



RAIDER PRIDE

A State and National Award-Winning Publication

AUGUST 2024



Photo Credit: Bill Paterson

CHAPTER ONE!

We welcomed our students with open arms as they began their first chapter of the 2024-25 school year at Seneca Valley. We wish all SV students a wonderful year and exciting new beginning! For more first day photos, click [here](#) (or see page 2).



MEDIA NOTICE:

We wish to share good news of events and activities in our schools. If you do not want to have your child's name, photograph or other personal information appear in any media or district publication, please submit written documentation to your child's building principal. Thank you. ■

SALUTING SERVICE

The Seneca Valley School District is once again in the process of organizing a special Veteran Recognition Day during a Raider Football home game (vs. Pine Richland) on Friday, Sept. 6, 2024.

Seneca Valley is privileged to recognize veterans and active military personnel who live in the Seneca Valley School District and encourages these individuals to participate. Click [here](#) to learn more and/or register. ■



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DATES TO REMEMBER

Monday, Sept. 2..... District Holiday, No School
 Friday, Sept. 6..... Veteran Recognition Night at NextTier Stadium – Home Football Game vs. Pine Richland, 7 p.m.
 Monday, Sept. 9... School Board Meeting, Work Session, IHS Auditorium, 7 p.m.
 Monday, Sept. 16.. School Board Meeting, Regular Session, IHS Auditorium, 7 p.m.

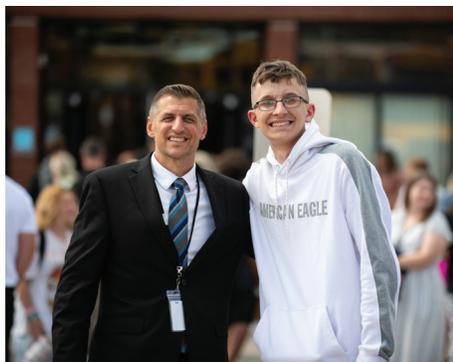
For more dates, visit: www.svsd.net/WebCalendar

SEPTEMBER

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					

CHAPTER ONE! (Continued from page 1)

Photo Credit: Bill Paterson



Seneca Valley SD 2024-25 Student/Teacher Calendar

APPROVED JANUARY 2024

August 2024						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	A80	17
18	A80	IS	IS	FD	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

11 Staff Days; 7 Student Days (9 w/A80)
Aug. 22 - First Student Day

September 2024						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	H	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					

20 Days

October 2024						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	A80	IS	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		

23 Staff Days; 21 Student Days (22 w/A80)
Oct. 4 - In-Service Day

November 2024						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	IS	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	H	H	H	30

18 Staff Days; 17 Student Days
Nov. 11 - IS/Clerical Day

December 2024						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	H	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	H	H	H	H	H	28
29	H	H				

14 Days

January 2025						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				H	2	3
4						
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	IS	18
19	A80	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

22 Staff Days; 20 Student Days (21 w/A80)
Jan. 16 - End of First Semester
Jan. 17 - IS/Clerical Day

February 2025						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	SM	15
16	IS	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	

19 Staff Days; 18 Student Days
Feb. 17 - IS/Clerical Day

March 2025						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	SM	22
23	A80	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

20 Staff Days; 19 Student Days (20 w/A80)

April 2025						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
						5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	H	H	H	H	H	19
20	A80	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

17 Staff Days; 16 Student Days (17 w/A80)

May 2025						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
						3
4	5	6	7	8	IS	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	H	27	28	LDS	30	31

21 Staff Days; 20 Student Days
May 9 - In-Service Day
May 29 - Last Day for Seniors (Grad. Day)

June 2025						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	LD	7
8	IS	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

6 Staff Days; 5 Student Days
June 6 - Last Day for K-11 Students

191 Work Days for Teachers

In the event of an inclement weather closure, SV may call for either a traditional "Snow Day," or a Remote Learning Day. If it is a traditional "Snow Day," the following are two makeup days that will be utilized:

Feb. 14, 2025

March 21, 2025

District Local Holidays:

Nov. 27, 2024

Dec. 2, 2024

Dec. 24, 2024

Dec. 31, 2024

April 18, 2025

KEY

A80 - Act 80 - Prof. Develop. Day (No school for students)

H - Holiday (No school)

IS - In-Service Day (No school for students)

FD, LD & LD-S - First Student Day, Last Student Day & Last Day/Graduation Day for Seniors

SM - Snow Makeup Day (this day becomes a holiday if no snow make-up days are needed)

Remote Learning - Flexible Instructional Day/Students engage in remote learning from home

Please note all dates are subject to change

TOGETHER WE THRIVE

Seneca Valley’s Welcome Back All-Staff Meeting was held on Friday, Aug. 16, with the message of “Together WE Thrive!”

JROTC students gave the presentation of Colors while SV Cheer, Dance Team and Mini Marching Band led standout pep performances. Administrators even joined in on the SV Raider rally fun! Staff listened attentively to remarks from District officials and award-winning educator, writer and speaker Chase Mielke. Mr. Mielke gave an inspirational message to staff about togetherness, building resilience and fostering a positive atmosphere within the SV educational community.



In a survey given after the event, one staff member said, “Having an inspirational speaker allows teachers to approach the new school year with a positive attitude ready to inspire young minds!”

The district extends a heart-felt thank you to Eckles Construction, Rhoads Orthodontics, Fun-Fore-All and the Seneca Valley Foundation (SVF) for sponsoring staff SV Rally Towels, and the SVF for sponsoring SV spirit pompoms and the speaker.

Teachers, administrators and staff are very excited for an engaging school year ahead! ■



Photo Credit: Bill Paterson



If you’re looking for an online version of the 2024-25 calendar, click [here](#). ■

2024-2025
ACTIVITIES AND INFORMATION CALENDAR



WARM RAIDER WELCOME

Seneca Valley welcomed over 30 new educators to the District for the 2024-25 school year! These SV future makers attended the annual SV New Teacher Induction Program Aug. 14-15 where they learned more about Seneca Valley, met several colleagues and administrators and attended various training sessions.

Connoquenessing Valley Elementary School

Hillary Mellott - Multiple Supports

Ehrman Crest Elem./Middle School

McKenna Roach - Multiple Supports

Maggie Kishbaugh - Gifted Support

Ehrman Crest Elementary School

Taylor Geist - Grade 1

Julienne Anderson - Grade 4

Holly Blizman - Grade 3

Ehrman Crest Middle School

Tia Burns - Guidance Counselor

Haine Elementary School

Kayla Pittser - Grade 3

Kylie Syska - Autistic/Emotional Support

Margaret Halferty - Speech & Language

Nancy Bilger - Grade 2

Julie Willoughby - Grade 3

Haine Middle School

Jessica Rupolo - Learning Support

Jordan Burnett - Art

Haine Elem./Middle School

Ashley Graham - Learning/Emotional Support

Amanda Cypher- ESL

Rowan Elementary School

Emmelia Jaffe - Grade 2

Emily Drotar - Grade 2

Jaded Miller - Grade 4

Alternative Education

Eleanor Sgro - Learning, Emotional, Autistic Support

Gabe Miller - Grades 7/8

Ryan Gloyer Middle School

Claire Staudacher - Learning Support

Michaela Herrman - Speech & Language

Brooke Wilson - Learning Support

Ryan Gloyer Middle School/Intermediate High School

Matilda Shay - Orchestra



Intermediate High School

Ryan Balog - Learning Support

Spencer Murray - Guidance Counselor

Senior High School

Andrew Musacchio - Chemistry

Tracey Williams - Multiple Supports

Long-Term Substitutes

Connoquenessing Elementary School

Tanner Yergin - Grade 2

Ehrman Crest Elementary School

Ellie Hyland - Grade 1

Sophia Puricelli - Grade 3

Ryan Gloyer Middle School

Devyn Peskorski - Health & Physical Education

Tammy Cantella - FACS

School Nurse

Alisha Nist - Floating ■



DRESS CODE POLICY REMINDERS

The following is an important update to the Seneca Valley School District's Dress Code Policy, effective beginning with the 2024-25 school year. This change was brought about after a comprehensive review

was conducted over the past year by the Seneca Valley Dress Code Committee, which includes both District and building-level administration.

As part of this, the District sought input from students, staff and parents through a ThoughtExchange survey distributed last winter. [The majority of respondents agreed that the dress code should be respectful and appropriate for a school setting with calls for consistency across the district.](#)

In addition to gathering community input, the committee sought out and reviewed research articles and related studies focusing on how to shape a dress code that establishes clear expectations while allowing for student expression.

After careful review and consideration, the committee brought [a student dress code update before the School Board, which was approved on June 3, and is now effective with the start of the 2024-25 school year.](#)

The School Board recognizes that each student's mode of dress and grooming is a manifestation of personal style and individual preference. The updated dress code aims to provide a consistent standard for all students. The policy also encourages students to project themselves to other students, staff and visiting guests in a manner that honors the atmosphere of learning in a school environment.

The following are the important points within the updated policy, specific to **inappropriate items** for the school day, which include but are not exclusive of, the following:

1. Clothing, apparel, or jewelry that by words, signs, pictures, or any other combinations thereof, advocates or promotes sexual activity, violence, death, suicide or the use of alcohol

or drugs, or demeans, degrades or intimidates another because of race, sexual orientation, sex, gender identity, religious persuasions, national origin or disability.

2. Students are required to avoid clothing that excessively exposes the chest or buttocks when standing, sitting or moving. Undergarments may not be exposed. Items of clothing cannot mimic the appearance, style or coverage of undergarments.
3. Any clothing that is of transparent material, see-through material or has sexually suggestive signs, symbols or phrases.

In addition:

4. Footwear must be worn at all times.
5. JROTC uniforms are considered standardized dress on designated days.
6. Activity-specific dress such as cheerleading uniforms or other athletic uniforms are only permitted on days designated as school spirit days by the building principal or his/her designee.
7. Where hats are permitted (see Frequently Asked Questions #5 below), they must be worn to allow the face to be visible to staff and not interfere with the line of sight of any student or staff. Hoodies will be worn down so that the face and ears will be visible to school staff.

The policy describes the district's minimum dress code requirements. Each building has a student handbook, which may contain additional requirements associated with that building. Those specifics will be communicated to you through your child's building; additionally, frequently asked questions are below.

As we move forward into the 2024-25 school year, we believe that these changes will foster a respectful and consistent environment for all students. Thank you for your cooperation and support as we implement these adjustments.

Dress Code Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs):

1. Can I wear a shirt with spaghetti/tank straps?
 - a. Spaghetti/tank strap tops are permissible so long as they do not excessively expose chest, expose undergarments or mimic the coverage of undergarments.
2. Can my bandeau be exposed, or may I wear a tube top?
 - a. No, no undergarments may be exposed; tube tops on their own are not permissible.
3. Can I have holes in my jeans?
 - a. Holes in jeans are permissible so long as they do not expose buttocks when standing, sitting or moving. Undergarments may not be exposed.
4. Can I show any midriff?
 - a. Some midriff is permissible so long as the top does not mimic the appearance, style or coverage of undergarments. Furthermore, so long as the top does not excessively expose chest while standing, sitting or moving.
5. Can hats be worn in all grades?
 - a. Hats are permitted in grades 9-12; they are not permitted in grades K-8.
6. What will the consequences look like for dress code violations?
 - a. Disciplinary action will be as follows:
 - i. First Offense: warning and documented
 - ii. Second Offense: required to change, student phone taken as collateral if borrowing clothing, call home and documented
 - iii. Third Offense: after school detention assigned, required to change, phone taken as collateral if borrowing clothing, call home and documented
 - iv. All subsequent offenses: progressive discipline ■

SV STANDOUT NAMED WINNER IN FIRST-EVER ‘AMERICA’S FIELD TRIP’

Leila Wright, a rising sophomore at Seneca Valley Intermediate High School was recently named a first-place awardee of “America’s Field Trip,” a new, nationwide scholastic contest encouraging students to reflect on what America means to them.

Thousands of students from across the country submitted inspiring entries, responding to the prompt “What does America mean to you?” for the first-ever “America’s Field Trip” contest. A panel of current and former educators selected 150 students as awardees, hailing from 44 states and territories. First-place awardees were able to take part in unforgettable field trip experiences this summer at iconic American historical and cultural sites, and second-place awardees will receive \$500 cash awards.

America250, the official nonpartisan entity charged by Congress with planning the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence, announced the inaugural cohort of “America’s Field

Trip” awardees. The contest will continue in 2025 and 2026, with next year’s contest launching this September.

“We’re thrilled to announce the first-ever ‘America’s Field Trip’ awardees – 75 incredible students from across the country who will now embark on transformative field trip experiences where they’ll experience history outside of the classroom,” said America250 Chair, Rosie Rios. “We’re grateful for all of the students, teachers, and families who engaged around ‘America’s Field Trip’ – one of the first big steps on our long journey together to the Semiquincentennial. As we advance toward July 4th, 2026, ‘America’s Field Trip’ will only get bigger, engaging thousands of students around our collective history and giving them a platform to actively participate in envisioning our future.”

America250 announced “America’s Field Trip” in cooperation with BNY, a global financial services company that played a



pivotal role in the development, growth, and rise of the United States for 240 years. “The meaningful experiences these students will gain beyond the classroom by visiting iconic American sites will inspire them and all the lives they touch to advance the nation’s long history of innovation,” said Jayee Koffey, Global Head of Enterprise Execution and Chief Corporate Affairs Officer for BNY. “We congratulate these students and their families and are honored to be part of their journey.” ■

OUT OF THE PARK FUN-DS!

Seneca Valley students continue to impress and serve our greater community with #SVRaiderPride! This past year, students raised over \$11,500 for the Miracle League of Southwestern Pennsylvania (MLSWPA) during their 10th annual Raiderthon event. This brings the total raised by SV for the MLSWPA to over \$120,000 over the last 10 years!

“You should be proud of the young adults you are preparing to enter the world,” said Mr. Terry Shulsky, MLSWPA Board Member, commending the efforts of the Seneca Valley School District.

According to its mission, the Miracle League of Southwestern PA strives to provide the opportunity for children and adults with special needs a chance to play baseball in a league-based environment at Graham Park in Cranberry Township. ■



SV LAUNCHES ONLINE PARKING PERMIT REGISTRATION

Seneca Valley is pleased to introduce an online system to register and manage student parking permits. To register online and receive a parking permit, students will need their student ID number, driver’s license information, vehicle registration and valid auto insurance. Register here for the parking permit: [Login \(permitsales.net\)](https://permitsales.net).

The link can also be found under the Safety & Security Department on the District website at www.svgsd.net. ■





A SWEET SLICE OF ENTERTAINMENT SIGNALS BEGINNING OF THE FALL SEASON

The Seneca Valley Band Boosters hosted the annual Marching Band “Pie Festival” on Thursday, Aug. 15. This event kicks off the fall season with the premier performance of the SV “Roaring” Raider Marching Band. As a special addition, the band invited members of the SV Summer Band to perform the National Anthem alongside the full Marching Band on the field. Under the direction of Mrs. Tracy Glass, Mrs. Kelly Levere and Mrs. Erin Scott, over 80 young band students performed. A full crowd was present to witness this cherished fall event and enjoy the band’s first full halftime of the season. This season, the Marching Band is featuring the music of the Beatles, covering nine famous tunes during the course of the halftime performance. ■

Photo Credit: Bill Sauers



SUMMER BAND PERFORMS AT PIRATE GAME

The Ehrman Crest Middle School Summer Band students took a field trip to perform the National Anthem at PNC Park on Friday, Aug. 2, prior to the Pirates vs. Arizona Diamondbacks game. The band comprises 110 band students, grades 4-6, and 35 secondary student band mentors. Directors were Mrs. Tracy Glass and Mr. Kurt McNaught. ■





WEARING THE SV



Thirteen years ago, I was privileged to receive an offer to become the Director of Athletics & Activities for the Seneca Valley School District. It did not take me long to consider this opportunity for I saw in #SVRaiderNation hugely untapped potential, visionary District leadership, and amazing community connections. I had an idealistic vision of what outsiders would think when they saw anyone wearing the Columbia Blue and Black SV. They would know the bearer represented a culture of excellence – academically, athletically, artistically and socially, – embodied a commitment of unwavering trust, and was part of a community that valued their friend, peer, teammate and neighbor. What I often refer to as “Culture, Commitment, Community.”

My annual message to our student-athletes this year centers around the phrase, “Wearing the SV.” It is a privilege for our students to don a uniform adorned with the SV. We talk of the privilege and the responsibilities that come with privilege. When it comes to “Wearing the SV” the expectations are:

- 1) Be a Good Human because positive energy is contagious
- 2) Be a Great Competitor because competitive energy is contagious
- 3) Be the Best Teammate because team-first energy is contagious

Embedded in my delivery is the non-negotiable expectation that each of us is kind, humble and supportive, and the recognition that negative energy is destructive. As a leader in education-based sports, I am a firm believer that the athletic arena, as a non-traditional venue, teaches some of life’s most essential lessons; among them, how to handle success with humility and adversity with composure. Sport teaches us all the vast difference of playing FOR your teammate and not with your teammate.

I routinely remind our students the foundation of this learning centers on class – having the utmost class in good times and bad. What education-based sports also provides is a chance to “seize the teachable moment” in times of poor judgment, recurrent mistakes or spontaneous acts of selfishness.

Kindness, class and being an even better teammate than player are the pillars for

Raider Athletics. We will always respect the game and all its participants with a positive sporting mindset, and we will be the consummate teammate to our peers. That is what “Wearing the SV” means.

But is this only for our students? If our youth are our purpose and teaching is our objective, should not all #SVRaiderNation choosing to “Wear the SV” embody the same? In moments of conflict, we must remind ourselves the SV is what binds us together as a community. Our thoughts and philosophies may diverge but the SV pillars of kindness, class and being an even better teammate should always be reflected by those who choose to “Wear the SV.”

I may have uncommon ambitions for what it means to “Wear the SV” but my unwavering commitment to these ideals is absolute. As we welcome another school year, my hope remains that SV will enhance our community connections and #SVRaiderNation will be ideal role models of Good Humans, Great Competitors and Best Teammates. If we catch the energies, imagine the possibilities for excellence! ■





STILL HERE IN 2024-25 – ANNUAL ATHLETIC PASS

In collaboration with the Student-Athlete Leadership Team (S.A.L.T.) the Seneca Valley Athletics Department is pleased to offer a year-long annual athletic pass for all Raider sports home contests on our campus for the 2024-25 school year. **New this year: the pass is now available to students *and* adults!**

The pass will be \$50 and will entitle the name holder - who presents the Athletics pass along with valid ID (SV ID, License) - to free entry for our regular season home contests.

Any Seneca Valley community member is eligible to purchase a 2024-25 annual student athletic pass. Passes may be purchased in the Athletic Office located in the lobby of the Senior High School. Passes are available for sale between the hours of **8:30 a.m.-3 p.m.** Passes may be purchased with **a check made payable to S.V.S.D. or with cash.** No credit cards accepted.

Terms of Use for Annual Student Athletics Pass

1. The pass entitles bearer for one student paid admission to any regular season SV home athletic contest.
2. Must be presented with SV Student ID or license.
3. Only valid for regular season SV home games.
4. Pass does not allow for reentry into venue.
5. Lost passes will not be replaced.
6. Passes are non-transferable.
7. Pass is not accepted at any WPIAL and/or PIAA playoff contest hosted on our campus.

Special Event Nights

- Aug. 23, 2024: Senior Night, Home Football vs. Bethel Park
- Sept. 6, 2024: Veterans Recognition Night, Home Football vs. Pine-Richland
- Sept. 19, 2024: Homecoming Carnival & Parade, Secondary Campus
- Sept. 20, 2024: Homecoming Night, Home Football vs. Moon
- Oct. 3, 2024: Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony, Senior High School
- Oct. 4, 2024: Hall of Fame Recognition & Youth Night, Home Football vs. Canon-Mac
- Oct. 11, 2024: Pink Night Game, Home Football vs. Hempfield ■

SENECA VALLEY

RAIDER PASS

2024-2025



\$50

#

12TH ANNUAL GIFT OF HOPE GOLF CLASSIC – A “TEE”RIFIC SUCCESS!

The Seneca Valley Foundation (SVF) hosted its annual Gift of Hope Golf Classic presented by ComDoc earlier this month and is excited to announce it exceeded its goal by raising over \$66,000!

Proceeds from this incredible event benefit SV students and staff and allow the SVF to continue its mission of providing the “Gift of Hope and Promise of Excellence” to the Seneca Valley School District. We sincerely thank all sponsors, golfers

and volunteers, as well as friends from Cranberry Highlands Golf Course, SV Leadership Team and School Board, SVF Board of Trustees, Mary Ann Mangini and Sam Carmella for making this day a huge success. Extra special thanks to SV student, Louis Marsh, for leading the Pledge of Allegiance to kickoff the day. ■



Gift of Hope Golf Classic Sponsors

Presenting: ComDoc

Gold: Penna Flame Industries; Cannon Design; NexTier Bank; Eckles Construction Services

Silver: Fun Fore All; Renaissance Learning; PNC; Highmark; CE Davis; ABC Transit

Extraordinary: Armstrong; Tower Engineering; Allegheny Safe & Lock; Melanie Marsh Group Compass Realty; Reschini Agency; SV Education Association; Media Frog; Russell Standard; Imagine Learning; GEM Building Contractors; Audio Enhancement; Nothing Bundt Cakes

Hole: MPLX; Marburger Farm Dairy; Field Turf; Butler Co. Chamber of Commerce; Silk & Stewart; In Memory of Jason Wahlr; Dinamore & Shohl; Fred & Cecilia Peterson; ECS Mid-Atlantic; Rhoads Orthodontics; H.F. Lenz; Tucker Arensberg, P.C.; Ozdinec & Witzel, LLC

Advertising: Municipal Revenue Services; Central Maintenance; Inventionland; Double Tree Cranberry; Geico; General Rental; School Assist Consulting; Senator Elder Vogel; Print King

Raffle Prize Donors: Back Home BBQ & Brew; Definitely You; Eckles Construction; Penna Flame Industries; Renaissance Learning; Dr. Kristen White; Fun Fore All & DQ; Pittsburgh Steelers; Pittsburgh Penguins; Sheetz; Pittsburgh Zoo; Double Tree Cranberry; Springfield Grill; Beyond Parallel Fitness; Ascend Climbing; Midwest Shooting Range



LOCAL AUTHOR DONATES BOOK TO WELCOME CLASS OF 2037

The Seneca Valley Foundation (SVF) recently received a generous donation of the book “Callabunga! Calla Goes to Kindergarten,” written by local author Hoa Bird. This heartwarming and inspiring book is set to greet the Class of 2037 as they embark on their educational journey at the Seneca Valley School District.

“Callabunga! Calla Goes to Kindergarten” is a delightful tale that captures the excitement and adventure of starting kindergarten through the eyes of its young protagonist, Calla. Bird’s beautifully illustrated book aims to provide comfort and encouragement to all children as they take their first steps into the world of formal education.

“I was inspired to write these books for my four girls, ensuring they grow up seeing themselves represented in stories that celebrate diversity. As a parent of biracial children, it’s important to me that they—and others like them—see themselves in narratives where inclusivity is a natural part of life, not the focal point. My goal is to create stories that reflect the world they live in, where diversity is embraced and every child feels seen and valued,” said Bird. Ms. Bird resides in Indiana Township with her husband Adam and



Pictured left to right: Dr. Sean McCarty, Assistant Superintendent; Hoa Bird, Author; Freesia Bird; Calla Bird; Margie Beggy

their four daughters Azalea, Zinnia, Calla and Freesia – each of whom have a book written in their honor.



“We are thrilled to introduce this wonderful book to our youngest Raiders and are grateful for the donation” said Annie Mersing, SVF Development Director. She added, “We believe it will inspire and support all of our students as they transition into this new chapter of their lives.”

As the Class of 2037 prepares to enter the classrooms of Seneca Valley, each kindergarten class will receive its own signed copy of this incredible book to enjoy with their peers. This thoughtful donation made by SV employee and Cranberry Township resident, Margie Beggy, underscores SV’s commitment to nurturing a welcoming and engaging environment for all students.

We extend our heartfelt thanks to Ms. Beggy for her generosity and to Ms. Bird for sharing her talent with our community. Their contribution is a wonderful reminder of the power of literature to make a positive impact on young minds. ■

SECOND ANNUAL SFC RYAN GLOYER MEMORIAL RUN – REGISTER TODAY!

Join us on Sunday, Nov. 3 for the Second Annual SFC Ryan Gloyer Memorial Run! Presented by Westinghouse and hosted by the Seneca Valley Foundation (SVF), this incredible event serves to spread community awareness of the life and legacy of SFC Ryan Gloyer by highlighting the many amazing attributes this man possessed; to remind students and the entire community of Ryan’s ultimate sacrifice for our Country; and, more importantly, preserve his legacy of being inclusive, selfless, dedicated and a true patriot.

We are calling on the entire Seneca Valley School District to be a part of this day: Students, staff, families, alumni, business owners - From babies in strollers to baby boomers!

Register here: <https://runsignup.com/Race/PA/Harmony/RyanGloyerMemorialRun>

The race will begin at 9 a.m. on the beautiful campus of Seneca Valley’s secondary schools. Because of course logistics, it is necessary to shut down Seneca School Road for approximately one hour. We ask participants and guests to arrive no later than 8:30 a.m.

New this year is the COMMUNITY COMMISSARY! A welcoming space for sponsors, vendors and non-profits to share information about their products, services and resources. See the image below for additional information.

A few sponsorship opportunities are still available, if you would like to support the event

SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

T-Shirt Sponsor - \$3,000

- Corporate Logo on Back of participant T-Shirts (Limited to (4) Available)
- Six (6) Complimentary Participant Fees

Mile Marker Sponsor - \$1,000

- Corporate Logo on signage (36x24 inch) at Characteristic Mile-Markers (6 available):
 - Teach & Mentor
 - Honor & Integrity
 - Selfless Service
 - Lead by Example
 - Strive for Excellence
 - Persevere through Adversity
- Four (4) Complimentary Participant Fees

Water Stop or Finish Line Sponsor - \$1,000

- Corporate Logo on signage at applicable space
- Four (4) Complimentary Participant Fees

Legacy Sponsors - \$500

- Corporate Name on signage (24x18 inch) along the course with accompanying legacy quote
- Two (2) Complimentary Participant Fees

Medal; 50/50 Raffle; or Signage Sponsor - \$400

- Corporate Name on signage (24x18 inch)

All Sponsorships include:

- Digital Engagement & Recognition on RunSignUp.com, SVSD/SV Foundation Websites & Social Media Channels
- Opportunity for Promotional Table & Items in Packet
- Verbal Acknowledgement throughout Event

To secure a sponsorship, contact Annie Mersing w/SV Foundation at mersingam@svsd.net. All proceeds benefit Ryan Gloyer Middle School

in this way, please contact Annie Mersing, SVF Development Director, at mersingam@svsd.net.

All proceeds from this event will benefit Ryan Gloyer Middle School. ■

SFC RYAN GLOYER MEMORIAL RUN



PRESENTED BY:

Westinghouse

2nd Annual 5K Run/Walk
November 3 - 9 a.m.
SV Secondary Campus, Harmony, PA

Register Today!

SV Students - \$20
Civilian & Virtual - \$30
Active Duty or Veteran - \$25

Sign Up Here:



FOUNDATION

SFC RYAN GLOYER MEMORIAL RUN



PRESENTED BY:

Westinghouse

2nd Annual 5K Run/Walk
Sunday, 03 NOV 24 - 0900
SV Secondary Campus

Be a part of the
Community Commissary

The Community Commissary is designed to be a space to connect with sponsors, local businesses and non-profit organizations. Reserve a table today!

Race Sponsors & Non-Profits = Complimentary
For-Profit Businesses = \$100

Contact space coordinator, Laura Goossen, at laurajwatson@gmail.com for additional information.

FOUNDATION

SV ACADEMY OF CHOICE DROP-IN CENTER WELCOMES HART

Teachers and administrators at the Seneca Valley Academy of Choice (SVAOC) opened its doors to Mr. Randy Hart earlier this summer to tour their incredible facility and demonstrate how the Hart Mini-Grants are benefiting students. The SVAOC received five Hart Mini-Grants last school year for physical education equipment, outdoor learning projects and a mindfulness initiative to improve overall wellbeing and academic success.

The Hart family generously donated over \$28,000 to the Seneca Valley Foundation during the 2023-24 school year to facilitate 32 mini-grants across the district. ■



Pictured left to right: Denise Manganello, SVAOC Principal; Elizabeth Porco, teacher; Megan Meeder, teacher; Randy Hart; and Jim Pyle, teacher

BRINGING HOME THE GOLD

Going for the gold both in and out of the classroom, Viktoriya Semenenko, a 2024 graduate of Seneca Valley and Butler County Area Vocational Technical School (BCAVTS), placed first at the SkillsUSA National Championship.

Miss Semenenko competed in Advertising Design and received a gold medal at the SkillsUSA Pennsylvania State Competition, advancing her to the National Championship where more than 6,500 other state champions competed for national gold, silver and bronze medals in 115 skilled and leadership competitions.

The Advertising Design competition lasted three days, assessing both technical skills and creative aptitude, simulating the experience of working in an advertising agency. Competitors took a written test and recreated an advertisement, and were evaluated on accuracy, software proficiency, and the ability to meet deadlines. The competitors developed logos, a company mascot, advertising materials, sketches and packaging for a brand called “Our Food Slaps,” a fun, youthful fast-food restaurant. Additionally, the competition featured a creative segment that tested their creative thinking and design skills.

“Over the past year, leading up to this national competition, I’ve been marketing myself on Instagram,” said Miss Semenenko. “Clients came to me for logos, designs, T-shirt designs and even truck wraps. While I wouldn’t say the competition was easy, I felt well-prepared thanks to the skills and experience I had developed, and I knew what was necessary to make my work stand out.”

SkillsUSA is a program offered through the Butler County Area Vocational-Technical School, and it is a partnership of students, teachers and industry representatives working together to ensure America has a skilled workforce. SkillsUSA helps each student to excel. This national organization serves teachers and high school and college students who are preparing for



careers in technical, skilled and service occupations, including health occupations and for further education.

“When the finalists were announced, I was so nervous I couldn’t even process what was on the screen,” added Miss Semenenko. “I was thrilled and relieved, especially after last year when I placed 17th in the nation despite high expectations. This year was different, and when they called my name for first place, I was beyond excited. All the hard work truly paid off!”

The SkillsUSA National Championship was



held in conjunction with the SkillsUSA’s National Leadership & Skills Conference (NLSC) in Atlanta, Georgia June 24-28, 2024. SkillsUSA’s NLSC is the largest gathering of America’s future skilled workforce and the ultimate recognition of excellence in career and technical education. The NLSC is a week-long celebration of the skilled trades and the accomplishments of career-ready leaders from across the United States. The event brings together more than 16,000 attendees, including students, instructors, industry partners, government officials, administrators and more. ■

RYAN GLOYER MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENT EARNS STATE, NATIONAL WRESTLING TITLES

Congratulations to Mimi Skowronski, Ryan Gloyer Middle School eighth grader, for her continued success in the wrestling ring at various competitions that took place over the summer months!

Miss Skowronski's 14U PA Girls National Dual Team took first place in both Freestyle and Greco-Roman at this year's USA Women's National Duals event. This is the fourth straight national championship in freestyle and second straight national championship in Greco. Miss Skowronski, who was also part of the team last year, was recently featured with her team on the USA Wrestling website at [USA Wrestling | Pennsylvania Blue pins its way to 14U Girls National Duals freestyle title over Illinois, 58-18 \(themat.com\)](https://www.usawrestling.com/news/2024/07/24/pennsylvania-blue-pins-its-way-to-14u-girls-national-duals-freestyle-title-over-illinois-58-18).

Miss Skowronski also competed at the PA USA Wrestling State Championship in Freestyle and Greco and took first place in both styles, as well.

In total, for the 2024 season, Miss Skowronski took first place in all three wrestling styles: Folkstyle, Freestyle and Greco Roman - earning a triple crown! ■



SCORING GOALS AT NATIONALS

Before the calendar page turns on a new season of soccer, two SV eighth graders Leah D'Amico and Charlotte Riggle are celebrating their title as national champions.

The Northern Steel Blue Soccer Club's U13 girls team consisting of students from Seneca Valley and other local schools recently won the U.S. Club Soccer Premiere Group national championship in Commerce City, Colorado.

"The girls were very excited as this was their first time traveling across the country for a tournament," said the team's manager Ms. Terri D'Amico.

These young soccer standouts went 3-0 in pool play competing against teams from Washington, Iowa and California before winning the final 5-1 over Fury FC from Southern California. Read more about this accomplishment at [https://](https://www.cranberryeagle.com/2024/07/30/area-youth-girls-soccer-team-wins-us-club-soccer-national-tournament/)



www.cranberryeagle.com/2024/07/30/area-youth-girls-soccer-team-wins-us-club-soccer-national-tournament/. Congratulations, athletes! ■



STEPPING STONES OF INSPIRATION

Several SV students in Brownie Girl Scouts Troop 46817 have had a fulfilling summer creating an “Encouragement Rocks Garden” for the Cindy Watson Memorial Walking Trail at Four Springs Park which is dedicated to the memory of Cindy Watson, the late wife of Mr. Troy Watson, a beloved maintenance serviceman at Connoquenessing Valley Elementary School (CVE). Marked along the trail are eight of Ms. Watson’s best qualities (loyalty, hospitality, patience, peacemaking, selflessness, encouragement, kindness, generosity) which closely align with Girl Scout Law. Scout leader Ms. Jessica Repp and her students aimed to connect those qualities with a project based on encouragement and self-reflection.

The scouts met with and presented their ideas to Lancaster Township supervisors before beginning the process of painting rocks and constructing the garden. Ms. Repp noted how the scouts enjoyed leading The Pledge of Allegiance and being a part of an official meeting. She said, “The girls witnessed local government in action by attending the meeting, including the official vote and sound of the gavel when their idea was unanimously approved by the board!”

Funds were raised to purchase materials as well as a plaque and two butterfly bushes. To wrap up the heartfelt project, the finished garden was presented to Mr. Troy Watson. He shared an inspirational



message with the troop to do the right thing even when no one is watching, just like Cindy did. The students all hope the community will keep the rock garden thriving by contributing more rocks painted with encouraging phrases. ■



SV ADMINISTRATORS EMBRACE NEW ROLES



Dr. Taisia Papariella



Chelsea Miller



Skylar Meier



Dr. Tony Babusci



Trisha Butschle

The Seneca Valley School District is excited to announce that several long-established employees of the SV family are stepping into key administrative roles. Their dedication, hard work, and commitment to excellence have been truly impactful, and we look forward to seeing them thrive in their new positions.

New Roles

- Dr. Taisia Papariella, previously the Acting Assistant Principal of Connoquenessing Valley Elementary (CVE) School, is now serving as the Assistant Principal of CVE.
- Ms. Chelsea Miller, previously a second-grade teacher at CVE, is now serving as the Acting Assistant Principal of Haine Elementary/Middle School (HES & HMS).
- Ms. Skylar Meier, previously a Health and Physical Education teacher at RGMS, is now serving as the Acting Assistant Principal of RGMS.

Additionally, Dr. Tony Babusci, a Ryan Gloyer Middle School (RGMS) administrator, is now supervising a recently developed district-wide Alternative Education Program, along with serving as Co-Principal

of RGMS. The Alternative Education Program is an additional resource the district is providing for students who face challenges in the larger school setting. Programming includes courses taken through the Seneca Valley Academy of Choice (SVAOC) as well as in-person offerings including Health and Wellness, Social Awareness and Personalized Pathways (a project based learning course). Ms. Trisha Butschle, previously RGMS Assistant Principal, is now serving as Co-Principal of RGMS alongside Dr. Babusci.

“Our teachers and staff members have shown exceptional dedication and commitment,” said Superintendent Dr. Tracy Vitale. “We are confident that Dr. Papariella, Ms. Miller, Ms. Meier, Dr. Babusci and Ms. Butschle will excel in their new roles and continue to contribute to the success of our District.”

Additional hires will be taking place in the coming months to hire assistant principals for RGMS, Ehrman Crest Middle School and the SVAOC.

Please join us in congratulating them and offering your full support as they transition into their new positions. ■

CONGRATULATIONS, DR. PAPARIELLA

Taisia Papariella, Connoquenessing Valley Elementary (CVE) Assistant Principal, successfully defended her dissertation (titled “An Examination of School Climate Prior To and During Implementation of PBIS at Tier 1”) and completed her doctorate in Leadership and Administration from Point Park University.

“Thinking back to my undergraduate days, I never imagined reaching this level of education,” said Dr. Papariella. “I feel quite accomplished and connected, as my research was directly related to my daily experience at CVE. It feels very complete to have arrived here.” ■



Dr. Taisia Papariella

SV EDUCATORS EMBARK ON TRANSFORMATIVE SUMMER TOURS

Five Seneca Valley teachers recently returned from a life-changing tour of the Holocaust in Poland thanks to a continuing partnership with Classrooms without Borders (CWB).

They included Josh Sektnan, Ehrman Crest fourth grade teacher; Tracey Lowe, Haine Middle School fifth grade teacher; Rachel Sager, SV Intermediate High School social studies teacher; Carol-Lynn Dubovi, SV Senior High School autistic/emotional support teacher; and Quincey Gildea, SV Intermediate High School assistant principal.

“Words cannot adequately convey the experience that over 30 educators and I had on our Holocaust educational trip to Poland,” explained Mr. Sektnan.

Over the course of a week, the group visited various locations to witness firsthand the atrocities committed by the Nazis against the Jewish community. From the Warsaw cemetery with over 250,000 marked graves, to the Warsaw Ghetto, to many synagogues, Treblinka extermination camp, Majdanek extermination camp, and Auschwitz, every moment was described by Mr. Sektnan as “unforgettable.”

They were also joined by 95-year-old Holocaust survivor, Howard Chandler, who accompanied the group to many of the sites. “Despite the loss of his family, Howard stood tall and reminded us of the fragility of humanity and the importance of compassion and understanding in our world,” said Mr. Sektnan.

If you’re interested in reading some of their trip reflections, we invite you to read their blogs:

- Josh Sektnan blog - <https://cwbpg.org/a-surreal-journey-to-auschwitz-reflecting-on-humanitys-darkest-chapter-by-josh-sektnan/>
- Quincey Gildea blog - <https://cwbpg.org/keep-learning-forever-by-quincey-glidea/>
- Rachel Sager blog - <https://cwbpg.org/hiding-in-plain-sight-by-rachel-sager/>

Another group of educators, this time as part of CWB’s Civil Rights Study Seminar, attended “March Down Freedom’s Road.”



This journey took educators, area students and change-makers on an eight-day journey that started in Atlanta and went through Montgomery, Selma, Birmingham, Memphis and Louisville, concluding in Cincinnati. Attendees learned about the profound origins of the Black-led freedom movement and explored through unique interactive experiences, including site visits, meetings with contemporary witnesses, curated readings, songs and group reflections.

“This journey is difficult,” shared Megan Lizewski, SV Senior High School principal. “This journey is emotional. This journey is enlightening. This journey is inspiring. The sentiment repeatedly represented is that we MUST understand the true history, though it makes our hearts hurt, in order to address what we face today.”

Blog postings made by attendees [Ms. Lizewski](#), [Mr. Chet Henderson](#), SV Intermediate High School principal, and [Mr. LaVarr Stephens-Howling](#), Ryan Gloyer Middle School teacher, can be found by clicking on their name.

We thank them all for sharing their thoughts and photos of these historical journeys. ■



A 'GOLDEN' GROUP AT SV

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.*

Athletic schedules and District events are listed via the [athletic/activities calendar](#) on the website.

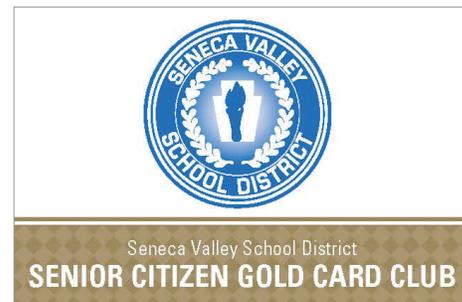
Membership is free and proof of residency is required at the time of application. Acceptable proof of residency includes: a copy of a valid PA driver's license or identification card with a Seneca Valley School District community address, lease, or utility bill (name of the application

must match the name on the license/identification). A Gold Card application can be made by mail and must include a copy of proof of residency.

To use a Seneca Valley Gold Card:

- You must carry your card with you and present it to admissions personnel when you wish to use it.
- Remember that use at some fine art performances, including the SV All-School Musical, require reserved seating, so call ahead to check or confirm your reservation.

To apply for a gold card, please fill out the following and return as directed: [Gold Card Application](#).



*Please be aware that many fine arts performances such as dance reviews and band, orchestra and choir concerts offer free admission, but accept voluntary donations. Other events may offer a reduced-price admission charge to Gold Card members. In addition, reservations may be required and some performances may have limited free-admission seating for Gold Card members. Thank you for your understanding and patronage. ■

A 'HART' FOR SERVICE

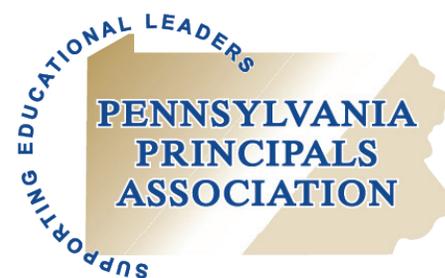
The Pennsylvania Principals Association recently announced Randy Hart, a 1970 Seneca Valley Alumnus and former Seneca Valley School Board Member, as the 2024 recipient of its prestigious Service to Children Award.

This honor is bestowed annually upon individuals, groups or organizations that have made a substantial and positive impact on children across Pennsylvania's elementary, middle and high schools. Mr. Hart, a former educator and long-time resident from Zelienople, was selected from the West Region, which covers intermediate units 1-7, 27 and 28.

Even in retirement, Mr. Hart's commitment to education remains unwavering. His contributions to Seneca Valley span from his tenure as a school board member to his ongoing philanthropic efforts. Mr. Hart has supported educational enrichment through various initiatives, including funding mini grants for curriculum enhancements, physical education equipment and nature trails for student exploration. His dedication extends beyond financial support, encompassing emotional investment in the community's safety and educational progress.



Denise Manganello, Seneca Valley Academy of Choice Principal, and the nominator for this award, highlighted Mr. Hart's exceptional dedication. "Randy Hart truly deserves recognition for his unwavering commitment to our community," she said. "As a former high school educator, he understands the vital role of community involvement in supporting our schools. Randy's engagement goes beyond acknowledging projects; he actively partners with the district, providing both financial and emotional support to enhance our educational environment."



Mr. Hart expressed his gratitude upon receiving the award. "I am overwhelmed and honored," he said. "This year marks 50 years since I first stepped into a classroom as a young teacher, and 18 years since my retirement. I continue to share my educational experiences to support the next generation of educators. I am incredibly proud of the Seneca Valley administrators' pursuit of excellence. In my view, the entire Seneca Valley staff is among the top 10% of educators in the country."

With nearly 3,500 members, the Pennsylvania Principals Association is one of the largest state principals' associations in the nation and is affiliated with the National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP) and the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP). ■

EHRMAN CREST SHINES AGAIN

Hundreds of educational leaders from across the state attended the 2024 PA Principals Association Conference held August 4-6. Administrators gathered at Ehrman Crest Elementary/Middle School to listen to dynamic keynote speakers and attend a variety of breakout sessions and workshops.



The Cranberry Township Neighborhood Forum, consisting of board members from Cranberry Township's Homeowners Associations, recently toured Ehrman Crest Elementary/Middle School after learning about its many accolades and awards. The HOA board members were very impressed by the school's innovative design and how both the building and surrounding natural environment are used as teaching tools. ■



SV COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT AWARDED IN NSPRA, PENSPRA PUBLICATIONS CONTESTS

The Seneca Valley communications department earned a combined total of 12 awards in the National School Public Relations Association's (NSPRA) 2024 Publications and Digital Media Contest and in the Pennsylvania School Public Relations Association's (PenSPRA) "Excellence in Education Communications" 2023-2024 Contest.

NSPRA's Publications and Digital Media Awards recognize outstanding education publications and marketing/informational materials (print and electronic), video/TV/radio programs, social media and websites.

In PenSPRA's Contest, the Seneca Valley communications department earned four awards. They received an Award of



Honor for their celebratory video, "Happy Birthday, Rowan Elementary School!" and, lastly, three Awards of Merit for the 2023-24 Activities and Information Calendar, "Cultivating Curiosity," SV Raider Pride E-Newsletter and the "Inspire. Connect. Excel." Annual Report.

PenSPRA was chartered in 1969 and, much like NSPRA, is an organization of school public relations professionals whose goal is to improve educational communication and support student achievement through systematic, proactive and responsible public relations programs. Both organizations annually sponsor separate Excellence In Education Communications Contests. Entries are accepted in a number of categories to reflect the scope of work often undertaken by communications professionals.

The communications department coordinated and developed these award-winning publications for the Seneca Valley School District. ■

SCHOOL BOARD MEETINGS

The School Board approved the following meeting dates (all meetings begin at 7 p.m. in the intermediate high school unless otherwise noted):

Work Sessions

Sept. 9 (*note the later date due to the holiday*)

Oct. 7

Nov. 4 (*held in the SHS Auditorium*)

Dec. 2 (Reorganization Meeting - 5 p.m.)

Jan. 6 (*held in SHS Auditorium*)

Feb. 3 (*held in SHS Auditorium*)

March 3

No Meeting

May 5

June 2

Regular Sessions

Sept. 16 (*note the later date due to the holiday*)

Oct. 14

Nov. 18 (*held in SHS Auditorium - note the later date due to In-Service Day*)

No Meeting

Jan. 13 (*held in SHS Auditorium*)

Feb. 10 (*held in SHS Auditorium*)

March 10

April 7

May 12

June 9 ■

SERVICE AND A SMILE

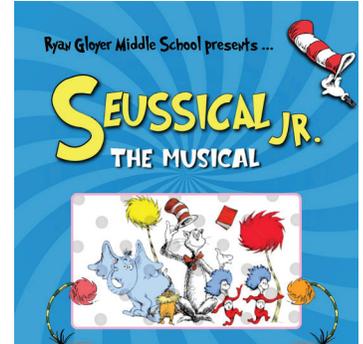
Seneca Valley Administrative Assistants recently participated in a professional development training with guest Mr. Jeff Nash of the American Association of School Customer Service (AASCS). AASCS serves to assist schools in fostering engaging customer service habits. Mr. Nash shined a light on the importance of quality service and its impact on student success, employee recruitment and overall school performance. ■



FROM THE JUNGLE OF NOOL TO THE MIDDLE SCHOOL STAGE

"Think and wonder and dream far and wide as you dare!"

There's no better place to bring those dreams to life than on stage! This year, Ryan Gloyer Middle School (RGMS) will dazzle audiences with the musical "Seussical Jr." a journey that promises to be as colorful and creative as the stories themselves! Transporting audiences from the Jungle of Nool to the Circus McGurkus, the Cat in the Hat narrates the story of Horton the Elephant and shares the power of friendship where "anything's possible!"



The 2024-25 RGMS Musical, "Seussical Jr.," will be performed in the IHS Auditorium October 24-27, 2024.

Visit the [SV Theater Website](#) and/or [RGMS Musical TEAMS page](#) for this information. ■

YESTERDAY'S STANDOUTS, TODAY'S HONOREES

Seneca Valley Alumni and former SV sport teams will once again be recognized on their "home turf" for outstanding athletic achievements at the 2024 Seneca Valley Sports Hall of Fame (HOF) Induction Ceremony.



This year's 2024 Induction Class includes Jonathan Dorogy ('13), Jake McAndrew ('10), Ruth Mick Mischler ('02), Oliver Philogene ('12), Ashley Turici ('06), as well as the 1978 SV Wrestling Team and 1994 SV Baseball Team.

The SV Sports HOF committee will be honoring these inductees the weekend of Oct. 3-4.

The Induction Ceremony will be held at 7 p.m. on Thursday, Oct. 3, in the senior high school (SHS) auditorium and is free for all to attend. This ceremony will be preceded by a dinner at 6 p.m. (doors open at 5:30 p.m.) in the SHS cafeteria. To purchase tickets and learn more, visit www.svsd.net/HOF.

Inductees will also be recognized at the football game at NexTier Stadium on Friday, Oct. 4.

All are welcome to attend and recognize these inductees for their contribution to Seneca Valley Raider athletics! ■

For more information, please contact Wayne Roccia at 724-816-0698 or via email at wroccia@zoominternet.net.

STAFF OF SV

Have you ever wondered why things happen the way they do? Have you ever thought the flutter of a butterfly's wings across the world could somehow create a chain reaction of events that affect the way your life plays out? I had never thought about this until I met my husband in Paris, France thanks to a simple interaction with a substitute teacher at CVE.

“Bonjour!” “Merci!” “Oui!”

The school year was winding down and every so often I would faintly hear these French words coming from the classroom next door. The homeroom teacher was absent that day and she had a substitute. Coincidentally, I was planning a trip to France with my brother for my 30th birthday that summer. Introducing myself to the substitute was easy as I always love meeting new people. I also thought of it as an opportunity to perhaps learn something about French culture and etiquette.

“Hi there!” “Bonjour!” — Our first interaction and we immediately got to talking about my trip. It turns out she loves France and even splits her time between here and there throughout the year. We kept in touch, and she helped me plan out many details of my European adventure.

Jumping ahead to June 11, 2022, and I found myself visiting a beautiful castle called Château de Chantilly on the outskirts of Paris with none other than



the French teacher (who I started to call Madame) as my own personal tour guide.

Some of her family lives close by so we had planned an afternoon picnic and visit of the castle. Her son Michael, who lives a stone's throw away, had seen it enough times and suggested renting golf carts to explore the grounds instead. I was not going to pass up the opportunity to ride around in a golf cart so there I found myself, driving around a castle with the most perfect French man.



I texted my mom and my friends back home to tell them I found the one. I knew at that moment we would get married someday.

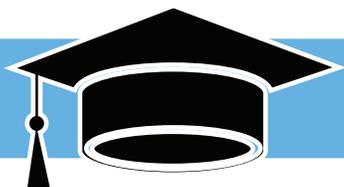
Two days later my trip came to an end, but the most beautiful love story was just beginning. A six-hour time difference and an ocean stood between us for nine months until Michael finally moved back to Pittsburgh in the winter of 2023 after living in Paris for 11 years. Six months later we were married, and the rest is magnifique!

Just like the butterfly sending off tiny ripples in the air, I believe everything that happened that year was part of a butterfly effect. If the teacher next door hadn't been absent, she wouldn't have had a substitute. If I had not been planning a trip to France, I wouldn't have told the substitute about my summer plans. If that substitute hadn't invited her son, or if he ended up working that day, we would have never met, and Madame wouldn't have become my mother-in-law!

Et mon française? Je l'améliore avec chaque jour qui passe!

**Amanda Longello, Ehrman Crest
Elementary Second Grade Teacher** ■





Sabrina Mitchell, SV '11, is currently working as a recruiter for a global leadership development consulting firm. 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: I am currently working as a Recruiter for Development Dimensions International. I attended Butler County Community College for my associate degree in Criminology after high school. I received my bachelor's degree in Social Work from the University of Pittsburgh in 2015 and received my master's degree in Higher Education Administration in 2020 from Duquesne University.

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

A: I live in Washington, PA with my husband and our two dogs, Piper and Mae!

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

A: I can juggle.

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

A: I formed a lot of relationships in high school that have carried into adulthood. I learned many things in the classrooms at Seneca Valley from teachers that really



cared about us students and wanted to see us grow.

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

A: There's a few I have to mention! Mr. Lucot, Mr. Manipole, Coach Roccia and Coach Sample, Mr. Pysher, and Mr. Parenti all had such an impact on me, and I appreciate them to this day.

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: Earning a WPIAL medal and making it to states in Track and Field is one of my proudest high school moments.

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

A: Remember that the things you say to students stick with them for a long time. The impact you have is so important!

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

A: That it is a great place to learn and grow. ■

Welcome, Alumni!

Seneca Valley is proud of our graduates who have excelled in their careers. Be sure to let us know if you would like to be featured in our Raider Pride e-newsletter. To keep us in the loop, send your graduation year, a summary of your professional life and a brief review of how Seneca Valley helped pave the way, to [Tiffany Hernandez](#), Content Marketing Specialist.



HOW TO PREPARE YOUR KIDS FOR SCHOOL AFTER A SUMMER OF SCREEN TIME

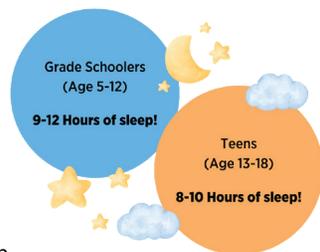
As summer winds down, the back-to-school scramble ramps up, leaving families wondering how to get back on track and prepare their kids for a successful school year. If your kids' summer has been filled with video games and screen time instead of schedules, don't worry—you're not alone. But the transition doesn't have to be stressful. Here are some practical tips to get your kids into learning mode with ease.

Reestablish a consistent routine

Gradually build a routine to help kids adapt. Eat dinner earlier and create a wind-down process. Make it a team effort, especially for younger students: set alarms, set out clothes for the next day, and give fun incentives. Consistency helps children feel secure and understand what to expect, and helps prevent rushed mornings when school starts.

Prioritize sleep

Set a regular bedtime and **keep screens out of the bedroom or sleeping area**. Slowly start to move bedtime earlier so sleep cycles can adjust. Try to avoid screens and video games 30 minutes to an hour before bedtime to ensure they calm down properly. Aim for **9–12 hours of sleep for school-age children** to help them feel rested and ready for the day ahead.



Gradually limit screen time

Sudden changes can be tough. Ease into reducing screen time by encouraging screen-free activities like outdoor play, reading, arts

and crafts, or **listening to podcasts**. Setting **specific times for screens and video games** helps balance screen time with physical and educational activities. Having clear digital boundaries helps kids maintain a healthy balance and reduce negative effects on attention and behavior.

Combine screen time and learning

Not all screen time is bad. Explore **educational apps and games** that make learning fun. Apps that focus on math, reading, or science can be a great way to blend entertainment with education. Just make sure they're **age-appropriate and engaging**.

Reset screen-time habits

As the school year approaches, it's a good time to reset screen habits and set healthy boundaries. Make certain areas of your home, like the dining room or bedroom, screen-free to encourage family interaction and **discourage distraction**. Start talking about **tech expectations** at home and at school, especially if new devices came into the picture over the summer. Bring your kids into **discussions about screen-time rules you'd like to set** so they understand that the rules are there to help them, not punish them. This way your kids can feel in control and can make the most out of their entertainment and tech time.

Model healthy tech habits

Kids pick up tech habits from their parents and caregivers, so if you want your kids to limit their screen time, **try to model healthy habits yourself**. Discuss screen habits that support your child's health and well-being.

Article provided by Common Sense Media

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

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

ANDROID APP ON Google play | Download on the App Store

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.svwd.net



- Help SV WIN against hunger in the WPIAL Food & Fund drive challenge! For every \$1 donated, the Food Bank can provide up to three meals for families, children and seniors, so **DONATE TODAY** and make SV the most giving district for the THIRD year in a row!



- All students in Pennsylvania public schools, including Seneca Valley, have access to **free breakfast for the 2024-25 school year**, regardless of family income. Encourage your student(s) to stop for a full breakfast or various grab-and-go items. If you think you might be eligible for Free and Reduced-Price School Meals, we encourage you to fill out a Free and Reduced-Price School Meals Application as many programs are connected to your child[ren]'s eligibility. Please return it to the Seneca Valley Administration Office with attention to Faye Nelson. Applications can be found at www.svsd.net/FreeandReduced.
- SV Backpack Flyers - Flyers are updated frequently and feature information on student and community events/activities. Learn more at [Backpack Flyers / Backpack Flyers \(svsd.net\)](http://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 \(svsd.net\)](http://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://Substance Abuse Prevention for Parents - CANDLE, Inc. (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 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. ■



care solace

It's okay to ask for help

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.

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

Care regardless of insurance
Connect to care with any coverage including Medicaid, Medicare, and sliding scale options for those without insurance.

Easy access to care
Use Care Match, the self-serve website, to find a provider or services on your own.

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 9-8-8.

Call (888) 515-0595
or go to
caresolace.com/



JOIN THE SENECA VALLEY TEAM!

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT POSITIONS

Seeking knowledgeable applicants with strong interpersonal and communication skills for permanent 12-month (\$31,524/year salary) administrative assistant positions. Play a vital role in supporting students, staff and the SV community! Requirements: Must pass the district administrative assistant test when scheduled. High attention to detail required. Must be able to multi-task in fast paced work environment. Join a family that offers a supportive and engaging work environment. Take the first step toward a rewarding career and submit required information to www.svsd.net/Employment.



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

Heather Ruppert, Administrative Assistant
Ehrman Crest Middle School

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

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

Emily Ladd, Administrative Assistant
Ehrman Crest Middle School

APPLY TODAY!

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

Benefits of working at Seneca Valley:

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

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

SENECA VALLEY ACADEMIC GAMES TEAMS



JOIN US FOR ACADEMIC GAMES!

We compete against other schools in the following games:

**PROPAGANDA *EQUATIONS *PRESIDENTS *ON-SETS *CURRENTS
EVENTS/THEMES *LINGUISHTIK**

For more information reach out to our Teacher Advisors:

Mr. Michael Stebbins- Sr/Intermediate High School Division at:

stebbinsmd@svsd.net

Mrs. Julie Smith- Middle School Division at:

smithjd@svsd.net

This year's National Tournament will be held in Arlington, Va.

Click on the link below for more information on our National Organization:

<http://www.agloa.org> Academic Games Leagues of America

*For SVAG Booster information please contact Milan Grupp at mgrupp80@gmail.com *

BE WHAT YOU WANT TO BE.



Thiel students come from across the country and abroad and from small towns and big cities. What they have in common is the desire to achieve success in graduate and undergraduate programs, on athletic fields and courts, in clubs and organizations and in their communities as they create a better world through learning, leadership and service.

This is what Thiel is all about -
students having an exceptional college experience at an affordable price.

It's the **TOMCAT WAY**



THIEL[™]
COLLEGE



Where your **JOURNEY** *begins*