

THE SPRESS

October 30, 2025

* MRS. MASSARI

* BAND CONCERTS

* SCHOOL LUNCHES

South Park royalty

Cassie Oxford



Queens Court pictured from left to right: Sienna Wertelet, Kaitlyn Polk, Sydney Sekely, Sydney Dubiak, and Ella Morgan



Kings Court pictured from left to right: Nolan Oliphant, Robert Lenzi, Nick Latona, Dai'Sean Hunter, and Aidan Battista

Homecoming is an exciting time of the year because of the big game, the lively school spirit, and the dance that brings everyone together to celebrate. It's a time of school spirit and Eagle Pride as our football team competed in this year's homecoming game. The game took place on October 17 at 7:00 p.m. and was against Apollo Ridge, who won 45-34. Although our football team did not win, they played an amazing game and truly represented strength and determination.

The game was still enjoyable, whether South Park won or not. Because it was the homecoming game, the band and cheerleading team had alumni come back to the school to play and cheer alongside them. South Park enjoyed seeing current and old members come together to support one another.

Halftime, however, is what truly steals the show of the homecoming game. For example, during halftime, the Homecoming Court is highlighted. The girls on this year's Homecoming Court include: Sydney Dubiak, Ella Morgan, Kaitlyn Polk, Sydney Sekely, and Sienna Wertelet. Additionally, the boys on this year's Homecoming Court include: Aidan Battista, Dai'Sean Hunter, Nick Latona, Robert Lenzi, and Nolan Oliphant. These ten students were voted be-

cause of their dedication and impact on others, but, like every year, two students were voted King and Queen. This year's Homecoming King is Robert Lenzi, and the Homecoming Queen is Sienna Wertelet. Wertelet thinks she was nominated for Homecoming Queen because she tries her best to "be a role model for the girls on the cheer team." When she was announced as Homecoming Queen, every girl on the cheer team jumped up and down in excitement for her, which shows how much of an impact Wertelet has had on her team. Wertelet stated that she "wasn't the only person who won," and rather the whole team did because she "couldn't have done it without them." It was more meaningful to Wertelet that students voted rather than teachers because "students focus on who you are" while teachers generally focus on grades and academic achievements.

Wertelet's favorite part about school is "the memories you make with people who will stay with you for a lifetime," which perfectly encapsulates the importance of making connections in high school and enjoying the time you have while it lasts, because it goes by fast.

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South Park royalty (con't)

Cassie Oxford

A great way to do so is by attending the Homecoming dance, which took place the day after the game in the school cafeteria. This year's Homecoming theme was "A Night in Santorini," in which the cafeteria was beautifully decorated by the Student Council. The decorations included fairy lights, an entry arch for pictures, and there were also a variety of refreshments. Overall, people seemed to enjoy the dance and had fun with their friends.

Homecoming season is a great time to hang out with friends and get involved in after school events such as the football game and the dance. If you have never been to a football game or attended a school dance, you should definitely go at least once to get the fun experience, because you never know—you could end up loving it. Maybe you could even become the next Homecoming King or Queen.

More than just a meal

Jeremy Oxford

Have you ever gotten sick from an unappetizing meal? The bad appearance and taste of school lunches may have caused your unwellness. The nutrition of school lunches has been debated for a long time. The lunches have been declining in nutrition and being unaffordable for students to buy. Why would students want to pay for a lunch they don't even enjoy?

According to an online website, HowStuffWorks, some of the worst school lunch menu items are irradiated meat, pizza, and nachos. All of these items are what South Park High School serves to its students. These products are cheap and easy to buy, but are they nutritional and healthy to consume every day during school? Irradiated meat, also known as "mystery meat", is used in almost every meal because it's affordable for the school and easy to use in lunches, but is too much consumption of that specific meat harmful to students? Studies have shown that this meat is not harmful, but meat exposed to radiation causes a change in color and slight taste, making it unappetizing for us.

Most students don't realize what they are putting into their bodies; however, other students who recognize what they are eating either have to put up with the school lunches or have their parents pay for



Sienna Wertelet is happy to be this year's Homecoming Queen



Robert Lenzi is all smiles when announced Homecoming King

food more often to bring to school. However, this is more expensive and inconvenient for the parents.

The cost of a regular school lunch is \$2.70 including juice/milk, fruit, and option of an entree. A student can get another item such as a cookie, which is \$1.75 added on to the regular lunch price, or a bag of chips, which is an additional \$0.95.

Most students eating the school lunches have a favorite and least favorite meal. Karl Reilly, sophomore, says his "least favorite meal is the pizza." This lunch item was one of the meals listed on the worst school lunch menu items. Dakota Glaser, sophomore,
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Pencil and a calc!

Kolby Kostelnik



Who invented the round table? Sir Cumference! If you take geometry you'll get that one. Geometry is truly one of the best classes I've ever had. My friends, and especially the teacher, bring up my mood everyday.

Mrs. Massari is one of the best teachers I've ever had. Her teaching style is amazing and it makes learning so much easier. She'll always help you out if you need it and never make you feel uncomfortable. I could go on and on about her skills, but let's get to know more about Mrs. Massari!

Many students know how she is inside of school, but not many know the woman behind the Penn State gear. Outside of school, she loves to eat ice cream and most shockingly of all vacuum. Who would ever guess Mrs. Massari loves to vacuum for enjoyment?

What other hobbies does Mrs. Massari have? Mrs. Massari loves to run, walk, and jog. She just loves exercising in general. Mrs. Massari even said, "I try to get outside everyday." She also enjoys reading and going to the beach, but most important of all, she loves to spend time with her family.

Some people wonder why teachers want to become teachers. Mrs. Massari stated she was meant to be a geometry teacher. When she was growing up, math was her favorite subject. She also enjoyed working with children. It's like it was meant to be. Mrs. Massari even says "it is also nice having your summers off!"

Not many people know it, but teaching can make a huge impact on a teacher's life. Mrs. Massari even says, "teaching has impacted my life in so many ways." She has met many wonderful people and families along the way. She hopes she can teach many students and help them better understand mathematics. Mrs. Massari says she believes that "it is definitely a good day when I feel that my students have learned something from me, even if it's not mathematics." That's a beautiful quote that every teacher should live by.

Oh, and if you ever wondered if she's been stumped on a math problem, the answer is "yes of course", obviously!

IMPORTANT DATES

October 31: No school

October 31: Halloween

November 3-4: No school

November 6: Report cards

November 11: No school

November 13-16: "The Play That Goes Wrong"

November 19: NHS induction ceremony

November 23: MiniTHON turkey trot

November 26: Dodgeball tournament

November 26: Early dismissal

November 27: Thanksgiving

November 27-December 1: No school

Kate's Corner: Is the stigma surrounding reading overblown?

Kate Seitz

Who said reading was frowned upon? Society seems to think that there is a stigma—that is, a negative perception or mark of disgrace—surrounding readers. In an increasingly digital world, where people tend to seek instant gratification, taking the time to pick up a physical book is becoming more and more unpopular. The news claims that those who do take the time to do this, particularly when in regards to the younger generation, will be seen a certain way by their peers. In the high school setting, suggests one article by BookOrators, students who choose to read in their spare time will be looked at as “nerds”, which actively discourages them from partaking in this hobby. Readers at South Park High School, however, don't necessarily seem to agree.

Out of the surveyed readers, less than half believed there to be a stigma associated with reading, with one student, sophomore Emma Kienic, saying “I think that the stigma that readers are ‘nerdy’ is fading out. I never feel judged.” This is not to say that there are not any lingering negative associations with readers, but it's “usually [not] anything serious” according to Alex Lashley, junior. The general consensus among readers at South Park seems to be that while there might be some persisting stigma surrounding this hobby, it is much less prevalent than in previous years and people tend to feel much less judged.

Students who said they didn't like to read had a slightly different take on the presence or absence of a stigma surrounding reading. Most of them believed that there was still a negative view about readers, though like previously stated, not to the extent that it used to be. Even when they did believe that readers could be judged, most of these students said they wouldn't care if they were judged or not, and their reasons for not reading were separated from that, like having headaches or a short attention span.

Ultimately, while a stigma viewing readers as nerdy might still be present, it seems like both readers and non-readers at South Park High School agree it is slightly overblown by the media today. Even the parts that do remain appear to be of little concern to both parties. Maybe there's hope for this stigma to disappear in the future, after all.

More than just a meal (con't)

Jeremy Oxford

says her “least favorite school lunch is the tacos.” These tacos contain the so-called “mystery meat” most students don't enjoy eating. Out of the students interviewed, the majority said max sticks were their favorite. Max sticks are most likely the favorite because they're simple, yet fairly enjoyable compared to the rest of the items on the menu.

To improve the school lunches, making the food fresh every day and improving the quality of the food in general will most certainly raise students' enjoyment and satisfaction of their lunch. With continuing the same lunches such as “mystery meat” and frozen pizza, some students will keep expressing dissatisfaction with the food they receive. But if the school makes the food fresh every day, it will most likely improve the students' well-being and definitely be worth the money spent on the school lunches.

Bringing the band back together



Alumni majorettes posing with current marching band majorettes

Alumni of the South Park Eagle Blue’s Marching Band came to the high school on the night of the homecoming game to perform at their old stomping ground. The band had members who graduated as recently as 2025, but others dated all the way back to 1975, all playing side-by-side. The 65 alumni playing alongside the current band illustrates the band’s impact on lives and how it truly is like a family.

Violence has gone too far

Bailey Rorison

Violence is never the answer. Political violence has been seemingly on the rise as of late. Wait, but what even classifies as political violence? Political violence is any action that forces or intimidates an individual or group to achieve political goals. That includes both politicians and people who simply agree with one political opinion over the other.

So, political violence has been on the rise. The most well spoken about at this time is Charlie Kirk’s death. For those not aware, Charlie Kirk, a conservative activist, was assassinated on September 10, 2025 in Orem, Utah. Someone had shot and killed him in front of an entire crowd of people while he was giving political commentary at Utah Valley University. He had begun to respond to an opponent when a shot rang out. Charlie Kirk was dead. There was national outcry at this violent act. A man,

From the big screen to the SPHS auditorium



Ayden Bowser and Sara Underwood

On Tuesday, October 21, the South Park High School auditorium was alive with music from the silver screen. The Concert Band, Concert Choir, A Capella Choir, Jazz Band, and Marching Band all performed musical pieces from classic and modern films. After Mr. Sisley conducted the two choirs and Concert and Jazz Band, the Marching Band marched through the aisles to the drumline cadence then performed their entire halftime show, “The Greatest Show”.

with young children and a wife, was killed for the simple reason that someone disagreed with him.

But this wasn’t the first violent action related to politics in more recent years, not by a long shot. Before Charlie Kirk was killed, Melissa Hortman was murdered in her own home. Hortman was a liberal, speaker of the House of Representatives in Minnesota. Her husband and her were shot and killed in their own home. She was killed simply because someone disagreed with her political standpoints. They invaded her own personal home and murdered her and her family. Yet again, a family lost someone they loved due to a political disagreement turned violent.

Political violence hasn’t been confined to specific individuals. There was the Tucson shooting that ended with eighteen people being shot, six *continued on page 6*

Violence has gone too far (con't)

Bailey Rorison



**Gabrielle Giffords, photo courtesy of
The New York Times**

of which were killed. The attack targeted Gabrielle Giffords, a democratic Congresswoman. A majority of the people killed in the attack were retired and one of the victims was a nine year old girl. None of these people had anything to do with Giffords personally and yet their lives were taken because an individual disliked her political stance. Innocent lives that were not affiliated with the original target lost their lives regardless.

On the other side of the political aisle, there was a shooting at a baseball practice. This shooting was aimed to kill Republican representatives. These people were not the only people present, which led to hundreds of people unrelated to the targets getting severely injured in the attack. There was no singular target for the attack, but instead hatred for a group of people based on their political beliefs. Innocent people are being harmed for no reason other than one individual disagrees with a group of people.

Above are only four of the many examples of political violence of recent years. Although the examples presented may be some of the most devastating examples, there are many more, smaller-scale examples of these horrible incidents. Either way, violence based around politics has been increasing in more recent years. This kind of action only leads to heartbreak to families across the country. It doesn't only hurt the targeted group, but everyone that may have been in the vicinity at the time. Political violence should not be present in a country that is meant to prize freedom. No matter the side of the political

aisle someone stands on, violence should never be the answer to a disagreement. One of the things that makes America great is the ability to express opinions and beliefs freely, but political violence is silencing this expression. Just be respectful, America!

