 as the second makeup day for the second closure.

Starting with the **third** inclement weather closure, to and including all other closure days, the District will utilize **livestreaming days** that will run on a student **two-hour delay** so that teachers and students can prepare for livestreaming instruction. **Students will be expected to log on to the SV Portal and access the teacher-provided livestreaming link(s) in the Announcements section.** Inclement Weather School/Class Announcements will be made available for student/parent viewing via the SV Portal after **9:30 a.m.** on the day of the closure.

Here are the schedules for remote learning days starting with the third closure:

### K-6 Schedule on inclement weather CLOSURE days:

10:55 a.m. - 3:25 p.m. - Remote Synchronous Instruction with Students (teachers will post classroom schedules in the announcement section of the portal)

Modified A.M. Kindergarten: 10:55 a.m. - 12:43 p.m.

Modified P.M. Kindergarten: 1:37 - 3:25 p.m.

### 7-8 Schedule on inclement weather CLOSURE days:

10 a.m. - 2:30 p.m. Remote Synchronous Instruction with Students

Period 1 - 10 - 10:25 a.m.

Period 2 - 10:30 - 10:55 a.m.

Period 3 - 11 - 11:25 a.m.

Period 4 - 11:30 - 11:55 a.m.

LUNCH - Noon - 12:30 p.m.

Period 5 - 12:35 - 1 p.m.

Period 6 - 1:05 - 1:30 p.m.

Period 7 - 1:35 - 2 p.m.

Period 8 - 2:05 - 2:30 p.m.



### 9-12 Schedule on inclement weather CLOSURE days:

10:01 a.m. - 2:33 p.m. - Remote Synchronous Instruction with Students

Period 1 - 10:01 - 10:26 a.m.

Period 2 - 10:30 - 10:55 a.m.

Period 3 - 10:59 - 11:24 a.m.

Period 4 - 11:28 - 11:58 a.m.

Period 5 - 12:02 - 12:32 p.m.

Period 6 - 12:36 - 1:06 p.m.

Period 7 - 1:10 - 1:35 p.m.

Period 8 - 1:39 - 2:04 p.m.

Period 9 - 2:08 - 2:33 p.m.

The above schedule and closure information will be made available via the homepage of the District website ([www.svsd.net](http://www.svsd.net)) anytime the District announces a school closure.

As we have learned, livestreaming can sometimes be disruptive to optimal learning in both the traditional and remote environments. Therefore, we want to ask for your assistance when students are livestreaming:

- \* **Learning Environment** - Students should be ready and prepared to learn. Students should be seated at a table or desk **free from distractions. The student should not be traveling in a car or livestreaming from a loud environment. Please have student supplies readily available.**

- \* **Laptop Cameras** must be turned on (students are permitted to blur their background for privacy).

- \* **Laptop Microphones** should stay muted until the student needs to speak.

Students unable to livestream due to childcare needs or illness will be given assistance when they return and time to make up the day's assignments.

If you have extenuating circumstances, you may reach out to your child's individual teacher(s). ■



## FALL FAMILY FUN

CVE hosted their annual Fall Fun Night with plenty of participation. Students, along with their families, showcased their creativity with pumpkin painting and decorating. Teachers and staff read fall stories while students rode hayrides and enjoyed eating yummy baked goods from the PTO bake sale. ■



## BEST BUDDIES

Haine Elementary School recently started a Best Buddies chapter and selected students came together to paint pumpkins on Monday, Oct. 30, in the school's cafeteria.

Best Buddies is an international organization consisting of volunteers that create opportunities for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. At the elementary level, it's about promoting inclusion and friendship among students with and without intellectual and developmental disabilities through group activities.

Two teacher-nominated students from each third and fourth grade classrooms as well as students who primarily attend Haine Elementary's Multiple Supports classrooms joined together for the fun.

There will be a variety of Best Buddies activities taking place throughout the year. Following the fall pumpkin painting, there is a group activity planned for winter, spring and a big event culminating at the end of the school year.

"I've been working with the Best Buddies International Pittsburgh Program Manager on this and we're very excited about the new chapter," said Dr. Kathleen Mahon, School Psychologist at Haine Elementary School. "We're starting small this year but hope to grow the program in the future."

Best Buddies International is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to establishing a global volunteer movement that creates opportunities for one-to-one friendships, integrated employment, leadership development, and inclusive living for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD). For more information about the program, visit [www.bestbuddies.org](http://www.bestbuddies.org). ■





## UNBE-LEAF-ABLE SERVICE

Haine middle schoolers gave their time and raking talents to serve a local 55+ community on Thursday, Oct. 26. In partnership with Cranberry Township's Leaf Angel program, students in Ms. Sipp's, Mr. Cammisa's and Ms. Clarke's classes traveled to Cranberry Village Estates to rake and bag leaves at over 15 properties.

Additionally, SV Central Office employees Ms. Tracy Vidnovic and Ms. Lisa Fornadel donated their time and services to rake leaves in Oak Springs Park. ■





## LET THE BUILDING BEGIN

Seneca Valley robotic teams were geared up as they competed in the Spooktacular FIRST LEGO League (FLL) robotics competition held at Ehrman Crest Middle School (ECMS) on October 28. Out of the 24 local teams that were represented throughout western Pennsylvania, Seneca Valley's FIRST LEGO Lords team from Haine Elementary earned the top elementary school team trophy and the SV Crest Frogs team from ECMS earned the sixth-place finish trophy.

FIRST LEGO League introduces science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) to children ages 4-16 through fun, exciting hands-on learning. FIRST LEGO League participants gain real-world problem-solving experiences through a guided, global robotics program, helping today's students and teachers build a better future together.

Participating Seneca Valley teams included Raider Robotics FLL from Ryan Gloyer Middle School (RGMS), coached by RGMS industrial technology teacher Ms. Mary Boburczak; SV Crest Frogs from ECMS and SV Circuit Breakers from Haine Middle School, coached by Haine Middle School math teacher Ms. Jen Exler; and SV LEGO Lords from Haine Elementary School, coached by Haine Elementary School gifted support teacher Mr. Jeremiah Friday.



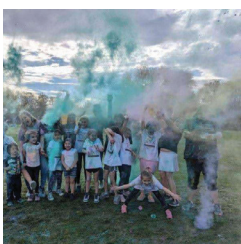
Team members from SV FIRST LEGO Lords are fourth graders Reese Abraham, Addy Callis, Lily Feitl, Nora Grider, Elena Hamilton, Tommy Loggans, Nathan Maravich, Ryan Myers, Aria O'Brien, Maya Pospistle and Quinn Vogan. Team members from the SV Crest Frogs are sixth graders Micah Eiler, Ella Ivin, Cameron Johnson, Charles Kling, Gabriel Kukkonen, Sebastian Osche, Austin Sperry and Zachary Sypien.

The second FLL competition took place on Nov. 18, at Aliquippa High School. ■



## FUN FRENZY

Splashes of color and showers of bubbles filled the fields of Haine Elementary School as excited students participated in a school-wide Fun Run. Students ran a total of 39,135 laps, smiling and laughing through it all! Leading up to the all-day event, students held a kickoff assembly, fundraised and participated in fun themed dress-up days. Donations were received from 38 states and five countries and students raised over \$47,000! Additionally, the top participating classes got to silly string their assistant principals. The Fun Run was organized to help raise money for school-wide educational experiences, field trips and updating the playgrounds. Congratulations to Haine students, staff and volunteers! ■



## GLOWIN' AND GROOVIN'

Students at Connoquenessing Valley Elementary School (CVE) recently celebrated a school-wide Glow Dance to signal the end of their fall fitness fundraiser. With the help of families and friends, students received donations from many states and even a few countries! They also enjoyed earning special prizes and participating in themed dress-up days.



The Glow Run was organized to help raise money for school-wide educational experiences and playground enhancements. ■





## CULTURAL DAY COMES TO ECMS

A bit of the world was brought to Ehrman Crest Middle School on Friday, Nov. 3, as part of an interactive Cultural Day.

Students and staff took part in a cultural celebration with special guests, learning opportunities and engaging activities.

The day began with cultural presentations covering the customs and traditions of Germany, South Africa, Japan, Greece, Kenya, India, Ecuador and others. In addition to presentations from community members, students participated in stations complete with crafts, dances and collaborative activities. These activities included Mexican dancing, African drumming, Diwali crafting, Latin and Argentinian dancing, Greek dancing, Brazilian soccer, Arabic spelling and learning about the American Deaf culture.

Students ended the day with a school-wide assembly and classroom community discussions. ■



## RECOGNIZING RED RIBBON WEEK

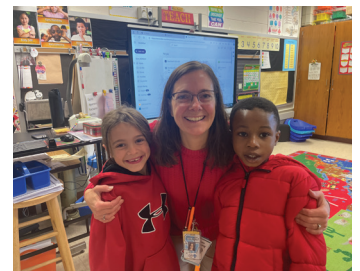
National Red Ribbon Week is recognized annually from Oct. 23-31, and students at Connoquenessing Valley Elementary School (CVE) celebrated their commitment to a Drug-Free America with themed dress-up days.



To kick off Red Ribbon festivities, students wore red to show pride in being drug-free. Other theme days included "teaming up against drugs" in favorite team spirit wear, "giving drugs the boot" in western gear and "falling for good choices" in fall-colored clothes.



This year's Red Ribbon theme was, "Be Kind To Your Mind. Live Drug Free." We encourage students to continue making healthy choices and celebrate living a drug-free life. ■





## FROM LITTLE SEEDS GROW MIGHTY TREES

Students at Ryan Gloyer Middle School (RGMS) got their hands dirty as they set off to beautify Cranberry neighborhoods through their Tree Planting Blitz, a cooperative partnership between Cranberry Township, FirstEnergy and the school district. This community service project at RGMS was planned as part of the continued "Community Grown" initiative that allows students to give back to the communities that have contributed to their education.

Ten teams made up of students and teachers volunteered at assigned subdivisions in Cranberry Township with the roles of planting trees, raking leaves, adding support stakes, etc. The day started with a meeting at the Cranberry Municipal Building to go over safety, planting procedures and other operations.

Nearly 200 trees were planted, and students enjoyed a day of teamwork, mentorship and service. School administrators and special guests, including Dr. Tracy Vitale, Superintendent of Schools, provided extra assistance and team support.

Special thanks to FirstEnergy for donating the trees planted and to our students who worked collaboratively to serve the greater community! ■





## SV ORCHESTRA STUDENTS ATTEND STRING FESTIVAL

On Nov. 2, students in the Seneca Valley Orchestra Program participated in the second annual Pennsylvania Music Educators Association (PMEA) District 5 Junior High String Fest. PMEA District 5 encompasses schools from Beaver, Butler, Lawrence and Mercer counties and the fest is open to students in grades 7-9.

Held at Mars Area High School, 15 Seneca Valley Orchestra students were selected for the Junior High String Fest. Students rehearsed and performed four pieces under the direction of esteemed retired educator Donna Fox.

"This is a great opportunity for our younger musicians to perform with students from other schools and get a feel for the PMEA experience," said Orchestra Director Sarah Miller. "I am so happy that this new fest has been such a positive experience for orchestra students in our area."



Student participants: Layla Anglero (8th, Violin), Kyle DeMaster (8th, Bass), Annelise Dykstra (8th, Violin), Addison Hartzell (9th, Violin), Caroline Holmes (8th, Violin), Benny James (9th, Bass), Kaelynn Markivich (8th, Violin), Hudson McGrady (8th, Cello), Lucy Miller (8th, Violin), Emma Pichieri (8th, Viola), Erin Sbrolla (8th, Violin), Robin Sommerville (9th, Violin). Not pictured: Sarah Frenz (8th, Bass), Einin Wolf-Johnston (8th, Violin) ■

## BUILDING BRIDGES THROUGH MUSIC

On Nov. 9, members of the Seneca Valley Treble Choir (grade 10) performed side by side with members of Duquesne University's Pappert Chorale, the Pittsburgh Youth Chorus and the Junior Mendelssohn Choir of Pittsburgh on the project, "Resonance of Hope: Building Bridges Through Music," as a memorial concert to honor the victims and families of the Tree of Life Synagogue shooting that took place October 27, 2018.

The performance joined diverse communities of Pittsburgh to celebrate the power of hope through music and word, including songs from the Civil Rights Movement, quotes by Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., and original poetry written and performed by Danielle Obisie-Orlu. Kristallnacht, also known as "the night of broken glass," which occurred on Nov. 9, 1938,



**Pictured L-R: Back row: Tae Villanueva-Smith, Maria Wilson, Madelyn Tresky, Meghan Tresky, Autumn Holmes, Lilia Maschmeier, Mia Grant, Josie Biertempfel, Claire Butterfield, Lucy Meyer, Aydan Danylo, Calleigh Foulkrod and Morgan Roithner. Front row: Loraine Torres Malave, Kristen Reese, Billie Rape, Mary Abbruzzese, Cassidy Harvey**

was also recognized through poetry about the Holocaust, by Valerie Bacharach; dance, by Attack Theatre's Peter Kope and Michele de la Reza; and music, by Jewish and Black American composers commissioned by the Holocaust Center of Pittsburgh and performed by Pittsburgh Symphony

musicians David McCarroll and Tatjana Mead Chamis and cellist Angela Park.

The evening concluded with the premiere of a new work, composed by Gerald Cohen and commissioned by the Tree of Life Synagogue. The piece featured Rabbi/Cantor Jeffrey Myers as soloist, who was present at the

Tree of Life tragedy in 2018. The choir was composed of singers from Pittsburgh Youth Chorus, Pittsburgh Creative and Performing Arts (CAPA) and the Seneca Valley Treble Singers. The piece was accompanied by members of the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra and conducted by Mr. Shawn Funk. ■



## UNITED IN HARMONY

Earlier this month, the Seneca Valley Instrumental Music Department held a side-by-side “Collaboration Day” that brought together some of the youngest and oldest students in the program. Students from the seventh grade band joined together with students in the auditioned Wind Ensemble to share the music each group has worked on.

After playing through a few warmups together, each band played sections of pieces they will be performing in their upcoming performances. Time was spent sharing ideas and observations of what the groups heard. Students contributed positive feedback to peers and appreciated the interaction they received between different grade levels.

Seventh grade flute player Parker Graham commented, “It was cool to hear how good we sounded.”

Another seventh grade student, percussionist Ophelia Vossah, realized how important her cymbal part was when she was the only one playing it.

The side-by-side event was coordinated by Sara Snyder and Brian Croach, instrumental directors at Ryan Gloyer Middle School



(RGMS) with assistance from Wind Ensemble directors Varden Armstrong and Bob Babick. ■

## ACCLAIMED BAND COMPOSER INSPIRES SV MUSICIANS

On Nov. 6, commended band composer Dr. Andrew Boysen Jr. visited the high school campus. Dr. Boysen currently teaches conducting and composing at the University of New Hampshire. He is an active composer, receiving commissions from festivals and university and high school concert bands across the United States. Dr. Boysen won the International Horn Society Composition Contest in 2000, the University of Iowa Honors Composition Prize in 1991 and has twice won the Claude T. Smith Memorial Band Composition Contest, in 1991 and 1994. Dr. Boysen has several published works with the Neil A. Kjos Music Company, Wingert-Jones Music, Alfred Music, Masters Music and C. Alan Publications. He was invited to attend a weekend festival at Youngstown State University (YSU) and, through a connection with Dr. Michael Butler, Director of Bands at YSU, was introduced to the idea of visiting Seneca Valley. The SV Wind Ensemble is currently rehearsing a three-movement composition by Dr. Boysen. This proved to be a spectacular “aligning of the stars,” and an amazing experience for our young musicians. Dr. Boysen made many suggestions and gave students new insights into composition and his musical intent.

Dr. Boysen said, “Thanks for giving me the opportunity to come in and work with your very fine band. They are amazing, so much fun to work with, so engaged and so dedicated to making great music.”

Senior trombonist Bridget Scott enjoyed the experience, commenting, “Having Dr. Boysen in rehearsal was a cool experience because learning the purpose and details of a song

made it much more meaningful and personal. It was also incredibly captivating to see how much joy it brought him to hear our music. Listening to his advice was not only helpful but fun.”

In conjunction with Dr. Boysen’s visit, woodwind faculty Kathryn Umble (flute), James Umble (saxophone) and Alice Wang (clarinet), provided masterclasses prior to the rehearsal for all woodwind students in grades 9-12. To learn more about Dr. Andrew Boysen Jr. and his music, visit [www.andrewboysenj.com](http://www.andrewboysenj.com).

Dr. Boysen’s composition, “Three Folk Song Settings for Band,” will be performed by the SV Wind Ensemble at their upcoming winter concert in the Intermediate High School (IHS) auditorium on Dec. 7 at 7 p.m. ■





## RECEIVING RAVE REVIEWS

The cast and crew of “Finding Nemo, Jr.” thrilled audiences with their captivating performance over Veterans Day weekend, Nov. 10-12. The dedicated elementary and middle school casts were rewarded with three standing ovations, a testament to their hard work and talent.

To enhance the audience experience, various engaging activities were planned throughout the show. Bubbles, face painting and a photo booth proved to be immensely popular among attendees.

In an act of true creative collaboration, students in Mr. Dan McKosky’s Animation & Design class teamed up with the directors of the musical to make the stage production more dynamic. Approached by producer Mrs. Jessica Kavanagh, the 13 animation students were



tasked with creating an underwater world to be projected live onstage for the performers and audience. This required students to work as a team, decide on an aesthetic direction, meet a firm deadline and experience the feeling of being hired by an outside client. Students utilized animation and design skills such as keyframing, illustration, chroma-keying, puppet tools, advanced shape



animation, and even artificial intelligence to create over a dozen complex backgrounds. Audience members saw various views of the deep sea, a dangerous jellyfish field, boats, a massive whale engulfing the screen and countless varieties of sea life make their way into the scenes. This unique project gave these students a public venue for displaying their work and filled the class, and Mr. McKosky, with pride.

In alignment with Seneca Valley’s “Beyond Our Walls” campaign, the SV Theatre Booster Club encouraged audience members to generously donate nonperishable items to local food pantries. We are incredibly proud to announce that over the course of the weekend, two trips were made to deliver several boxes of donations, a heartwarming reflection of the community’s spirit of giving. ■



## A NOTE-ABLE VISIT

Last month, members of the Seneca Valley High School bands worked with members of the brass faculty from Indiana University of Pennsylvania (IUP) and were treated to performances. Additionally, SV students had the opportunity to perform for the IUP visitors and receive feedback on the music they had been preparing. The day also featured masterclasses led by IUP faculty in which students could receive attention and tips regarding their own instruments. The event culminated with IUP brass faculty members taking part in a rehearsal with the Seneca Valley Wind Ensemble. Students enjoyed the opportunities that the day provided.

Junior trumpeter Elora Dabravalskas said, “I thought it was a very beneficial experience being able to get feedback and different perspectives from other music educators and performers.”



Senior tuba player Jay Guillame had a chance to perform a solo for the IUP faculty. He commented, “I thought it was very helpful to have professional musicians provide feedback on my playing and how to make my own playing better. It was great hearing these professionals play and help me out.”

The Seneca Valley Band and its directors were appreciative of the opportunity to work with various IUP brass faculty. The band looks forward to more events like this. ■





## WE ARE ONE SV

As I reflect on the 2023 fall season, I am drawn to my opening message back in August where I shared the following:

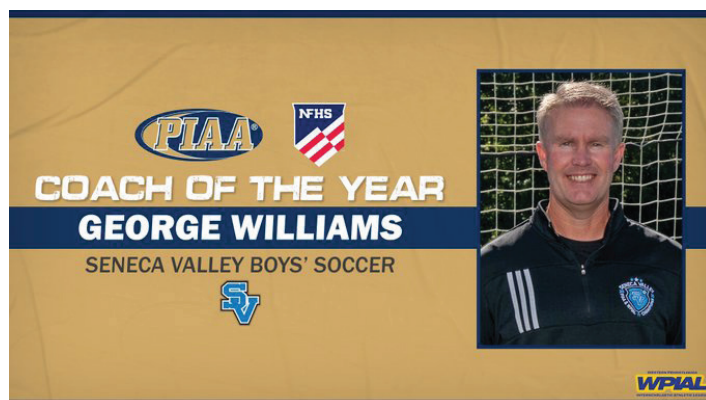
*"What we do in Athletics & Activities...We witness joy in its purest form, and we guide through unimaginable heartbreak in defeat. Through every trial and tribulation, as teammates, we show up for one another. What better lesson to learn in life than showing up for one another? As I look ahead to the 2023-24 school year my goal is simple: for each student to come through our department, it is my hope they learn the value of being the absolute best teammate they can be – not just in school, but in life. Building community – that's what we do in Athletics & Activities."*

This past fall I have witnessed unexpected success and indescribable loss. Consistent through those spectrums of emotion has been the response of the Seneca Valley community

or, as I commonly refer to, #SVRaiderNation. Collectively, we have celebrated our excellence and we have comforted in sadness. I have also had the privilege of witnessing the defining qualities of a Raider – trustworthy, talented, of high character and compassionate. I have watched uncommon work ethics coupled with astonishing talent result in championship performances. I have experienced, through our own players and coaches, unrivaled positive sporting behavior in those moments when the scoreboard is not in our team's favor. And, I have seen unity in support of our own when life presents the unthinkable. In three short months I have been reminded of our culture of caring, commitment to excellence and community of exemplary teammates. Culture. Commitment. Community. Thank you, Seneca Valley, for embracing what truly matters and helping teach valuable life lessons. #WeAreOneSV ■

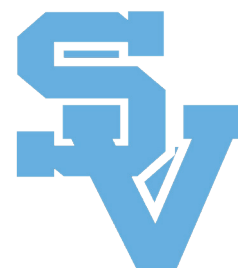
## 2022-23 STATE COACH OF THE YEAR

Congratulations to head boys soccer coach George Williams for being honored by the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) and the Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association (PIAA) as the 2022-23 Boys Soccer Coach of the Year. Honorees were selected based on nominations from the school community, the PA Coaches Associations, Board of Directors and State Association Staff. Each nominee is evaluated based on sportsmanship, adherence to PIAA bylaws, respect of officials, coaching impact and success at inter-district championships. We can think of no better coach who excels in all criteria than our own Coach Williams. Congratulations, George – your program's sustained excellence coupled with undeniable positive sporting behavior is a model for all interscholastic teams! ■



## COLLEGE COMMITMENTS – CLASS OF 2024

Many Raider student-athletes made their college commitment official with the early signing period starting in mid-November. 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
Creed Erdos	Baseball	James Madison University	Business/Finance & Engineering
Anna Kalkowski	Softball	Seton Hill University	Marketing
Kara Pasquale	Volleyball	Slippery Rock University	Early Childhood & Special Education
Connor Smith	Wrestling	Columbia University	Computer Science
Bria Stepp	Volleyball	West Chester University	Speech Language Pathology
Hunter Troiano	Baseball	Gannon University	Finance



## FALL POSTSEASON RECAPS

### Cross-Country

At the WPIAL Championships held at White Oak Park, Raiders boys cross-country finished in sixth place overall as a team, and, in the process, qualified Max Smith for the PIAA Championships held Nov. 4, at Hershey Park. At the WPIAL championships he finished in 11th place out of 171 competitors with a time of 16:26.3, earning the opportunity to run in Hershey. Max finished his season running 18:08 at the state championships. Congratulations, Max on your second consecutive trip to the state meet! SV Raider girls cross-country team finished in 12th place at the WPIAL championships with freshman Paige Damico and senior Samantha Moury leading the way with times of 20:01.10 and 20:05.0, respectively. The future is certainly bright for the girls cross-country program as they will return five of their top seven performers, four of which were freshmen this season.



### Boys Golf

Five members of the Raiders boys golf team qualified to compete in the WPIAL individual championships. Sophomores Marcos Lopez (fourth place) and Anthony Cardosi (10th place) were in the top-10 finishers at individual sectionals, and teammates Casey Clawson, Tyler Garvin and Payton Brown all advanced to the WPIAL individual semifinals. At a tough Latrobe Country Club course, senior Payton Brown was the Raiders' top finisher in the semifinals, shooting an 82 to advance to the WPIAL individual finals. At the WPIAL championship round held at Valley Brook Country Club, Brown shot an 84 to close out a wonderful career as a Raider golfer. Congratulations to Payton and all his teammates on another great season.



### Boys Soccer

For the first time since 2019, Raider boys soccer found themselves in an unfamiliar space looking from the outside in at the WPIAL and PIAA championship games. For three consecutive seasons our boys soccer program has played in both the WPIAL and PIAA championship games. Following a regular-season performance which saw Seneca Valley finish undefeated at 13-0-3 and earn the top seed in boys 4A soccer, the Raiders were upset by Norwin in penalty kicks (PKs) in the opening round of the WPIAL playoffs. This devastating loss ended the season prematurely and ended a



streak of winning not commonly seen at the scholastic level. When a team finishes their regular season without a loss, it has been an incredible year. For that, we congratulate Raider boys soccer on another outstanding run. We know you will be back!

### Girls Soccer

The SV girls soccer team, under the direction of coach Mark Perry, finished the regular season with a record of 13-2-1 and earned the No. 4 seed in the WPIAL 3A bracket. The Raiders could not stop a determined Canon-Mac squad in quarterfinal play and ended their season with a tough 2-1 loss in the playoffs. Canon-Mac lost to eventual WPIAL champion North Allegheny in the WPIAL semifinals by a score of 3-2. Congratulations, Raider girls soccer on an outstanding season and we look forward to the return of many talented underclass players who will carry on the tradition of excellence in our Raider girls soccer program.



### Girls Volleyball

Based on a regular season schedule which saw Raider girls volleyball finish with a 12-4 record and second-place finish in the section, the WPIAL playoff bracket seeded Seneca Valley No. 2. Following an opening-round bye, the Raiders hosted Peters Township in quarterfinal action and came



away with a convincing 3-1 win. Up next was a very hot Canon-Mac squad to face in the semifinals and, despite every effort, SV could not overcome the stellar play of the Big Macs, falling 3-0 in the semifinals. We will not let one result paint the picture of another great season from our Raider girls volleyball program. We congratulate Coach Poirier and the entire program on all their success in 2023. ■



## ALL-CONFERENCE SELECTIONS ANNOUNCED IN FALL SPORTS

The Big 56 Conference recently announced its fall sport honorees in football, boys and girls soccer, and girls volleyball and the Raiders were well represented. The following Seneca Valley student-athletes were recognized for their excellence on the field and court. ■

### FOOTBALL

#### 1st Team

Jayden Price, DB

#### 2nd Team

Adam Gehm, TE  
Cayden Parker, DE  
Kai West, RB

#### Honorable Mention

Luke Challingsworth, WR  
Sean O'Shea, QB  
Roman Royal, OT  
Tom Wuycheck, OT

### BOYS SOCCER

#### 1st Team

Cole Kamarec, For  
Daniel Leech, Def  
Tyler Prex, Mid

#### 2nd Team

Zach Garma, Mid  
Evan Howard, For  
Ben Keefer, Mid  
Gus Wytcherley, GK

#### Honorable Mention

Tyler Holloway, For

#### Additional Honors

PSCA All-State – Tyler Prex  
WPSCA Player of the Year – Tyler Prex  
WPSCA All-WPIAL – Cole Kamarec, Ben Keefer, Daniel Leech, Tyler Prex  
WPSCA All-Section – Cole Kamarec, Ben Keefer, Daniel Leech, Tyler Prex

### GIRLS SOCCER

#### 1st Team

Mia Humphreys, GK  
Karly Majeski, Mid  
Ayla Ward, For

#### 2nd Team

Ashlee Libby, For  
Madeline Marcotte, Mid

#### Additional Honors

WPHSGSCA All-WPIAL – Mia Humphreys, Ashlee Libby, Karly Majeski, Ayla Ward,  
WPHSGSCA All-Section – Mia Humphreys, Ashlee Libby, Karly Majeski, Sarah Vescio, Ayla Ward

### GIRLS VOLLEYBALL

#### 1st Team

Ollivia Congdon, MH  
Kara Pasquale, Libero  
Bria Stepp, S

#### 2nd Team

Katie Craig, OH  
Sadie Reese, S

#### Honorable Mention

Kennedy Pepper, OH

#### Additional Honors

Coaches Association All-WPIAL 1st Team – Ollivia Congdon, Bria Stepp  
Coaches Association All-WPIAL 2nd Team – Kara Pasquale  
Coaches Association All-WPIAL 3rd Team – Katie Craig  
Coaches Association WPIAL All-Section – Ollivia Congdon, Kara Pasquale, Bria Stepp



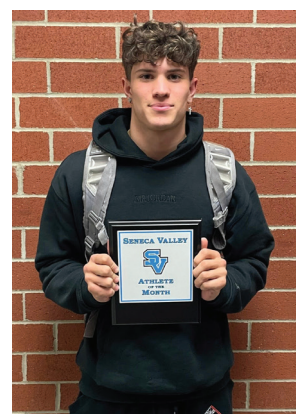
## ATHLETES OF THE MONTH, OCTOBER 2023

The Female Athlete of the Month for October was girls volleyball outside hitter Cameron Mueller. The freshman stepped into a significant role over the last month which helped the Raiders go 6-3 in regular season play and boast a 70% set win record over two tournaments. Cameron's contributions also helped the Raiders win the Norwin Girls Volleyball



Invitational and finish in sixth place at the South Fayette Tournament. Over the last month in non-tournament play, she has tallied 115 kills, 30 digs, six blocks and four assists. Cameron also had a serve receive percentage of two (on a scale of three) and her serve percentage was 86.4%. We recognized Cameron as the October Female Athlete of the Month. Congratulations, Cameron!

The Male Athlete of the Month for October was senior football running and defensive back Kai West. Kai's stellar play on offense and defense has helped the Raiders to a 3-1 record over the last month including three straight wins over Butler, Hempfield and North Hills. Over the four-game period, he totaled 566 all-purpose yards and seven touchdowns and one interception. His standout game came during homecoming against Hempfield where he tallied 170 all-purpose yards, two rushing touchdowns and one receiving touchdown to go along with an interception, leading the Raiders to a 42-13 victory. On the defensive side, he has been part of a strong Raiders defense that has allowed an average of 13.75 points per game over the four-game period. For an impressive month, we recognized Kai as the October Male Athlete of the Month. Congratulations, Kai! ■





## ANNUAL SUPPORT CAMPAIGN - ASPIRE TO INSPIRE

The Seneca Valley Foundation (SVF) is excited to launch its Annual Support Campaign and hopes to have your support as we wrap up our 11th year of inspiring educational excellence in Seneca Valley schools. It is our mission to inspire innovation, creativity and inclusion throughout the SV community, and we are proud to have invested over \$110,000 into SV schools in the 2022-23 school year!

For things like...

- Encouraging students through early literacy, performing arts, STEAM and global citizenship initiatives – like installing hydroponics systems, 3D printers and even a CNC machine in secondary classrooms

and book vending machines in elementary buildings.

- Supporting educators with classroom enhancements, international educational trips, teacher-inspired projects and professional development – because we value our teachers' commitment to excellence in academics.
- Ensuring our campuses afford various styles of learning opportunities, are welcoming for all and offer state-of-the-art equipment in places like the robotics and biotechnology labs.

We work hard to connect with local businesses, collaborate with community

organizations and utilize federal, state and local grants to bring these things to SV – but we need additional resources and support. We need YOU. Please help us continue to inspire SV students and staff by donating today!

Donations can be made through the below QR Code, at [PayPal.Me](https://www.paypal.com) or by mailing a check payable to the Seneca Valley Foundation to the District's Central Office at 124 Seneca School Rd., Harmony, PA 16037.

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



# ASPIRE TO INSPIRE

## Annual Support Campaign



[WWW.SVSD.NET/SVFOUNDATION](http://WWW.SVSD.NET/SVFOUNDATION)

**INNOVATION**

**CREATIVITY**

**INCLUSION**

**COMMUNITY**



**DONATE TODAY!**



## RACING TO REMEMBER: HONORING SGT. RYAN GLOYER

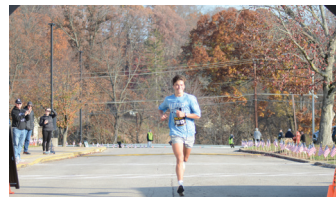
Nearly 400 people joined us in honoring the life and legacy of fallen hometown hero Sgt. 1st Class Ryan A. Gloyer (SV '00) who died courageously in battle in Afghanistan in 2016.

The Seneca Valley Foundation (SVF) welcomed participants, families and community members to the first Ryan Gloyer Memorial Run/Walk in memory of Sgt. Gloyer's work ethic, drive and resilience.

On a beautiful fall morning, the Memorial Run was held as an opportunity to share the attitudes and beliefs that make Sgt. Gloyer a role model for everyone in the Seneca Valley School District. Proceeds from the race go toward continued programming at Ryan Gloyer Middle School (RGMS), including future assemblies that feature Ryan's story for students. The Gloyer family also plans to generate a scholarship in partnership with the SVF for graduating seniors at Seneca Valley.

Many thanks to the SVF for a successful and inspirational event! Congratulations to SV junior Phillip Silvis on his first-place finish!

Read more about the event at [Ryan Gloyer Memorial run a good way to represent middle school namesake – Cranberry Eagle.](#)





## SV TAKES FIRST PLACE AT ACADEMIC DECATHLON

The Seneca Valley Academic Decathlon Team placed first among 10 other local schools at their recent competition at Moniteau High School.

The following students medaled in the events below:

### Music:

Shivani Umesh (Gold), Ophelia Crano (Silver), Roshini Umesh (Bronze), Kaia Satory (Gold), Parker Spence (Silver), Heath Lyon (Bronze), Leah Paxton (Bronze), Julia Acker (Gold), Zachary DeVault (Silver) and Arvand Esni (Bronze)

### Art:

Ophelia Crano (Gold), Kaia Satory (Gold), Heath Lyon (Silver), Rohin Jayaraman (Bronze), Ashley Kemp (Gold), Zachary DeVault (Silver) and Gavin Cress (Bronze)

### Literature:

Ophelia Crano (Silver), Kaia Satory (Gold), Rohin Jayaraman (Silver), Ashley Kemp (Gold), Zachary DeVault (Silver) and Gavin Cress (Bronze)

### Social Science:

Ophelia Crano (Silver), Rohin Jayaraman (Gold), Leah Paxton (Silver), Kaia Satory (Bronze), Ashley Kemp (Gold), Zachary DeVault (Silver) and Sarah Ghaffar (Bronze)

### Speech:

Gavin Cress (Silver)

Overall medalists, which are the top nine students in the entire competition include: Gavin Cress (Bronze), Ashley Kemp (Silver)



Zachary DeVault (Gold), Rohin Jayaraman (Silver) and Kaia Satory (Gold)

"The team consists of an exceptional group of students who embody hard work, intelligence, and focus – their dedication to understanding the material is truly commendable," said Seneca Valley Senior High School Teacher and Academic Decathlon coach David Reichard. "Our practices are a blend of fun and learning, where we use Kahoots, games, presentations, and various activities to bring the curriculum to life. It's exciting to see the team dive into topics like the history of computers, neuroscience, and music from science fiction films. Watching their growth and enthusiasm is a constant source of joy. I am eagerly looking forward to what the rest of the season will bring for this fantastic team!"

The next Academic Decathlon competition will be held at Penn State Behrend on December 2, where students will compete in Science, Economics, Mathematics and Interview events. ■

## ASPIRING APPRENTICES

Several SV students recently took a field trip to Steamfitters to learn about apprenticeship programs. Many of the students even had the opportunity to try shielded metal arc welding, also known as stick welding. ■



## 'DRIVEN' TO EXCELLENCE

Senior Jacob D'Appolonia is enrolled in the automotive technology program at Butler County Area Vocational-Technical School (BCAVTS) and was recently recognized as November's Student of the Month.

Mr. D'Appolonia was nominated by his automotive teacher, Mr. McLaughlin for his hard work and dedication to becoming an automotive technician. "He has a positive attitude and genuine desire to learn the

information required to be a successful automotive technician," said Mr. McLaughlin. "Jacob used the skills he learned during his first year to land a job at Riffin Specialty Auto in Harmony. Jacob has maintained an A average during his time at BCAVTS, and he also has great attendance."

Student of the Month is an opportunity at BCAVTS to recognize the hard work and achievements of students in their Career and Technical Education program. Students are nominated for recognition by their teachers based on their performance in the program, work ethic, attendance, interpersonal skills and teamwork. ■





## WILD WONDERS

Over 40 elementary students in grades 1-4 took an in-depth exploration into wildlife and nature at the Wildlife Biology STEM Outreach Day hosted by the Seneca Valley Science Honor Society and Biology Club. Students participated in themed activities at stations including aquatics, mammals, reptiles, forestry and birds. Station activities featured live animals, model skulls, mammal pelts, and more! Students also learned what makes a species native and which species are native to Pennsylvania.

Over 25 Science Honor Society and Biology Club students volunteered their time running the stations and acting as group leaders. The event was planned by senior Abby Bonno who serves as one of the Elementary Outreach coordinators this year. She has been working since August selecting activities and creating the stations.

"It was wonderful to see the students excited to share their love of science with the younger children," Miss Bonno said. ■



## LAB CHATS

The Seneca Valley Center for Biotechnology welcomed special guest Dr. Stephanie Cabarcas-Petroski to speak with students about her experience and expansive cancer research during a "Lab Chat" earlier this month. Dr. Cabarcas-Petroski, a professor at Penn State, presented how she got started in the field, the steps she took in her education and what her career looks like now. She also took time to answer students' questions and share her experiences as a first-generation college student.

Dr. Cabarcas-Petroski has conducted graduate and post-graduate research in cancer stem cells and developed skills in bioinformatics research. She has conducted studies at St. John's University,

the National Cancer Institute and National Institute of Health. Students learned how they, too, can pursue science degrees in a variety of ways. ■





## 'STRONGER THAN HATE'

Seneca Valley teachers recently spent their October professional development day attending activities centered around a new education initiative called Leadership through Innovation in Genocide and Human Rights Teaching (LIGHT). It's a network of students, teachers and community leaders working together to bring innovation to human rights advocacy and genocide prevention.

As part of their LIGHT training, teachers first took part in the Schenley Park commemoration of the fifth anniversary of the worst attack on the Jewish faith in U.S. history. On that day in 2018, a lone gunman took the lives of 11 people inside a Squirrel Hill synagogue. Three congregations worshiped there — Tree of Life, Dor Hadash and New Light.

After listening to the survivors, the group then watched the film "Repairing the World: Stories from the Tree of Life" with students from various districts and toured the "Revolving Doors" exhibit at the Holocaust Center with a tour led by the director and a daughter of a survivor. After spending some time discussing how to make change in their respective buildings, they then went to the "Keeping Tabs" Memorial to finish the day.

"It was a time of commemoration, reflection and learning for us as we discussed what we as educators can do to help make our school community stronger than hate," said Michele Russo, Seneca



Valley Intermediate High School (SVIHS) English teacher.

Leading up to this day, students in Ms. Russo's sophomore English class, along with Ms. Megan Kelly, SVIHS librarian, completed a week of stations titled "Stronger than Hate." Students learned about hate and propaganda around them including antisemitism. To end the unit, they, too, watched the film and then were given choice response projects. Students chose to write to the Mallinger family. Rose Mallinger, a Holocaust survivor, was the oldest person killed five years ago during



the Pittsburgh synagogue shooting, and her daughter, Andrea was also injured that day. They wrote and drew beautiful messages of what they learned and included their condolences. These were delivered to the family. ■

## REFLECTIONS TO REMEMBER

As part of their lesson about the Holocaust, seventh and eighth-grade students in gifted education classes at Ryan Gloyer Middle School (RGMS) spent the day visiting Pittsburgh to see the "Keeping Tabs" Memorial, Violins of Hope, the Tree of Life Congregation and the Rodef Shalom Congregation.

Additionally, students had the opportunity to closely explore and learn even more about the Holocaust through an interactive and collaborative workshop in partnership

with Classrooms Without Borders.

For the sixth consecutive year, playwright and teacher, Susan Stein engaged with



students during their class while they created cards based on Holocaust diary entries. ■





## STAFF AND FACULTY GET INSIDE LOOK AT MSA

To provide additional support for career opportunities for students, SV teacher representatives attended a full-day career experience at the Mine Safety Appliance (MSA) Headquarters in Cranberry Township on Oct. 27. MSA Safety Incorporated is the global leader in the development, manufacture and supply of safety products that protect people and facility infrastructures. SV staff and faculty members attended the tour and had positive feedback about the event. Here's what some of the staff had to say:

*"It was clear that the panel of individuals speaking with us believed in the work they were doing and felt that MSA was a place that offered growth and support. This is an important and valuable component to a career that is not discussed as frequently with students."*

*"Employers are really looking for prospective employees to have the soft skills of employment, excellent communication skills, a growth mindset and a willingness to learn."*

Teachers also expressed their goals for expanding the "school in the workplace" concept with the development of career pathways:

*"Teach kids to make connections and bring*



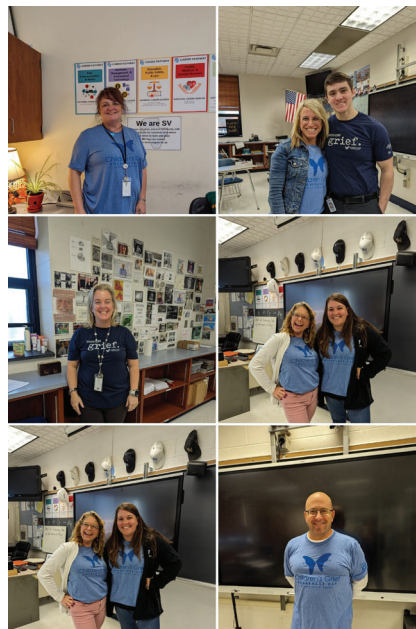
*personal experiences to job interviews. No experience is too small or obvious."*

*"I plan to be intentional when it comes to incorporating interpersonal skills such as communication, listening, time management, problem solving, leadership and empathy into my lessons and conversations with students. I look forward to creating opportunities for students to work through these with peers and adults."* ■



## SV HONORS CHILDREN'S GRIEF AWARENESS DAY

Seneca Valley Schools recognized Children's Grief Awareness Day on Nov. 16. The day was dedicated to make people become more aware of the needs of grieving children -- and the benefits they obtain through the support of others. Staff across the District honored the day by raising money for The Caring Place by selling T-shirts, wearing blue and creating opportunities for students to remember their loved ones. ■





# 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary



## Seneca Valley Senior Holiday Event

SV Intermediate High  
School

*126 Seneca School Rd. Harmony,  
PA 16037*

**12:30-2:30 p.m.**  
*(Doors open at noon)*

Wednesday,  
December

**20**

This free festive holiday presentation is open to senior citizens living in the Seneca Valley School community. Performances from the Seneca Valley Jazz Bands, Madrigal Singers, and Orchestra will take place in auditorium.

The National Honor Society will serve a sit-down holiday meal in the school's cafeteria following the performances. Student art will be displayed in the halls.

Extra assistance will be provided by members of the SV JROTC.

*RSVPs are required by Dec. 13. For more information or to RSVP,  
attendees are asked to call 724-452-6040, ext. 0.*



## SV ALL-STAR

For the month of November, we are pleased to announce the newest member inducted into the SV All-Star Club, Ms. Kate Rawson, technology support assistant at Connoquenessing Valley Elementary School (CVE).

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), bus drivers and security guards who are often the unsung heroes of our schools. We recognize a new member of this elite all-star club each month.

Ms. Rawson started her journey at CVE as a special education classroom paraprofessional where she worked hand-in-hand with CVE teachers to create an inclusive and nurturing learning environment for students. After serving in this position for quite some time, Ms. Rawson transitioned to technology support assistant for CVE and continues to be an invaluable asset to the school, as her previous professional background includes working as an executive in IT.

"It is with pride and admiration that I extend my deepest gratitude to Kate," said Mrs. DeeAnn Graham, Principal at Connoquenessing



**Pictured from L - R: Ms. Kathy Whittle, Board President, Mrs. DeeAnn Graham, Principal at Connoquenessing Valley Elementary School, Ms. Kate Rawson and Dr. Tracy Vitale, Superintendent of Schools**

Valley Elementary School. "Her dedication, kindness, and unwavering support have left an indelible mark on the hearts of all who have had the privilege of working alongside her."

Mrs. Graham added, "Kate is one of the most consistently happy, kind, and energetic people that I have ever had the pleasure of working with. She has made a lasting impact on our school community, and we are forever grateful for her presence in our lives." ■

## 'I LED THE PLEDGE'

Board meetings were held on Nov. 6 and 13. 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."

The Nov. 6 work session meeting featured Addison Dindinger, a second grader from Connoquenessing Valley Elementary School. Addison's favorite subject in school is art. She loves to bake with her mom and hopes to one day open her own bakery.

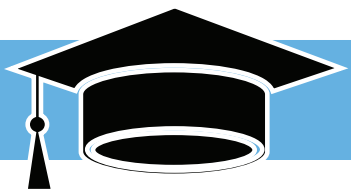


Kindergarten students from Rowan Elementary, led by Teacher Shelly Hess, did a great job at the Nov. 13 regular session meeting. In recognition of the final board meeting of Jim Nickel and Kathy Whittle,

the group projected perfectly and received shirts and medals for their efforts. We thank our students for attending, and Mr. Nickel and Ms. Whittle for their over 20 years of combined, dedicated service. ■







**EJ Eyles, SV '01**, has many roles including being the owner of a construction company, a car enthusiast and a loving father and husband. We asked him to catch us up on what he is doing and how Seneca Valley influenced his life and career.

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

A: I am the owner of a steel building construction company, Revere Steel. I have been in the steel industry since 2011. I enjoy spending time with my family, riding my motorcycles and being a car enthusiast.

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

A: I live in Forward Township with my wife Mallory Eyles (who works at Seneca Valley) of 11 years and our 8-year-old daughter Harper who is in third grade at Ehrman Crest Elementary. Shortly after moving into our home, we bought the farm across the street where my dad now lives.

**Q: What might (someone) be surprised to know about you?**

A: I am restoring an early 1900's bank barn at our farm.

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

A: Seneca Valley taught me to persevere through difficult times. Throughout my time at SV, my guidance counselors supported my non-traditional path to success. They met with me often and helped me to tailor my future to my goals post-graduation.

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

A: Seneca Valley is large and I was exposed to people from all walks of life. SV gave me diverse learning opportunities that I don't think I would have had at a small school.

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



A: Mr. Ceh, who was the Dean of Students during my time in high school. He gave me the tough love I needed at the time. Now, my wife works closely with him, and I hear of the positive impact he continues to have on students as the principal.

**Q: What is one of your favorite memories from your time at Seneca Valley? We'd encourage you to recall a moment or event that had a particularly strong influence on your life.**

A: Something very memorable to me, which had a large impact on my life, is when the Dodge Daytona car was parked in front of the school as a symbol and reminder to drive safely and that young lives can be easily lost due to reckless acts. Ever since then, I have enjoyed participating in various professional driving schools and events. I enjoy driving all types of vehicles on racetracks and have always had a strong sense of driver safety.

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

A: Life is what you make of it. Sometimes it will take some students longer to find their way. Don't count them out. Help them to find their passion even if it doesn't seem like a typical path.

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

A: Despite the large number of students, each school has a small-town feel. You will never meet a more committed group of educators. I am thankful to raise my daughter in this district. ■







## PARENTING AROUND ALCOHOL: THREE MYTHS YOU SHOULD KNOW

Youth are constantly bombarded with depictions of individuals consuming alcohol in party settings when they tune into shows, social media, and other forms of media.

Have you heard of the *"Call Her Daddy"* Podcast? It is massively popular among teen girls. Spotify allegedly paid the host Alex Cooper around \$25 million to move her show onto their platform. Well, not long ago, this [YouTube video](#) (Warning: Strong Language) was posted in which the interviewer, Alex Cooper, is doing "Truth or Shots" with a female guest.

We are all worried about the effect alcohol has on people's capacity to consent to sexual activities. Given this, it's troubling knowing that children are exposed to many TV shows that glamorize drinking in social situations. A [2022 study](#) from Australia found that alcohol was depicted in 98% of the reality dating show episodes they analyzed.

During adolescence, some teens will gather and have alcohol involved, whether that's at a park, in someone's house, or another inconspicuous location.

Talk with kids and students about messages about alcohol that come up in our digital world:

- Shows: alcohol images and references are ever present in many of the shows our kids watch. A few years back, the CDC published a study that analyzed the frequency of alcohol in top-ranked shows by 15-year-old boys. The researchers found that alcohol was either shown or mentioned on average 20.9 times per hour in TV-14-rated shows. Twenty-one times per hour! The study won CDC's Student Research Paper Contest and would be excellent to discuss not just with our kids but with students or with sport team members.
- Music videos: Taylor Swift is popular among teens, no doubt about that. Two of her most popular new music videos, *Anti-Hero* and *Bejeweled*, have alcohol in them. Consider watching one or both of these and discussing the alcohol in the videos. In one of them, she appears to be trying to drown her sorrows with a bottle of wine. Let's talk about emotions and drinking!
- Social media. The drink, White Claw, has benefited tremendously from all the posts people put up of them holding cans of the drink. In fact, 4 billion impressions of the drink have been created by social media users thus far.

There was a striking difference between parents' strategies for parenting around alcohol use and what the data reveals about what we should be saying and doing to help our youth make wiser decisions around alcohol.

Questions to get the discussion started:



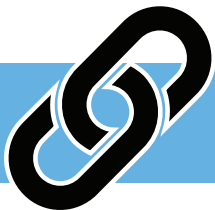
### MYTHS EXPOSED:

1. In European countries like France, where the legal drinking age is younger, and the culture is more permissive, teens learn to drink more responsibly.
  - a. The rate of binge drinking among 15-year-olds is actually three times greater in France than in the United States.
2. Students will drink safer once they get to college if they've already started drinking in high school.
  - a. The gross data says that the more you drink in high school, the more likely you are to increase your drinking in college and the more likely you are to have negative consequences.
3. If teens are drinking socially, it's safe to drink at home.
  - a. One study found that in homes where senior high school girls were allowed to drink with friends, they were more likely to report binge drinking (during their) freshman year of college than those who weren't allowed to.

1. What are some of your favorite things to do when hanging out with friends that don't involve drinking or partying?
2. Have you ever noticed how often drinking is shown on reality TV shows and social media? What impact do you think that has on how teens view alcohol?
3. How do you feel about the idea that being allowed to drink at home could make teens more responsible drinkers? Can you think of any pros or cons based on what you've heard or experienced?
4. In your opinion, what's the best way for someone your age to stay safe in situations where there might be pressure to drink?

*Article provided by Screenagers* ■





- SV alumni with careers in the STEM field are invited to participate in the 10th Annual STEM Alumni Event "Empowering Minds and Igniting Futures" on Dec. 21. Interested participants are asked to email [finchrs@svsd.net](mailto:finchrs@svsd.net) for more information.
- Teacher Nominations - WTAE-TV is launching a Teacher of the Month recognition program for the 2023-24 school year. Each month, from September through May, a teacher will be selected from the many deserving submissions that they receive. The selected Teacher of the Month will receive a \$1000 credit to [donorschoose.org](https://donorschoose.org), a crowd-sourcing page for classroom project/program funding. In addition, Pittsburgh's Action News 4 will feature that teacher and their story (and possibly a surprise school visit) during a news broadcast, as well as social media. Nomination information can be found at [WTAE Teacher of the Month](#).
- The Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) is encouraging Pennsylvanians to nominate an outstanding educator to be the Commonwealth's 2025 Teacher of the Year. The Teacher of the Year program celebrates excellence in teaching and honors individuals who have made outstanding contributions to the young people of Pennsylvania. Nominations will be accepted until Dec. 15, 2023. Learn more and/or nominate at [Teacher of the Year \(pa.gov\)](#).
- This month, Seneca Valley welcomed Alicia Kozakiewicz to share her story, "[Saving Lives and Stopping Predators](#)," with parents and staff. After becoming the victim of an Internet luring and abduction, and following a miraculous rescue by the FBI, Ms. Kozakiewicz created an awareness program that addresses Internet safety and awareness education. Her mission is to not only promote the importance of online safety, but to also advocate for missing and recovered persons, and to battle against child sexual exploitation and human trafficking.
- All students in Pennsylvania public

schools, including Seneca Valley, have access to **free breakfast for the 2023-24 school year**, regardless of family income. Encourage your student(s) to stop for a full breakfast or various grab-and-go items. And new for the 2023-24 school year, families who qualify for reduced meals will now be able to receive lunch for free. If you think you qualify, please apply to receive this benefit and return it to the Seneca Valley Administration Office with attention to Faye Nelson. We encourage you to fill out a Free & Reduced-Price School Meals Application as many programs are connected to your child(ren)'s eligibility. Applications can be found at [www.svsd.net/FreeandReduced](http://www.svsd.net/FreeandReduced).

- SV Backpack Flyers - Flyers are updated frequently and feature information on student and community events/activities, including Cranberry Township's Pet Photos with Santa and Milk & Cookies with Santa. Learn more at [Backpack Flyers / Backpack Flyers \(svsd.net\)](#).
- Healthy habits - SV's Health Services Department would like to remind everyone to eat well, sleep well, stay hydrated and wash hands frequently. Additionally, they ask that you please stay home or keep your child home when sick, and for 24 hours after fever is gone without medication or 24 hours without vomiting/diarrhea. Thank you!
- 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](http://candleinc.org))



- Subscribe to our YouTube Channel!
- Drive for SV! Driver incentives are now being offered.
- Join the SV Team! Visit [www.svsd.net/HumanResources](http://www.svsd.net/HumanResources) to learn more and apply.
- Visit [Niche](#) to view SV rankings ■

## 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. ■







# JOIN THE SENECA VALLEY TEAM!

## Buildings & Grounds Supervisor

Seeking a knowledgeable, highly effective leader skilled in operational management and maintenance coordination for permanent 12-month (salary regionally competitive) Buildings and Grounds Supervisor - second shift-position.

**Requirements:** Must have proficient technology skills and be able to work under high level of stress. Ability to respond to emergencies 24/7, 365 days a year.

Supervises custodial employees; works directly with outside contracted services. Maintains a coordinated inventory control program; assists with the preparation of the annual budget; reports to the Director of Buildings and Grounds.

Supervisory experience & Associate's degree in related field preferred.

Submit required information to [www.svsd.net/employment](http://www.svsd.net/employment).

### Benefits of working at Seneca Valley:

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

### APPLY TODAY!

To learn more and apply, visit  
[www.svsd.net/employment](http://www.svsd.net/employment)  
or call (724) 452-6040







# CALLING ALL SNOW ANGELS!

VOLUNTEER TO SHOVEL SNOW FOR A NEIGHBOR IN NEED THIS WINTER.



Sign up to volunteer November 13 - December 4  
Request assistance November 20 - December 8

\*This is not a Seneca Valley sponsored program



A PART OF VOLUNTEER CRANBERRY | [VOLUNTEER@CRANBERRYTOWNSHIP.ORG](mailto:VOLUNTEER@CRANBERRYTOWNSHIP.ORG) | [WWW.CRANBERRYTOWNSHIP.ORG/SNOWANGELS](http://WWW.CRANBERRYTOWNSHIP.ORG/SNOWANGELS)

## 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](http://www.svsd.net)



# PSATS Scholarships

Inspiring the **NEXT GENERATION** of local leaders



Township officials are encouraged to promote the **BRAND-NEW PSATS SCHOLARSHIPS** to high school juniors and seniors.

THE DEADLINE  
TO APPLY FOR  
EITHER SCHOLARSHIP  
IS JANUARY 26,  
2024!

## The Local Government Achievement Scholarship

Awarded to students who demonstrate outstanding **citizenship through commendable public service and community involvement.**

## The Academic Achievement Scholarship

Awarded to students who demonstrate enthusiasm toward **education by maintaining high academic standards.**



### BEGIN YOUR APPLICATION PROCESS TODAY.

Two \$1,500 scholarships will be awarded in each category for a total of four scholarships. Applicants must be a U.S. citizen, reside in a Pennsylvania township of the second class, and be currently enrolled as high school junior or senior. Both achievement scholarships are open for career education opportunities whether they be 2- or 4-year college degree programs or technical training schools and certificate programs that lead to professions. Interested applicants may scan the provided QR Code or visit [psats.org/scholarship](https://psats.org/scholarship) to begin the application process. The deadline to apply for either scholarship is January 26, 2024. For more information, email Scholarship Program Coordinator Katie Lizza at [klizza@psats.org](mailto:klizza@psats.org).