RAIDER PRIDE

A State and National Award-Winning Publication MARCH 2026

NATIONAL SCHOOL PUBLIC RELATIONS ASSOCIATION
PUBLICATIONS AND DIGITAL MEDIA EXCELLENCE AWARD
2025
HONORABLE MENTION
NEWSLETTER

GROUNDBREAKING MOMENTS

On Tuesday, March 24, the Seneca Valley community took a significant step toward the future as members of the School Board joined administrators, staff, students, and architectural and construction partners for the official groundbreaking ceremony for the Seneca Valley Intermediate High School and Performing Arts Center/Auditorium.

The ceremony featured inspiring remarks from district leaders and current students, who reflected on the community's growth, the vision behind the project and the excitement of what lies ahead.

Years of thoughtful planning, comprehensive facility studies and valuable community input have led to this important milestone. This transformative project will modernize learning spaces and expand opportunities across academics, the arts and beyond where students can continue to grow, learn and thrive.

"We are doing more than beginning a construction project, we are literally building a learning environment that will serve the students and families across the 100 square miles that make up our district," said Dr. Chet Henderson, Seneca Valley Intermediate High School Principal. "This building is a testament to our shared belief in what education can and should be for every learner who walks through these doors."

Visit www.svsd.net/IHSGroundbreakingCeremony to view the complete gallery.















Photo credit: Steven Dalton

TABLE OF CONTENTS:

Popping for Inclusion 9
Athletics 16
Rewarding Research 22
SV All-Star 28
Alumni Survey 29

DATES TO REMEMBER

April 1-3 Spring Break, No School for Students

April 6 Act-80 Day, No School for Students

April 20 School Board Meeting, Regular Session, IHS Auditorium, 7 p.m.

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

APRIL

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		

PLAYING WITH PURPOSE

In celebration of the 2026 Paralympic Winter Games, students at Haine Elementary and Middle School welcomed former Paralympians, adaptive athletes and student leaders on Tuesday, March 3, for an unforgettable, hands-on experience as part of the school's annual Respect Campaign - a celebration of inclusion, diversity and the unifying power of sport.

Former Paralympians Dan McCoy and Jeff Hantz joined players from the Mighty Penguins Sled Hockey team and Haine Middle School students to lead a day filled with inspiring stories, interactive demonstrations and meaningful connections. Throughout the day, students rotated through engaging learning stations where they participated in dynamic presentations and activities centered on inclusion, diversity and adaptive athletics.

Mr. McCoy, Paralympic gold medalist, shared his journey competing on the U.S. Paralympic Sled Hockey Team in 2014. Mr. Hantz spoke about representing the United States in men's discus throw and javelin during the 2004 Paralympic Games in Greece, offering students a firsthand look at the dedication, perseverance and resilience required to compete on the world stage.





Students also had the opportunity to experience adaptive athletics themselves. Players from the Mighty Penguins Sled Hockey team, Seneca Valley freshman Mitchell Everly and junior Braden Ernhardt introduced students to sled hockey before inviting them to try the sport using scooters and adapted hockey sticks designed for gym floors. Adding to the excitement, members of the Seneca Valley varsity hockey team assisted at each station, helping facilitate activities and small games while serving as positive peer role models.

Continued on page 3







PLAYING WITH PURPOSE

Haine Middle School students who are leaders in Best Buddies also led engaging bocce demonstrations, building on last year's successful partnership and expanding the school's commitment to celebrating different abilities through sport. After learning the game, students helped create an "Inclusion Chain," writing heartfelt messages of acceptance and encouragement that will be displayed throughout the school.

The event was organized by Haine Health and Physical Education teachers, Ashley Salman and Tyler Mesisca.

"This event was special because it intentionally connected our PE curriculum to the real world," said Ms. Salman. "Tyler and I wanted our students to see inclusion beyond the gym walls. And through Unified Bocce, Mighty Pens Sled Hockey, and learning from Paralympians like Dan McCoy and Jeff Hantz, they experienced that connection firsthand."

Ms. Salman added, "Our middle school bocce coaches stepped into meaningful leadership roles, teaching skills, encouraging younger students, and modeling respect while our SV hockey players strengthened communication, teamwork, and mentorship skills by creating an environment where everyone could succeed. It became more than a PE lesson; it was a real-world example of inclusion, leadership and belonging in action."

The excitement of the day was contagious as students moved from station to station, with one student exclaiming, "This is the best day ever!"

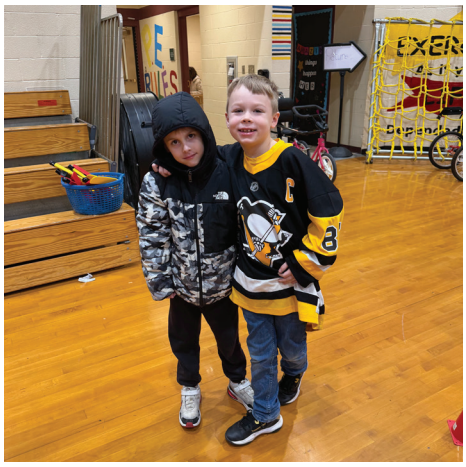


















‘FROZEN’

Congratulations to the entire cast and crew of “Frozen” for five amazing performances over the weekend of March 12-15! They were all met with standing ovations and rave reviews! Read more about the behind-the-scenes preparation and fun community celebrations on page 15.





















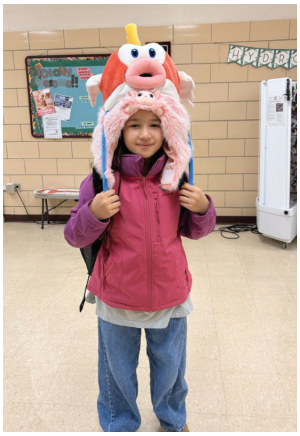




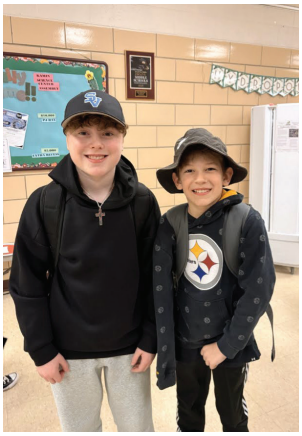
SPORTS, SCHOOL SPIRIT AND STORIES

This month, schools districtwide celebrated Read Across America Week, an annual event promoting reading and literacy among students of all ages. Students at Haine Middle School participated in a sports-themed Spirit Week and Tournament of Books as part of March Reading Madness, an international reading program. Each day, students showed their enthusiasm by sporting their favorite jerseys, hats, crazy socks and matching outfits! The halls were filled with school spirit, laughter and a wonderful blend of athletics and literacy as students cheered on their favorite teams and their favorite books.















BOOK BUDDIES

This month, students from Ryan Gloyer Middle School (RGMS) shared children's books they created with younger students in the Seneca Valley Preschool program. In celebration of Read Across America, an annual event promoting reading and literacy for all ages, winners of the children's literacy project from the eighth grade Personal Development class read their original books and organized a fun activity to complement the story!










SHAMROCKS, SNACKS AND CELEBRATIONS

Students at Seneca Valley Intermediate High School had a shamrockin' good time in celebration of St. Patrick's Day. During "Snack and Learn" sessions at the IHS LIGHT Center, students enjoyed Irish trivia, crafted friendship bracelets, learned traditional Irish dances and, in the spirit of gratitude, created special shamrocks to share what makes them feel lucky.






CARSON SCHOLARS

Two Seneca Valley students are among the 706 students nationwide to be named a 2026 Carson Scholar. Dahlia Marcin, Seneca Valley Intermediate High School sophomore, and Beckett Lowry, Haine Middle School sixth grader, have earned this prestigious distinction; a recognition of their outstanding academic excellence and commitment to service.

With this honor, these students will receive a $1,000 scholarship award that will be invested for their college education, along with a medal and certificate. They will be formally recognized at the Carson Scholars Fund's Annual Pittsburgh Awards Banquet on Sunday, April 12.

"We are so proud of Dahlia for being named a Carson Scholar," said Dr. Chet Henderson, Seneca Valley Intermediate High School Principal. "This remarkable recognition celebrates not only her academic success but also her compassion, leadership and commitment to making a positive impact in her community."

According to the Carson Scholars Fund, Miss Marcin and Mr. Lowry were selected because they demonstrate the highest standards of academic excellence, leadership, and civic and social responsibility.





"We are incredibly proud of Beckett for being named a Carson Scholar," said Dr. Erin Wilcher, Haine Middle School Principal. "This honor recognizes his exceptional academic achievement and dedication to serving his community, and his hard work and success are truly inspiring!"

For more information and to view the full list of Carson Scholars visit their website at www.carsonscholars.org.

INNER WORKINGS

Students from the Seneca Valley Center for Biotechnology were recently hosted by the Duquesne University Nasuti College of Osteopathic Medicine. Their visit included a presentation on the admission process and a behind-the-scenes look at HoloAnatomy and the simulation hospital. The day finished with a manipulative treatment demonstration, a Q&A with current medical school students and a group lunch. A huge thank you to Ms. Melissa Gaguzis, Dr. Michael Rice and all of the staff for giving students this special opportunity.









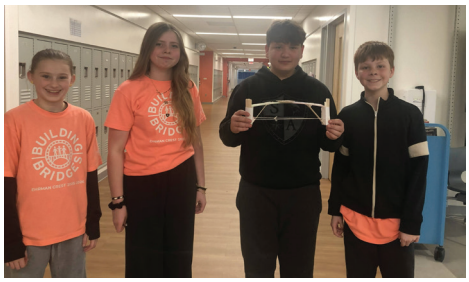




FEELING FRESH

Last month, Ehrman Crest Middle School (ECMS) students participated in a "Fresh February" day filled with schoolwide lessons that promoted being responsible, respectful and ready (also known as the SV3).

Activities focused on building community, collaboration, and a positive school culture through hands-on, interactive learning experiences. Students worked in groups to complete challenges that included making creative SV3 posters and constructing sturdy bridges using limited materials. Inspired by ECMS sixth grade SV3 Squad, the bridge challenge connected Ehrman Crest's theme, "Building Bridges" and



tasked teams with building strong bridges while also working collaboratively.

The day concluded with an exciting schoolwide assembly filled with surprises! Middle school students competed in an "SV3 Showdown: Respect Edition," to win prizes and celebrate peer respect. The assembly ended with a surprise Whitney Houston Drumbeat Challenge where ECMS



Assistant Principal Mr. Ivan Aranha took the victory! Shoutout to all ECMS students and staff for making Fresh February a day of fun, learning and SV3 spirit!









Ehrman Crest Elementary celebrated their PBIS mid-year refresher with a Safe, Kind and Responsible Winter Olympics!

Each classroom represented a country, and teachers nominated a torch bearer to lead their class throughout the games. Each day featured a new event focused on showcasing safe, kind and responsible behavior in the hallways, cafeteria, bathrooms, classrooms, recess, and arrival and dismissal.

Teachers awarded gold, silver and bronze medals as students worked together, supported classmates and demonstrated what it means to be part of a united school community.

"Complete with opening and closing ceremonies, the Olympic spirit was alive at Ehrman Crest Elementary," said Ehrman Crest Elementary Assistant Principal Ms. Tesin Amoscato. "With collaboration, pride and positivity, we can all go for the gold!"













POPPING FOR INCLUSION

Seneca Valley's Unified Bocce team hosted a "cool" event this month, their 6th annual Polar Pop! Over 350 students and staff members popped ice-cold water balloons over their heads to show support for schoolwide inclusion.

Members of our Seneca Valley Unified Sports teams took the jump into chilling waters at this year's Pittsburgh Polar Plunge. The SV Polar Pop directly contributes to the Pittsburgh Polar Plunge, an event that raises funds and awareness for Special Olympics Pennsylvania.

In the past five years SV has raised over $20,000 toward Special Olympics Pennsylvania. Proceeds from the event help provide year-round sports-specific training and competition for thousands of athletes with intellectual disabilities, including the Seneca Valley Bocce Teams.

























‘CODING’ FOR GOLD

Rowan Elementary School recently concluded its own version of the 2026 Winter Olympics — CIRC style! Students competed in teams to sharpen STEM skills such as coding and problem-solving during this creative, hands-on event. Creativity, Innovation and Research Center (CIRC) teachers Mrs. Kelsey Stauffer and Ms. Carrie Dillon put their own spin on six popular Olympic events: Alpine Skiing, Curling, Speed Skiing, Slope Style, Bobsledding and Ice Hockey.

Student STEM athletes used coding to create Alpine and Speed Skiing runs with Indi and Finch robots while racing against the clock for speed and navigation accuracy. Curling challenged teams to program Ozobots in precise coding patterns to hit a target. In Slope Style, Sphero robots took on jumps and ramps in a free-flowing makerspace course.

Teams also used makerspace materials to design and build their own bobsleds, putting them to the test in an energetic race across the NoRilla table. To wrap up the competition, students took center stage on the Active Floor for a unique motion-activated Ice Hockey experience.








Rowan’s student Olympians had a fantastic time building STEM skills, collaborating with teammates and experiencing the excitement of learning through friendly competition!

A SONG FOR THE SEASONS

From sunglasses and sunhats to scarves and sweaters, kindergarteners at Haine Elementary School embraced their roles as they took to the stage for their performances of the "Seasons" musical.












SNOW-SHAKIN’ SKILLS

Students in Ms. Jenna Montelaro’s class are “shaking” up the hallways of Haine Middle School with their creative AI-generated snow globes. Students used their imaginative skills to design a snow globe insert featuring their portrait against a wintry background. The assignment provided a unique way to educate our tech-savvy learners on using AI creatively and responsibly!



RAIDERTHON RAISES FUN-DS

Congratulations to the Seneca Valley Senior High School Student Council and all who supported this year's Raiderthon! SV celebrated school spirit and heartwarming community contributions in a BIG way!

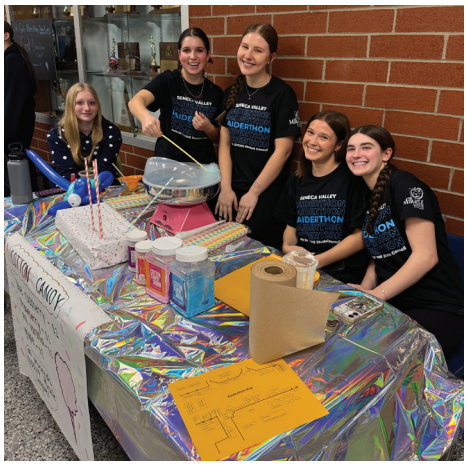
Between raffle baskets, donations and a GoFundMe page, the event raised over $10,300 for the Miracle League of Southwestern PA (SWPA).

"Raiderthon was an amazing night where everyone made a difference simply by showing up, having fun and supporting Miracle League," said SV Senior High School Student Council President Lucy Meyer. "Seeing our community come together for a good cause while supporting all our clubs and sports is something to be proud of."

From club-run carnival booths and face painting to karaoke and a staff vs. student basketball game, the event buzzed with excitement! Congratulations to the student basketball team for winning 55-50! Special shoutout to Miss Kinsley Pournaras for coordinating the basketball game.

"I am proud to make this my senior project and continue the tradition of the third annual staff vs. student basketball game," said Miss Pournaras. "I want to thank the student and staff teams for playing in this event. Also, a big thank you to Mrs. Mutschler and the student council for all the help and support and for letting me be part of Raiderthon."

Over the last 11 years, Seneca Valley students have raised over $120,000 for the Miracle League of SWPA.

























By Varden Armstrong,
Performing Arts Coordinator

JOURNALISM AND VIDEO PRODUCTION STUDENTS ATTEND SUMMIT



Seneca Valley journalism and video production students attended Butler Eagle's second annual Student Journalism Summit on Monday, March 9. More than 100 students from local schools packed Founders Hall of Butler County Community College to engage with a variety of pressing journalism issues. The day kicked off with keynote speaker Peter Adams, Vice President of the national News Literacy Project, who taught students how to detect and evaluate news sources. His presentation ranged from humorous examples of viral social media and AI trends to a discussion of journalism's crucial role in promoting truth and democracy.

Students then participated in a mock press conference hosted by Butler City Mayor Bob Dandoy and Sheriff Michael Slupe. Several Seneca Valley student journalists obtained their "press passes" and had the chance to ask officials for details in a simulated missing persons case. The experience allowed them to connect details, navigate roadblocks from officials and present their story leads to professionals from the Butler Eagle.

Reflecting on the news conference, senior Carson Leslie said, "We essentially became the independent journalists of a news conference, and being able to hear actual details from the mayor of Butler was a very intriguing experience."

In the afternoon, two breakout sessions were held to accommodate specific interests in the journalism field. Sports journalists, photojournalists, podcast hosts and other professionals led sessions for attendees, and some students participated in a Q&A session with WPXI news anchor Lisa Sylvester.

Sophomore Gianna Rosenzweig said, "I thought that being able to hear from people who were news anchors and sports journalists themselves was really interesting because they explained what they did and what a typical day at their jobs looked like."

Experiences like these along with the keynote presentation highlight the importance of journalism in society while giving students the opportunity to explore potential careers. Field trip attendees will also practice their newly learned skills in classes such as College in High School (CHS) Integrated Journalism and CHS Broadcast Journalism.





MAKING HISTORY AT HEINZ HALL

Earlier this month, seven Seneca Valley students had a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to perform at Heinz Hall! The Pennsylvania Music Educators Association (PMEA) Western Region Orchestra was hosted at North Allegheny and Heinz Hall through a partnership with PMEA and the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra.

Junior violinist Dylan Neal commented, "It was a really cool experience [to get to play at Heinz Hall], being on a stage where professional musicians play weekly."

Students performed pieces from Bourdin, John Williams and Rimsky-Korsakov under esteemed conductor Daniel Meyer. Through a rigorous audition process, junior bassist Benny James and senior violinist Elizabeth Browne are advancing to PMEA All-State Orchestra to be held in April. Additionally, Benny James made school history as the first Seneca Valley student to earn the position as first-chair bass!

Participants:

Elizabeth Browne - Violin, Benny James - Bass, Rileigh Karns - French Horn, Ella King - Clarinet Heath Lyon - Viola, Dylan Neal - Violin, John Rieger - Trumpet



TUNING IN AT PMEA REGION BAND

Eleven SV Band students were recently selected to participate in the PMEA Region 1 Band Festival that was held at Upper St. Clair High School. Region Band is a select group of students who have advanced through audition to the regional level of the state festival process. Region 1 comprises eight counties from three PMEA district-level bands. The guest conductor for the festival was Dr. Shelby Chipman, Director of Bands and Professor of Music at Florida A&M University. Based on audition results at the festival, the following students will be advancing to the All-State Festival in April: Emma Gallie, Gio Salgado, and Eli Scanlan. Camden Armstrong will be attending the All-State Jazz Ensemble but qualified for All-State band as well.

Students are led by Varden Armstrong, Robert Babick, Brian Croach and Sara Snyder, secondary instrumental instructors.

Participants:

Camden Armstrong – Alto Saxophone, Colton Frankovich – Trumpet, Emma Gallie – Clarinet, Catey Hunter – Trumpet, Benny James – String Bass, Ella King – Clarinet,



John Rieger – Trumpet, Gio Salgado – Alto Saxophone, Eli Scanlan – Trombone, Claire Thompson – Flute, Adrian Wrubel - Trumpet

MUSIC IN OUR SCHOOLS

The Seneca Valley Choral Program is proud to celebrate 30 years of hosting an annual Choral Adjudication! For the 30th consecutive year, the Seneca Valley Choral department hosted a Music Performance Assessment (MPA) event on March 25, in honor of Music in Our Schools month. Since the inception of the event in 1997, thousands of SV Choral students have been assessed by collegiate judges to support and fulfill the requirements of the choral curriculum. Many other schools have also attended music performance assessments at Seneca Valley including CAPA, Mars, Gateway, Moon and Peters Township, among others. However, our SV choral program has grown so much that additional schools no longer fit into the day's schedule! This year, approximately 800 Seneca Valley Chorus students in grades 6-12 participated in this Pennsylvania Music Education Association (PMEA) event. The goal of an MPA adjudication is to provide opportunities for students within ensembles to receive a clinic with a collegiate judge, scores, written and recorded comments, and a rating that reflects performance levels. It provides a "snapshot" evaluation of the implementation of music curriculum and provides meaningful feedback to the directors and students via adjudicator verbal and written comments. The PMEA assessment forms correlate to state standards, testing terminology and traditional grading. Ensembles can receive comments only, or ratings of Superior,



Excellent, Good, Fair or Poor. Attending an adjudication is valuable; however, hosting one is an even greater indication of the dedication of the SV Choral department, Choral Boosters and SV Directors!

The adjudicators for the event were Dr. Mark Boyle from Seton Hill University, Dr. Ryan Keeling from Westminster College and Dr. Brian Hart from Slippery Rock University.

"I'm so honored to be here judging," said Dr. Mark Boyle. "I have time in my schedule to work with high school choirs around the Pittsburgh area every Friday. This Chorus program is far beyond the norm. There is something very special at Seneca Valley!"

High School director Ms. Bobi-Jean Alexander added, "I am so very proud of the tradition our chorus has built from my first adjudication here in 1997 to celebrating our 30th anniversary of the event! I truly believe music performance assessments have been an integral part of the strength and success of our choral program!"

The SV Choral directors participating were Ms. Bobi-Jean Alexander, Ms. Chessa Crum,





Mr. Kyle Masson and Ms. Ellie Schroder. The Seneca Valley Choral Boosters provided support as chaperones and as assistants in organizing and implementing the many details of the event!

The Madrigal Singers, Concert Choir, Treble Choir, Men's Choir, Grades 9-10 Choral Union, Eighth Grade Choir, Seventh Grade Chorus, and Haine Sixth Grade Choir all participated! Congratulations to all! The collaboration of District officials, students, parent helpers, teachers and collegiate judges made the day a fantastic educational experience and a great success!

CHORDS OF COLLABORATION

On Feb. 24, nearly 150 fifth grade band students from Haine Middle School (HMS) and Ehrman Crest Middle School (ECMS) joined members of the Wind Ensemble, grades 9-12, for a high-energy day of making music. After a brief morning greeting, students split into sectionals where they met high school musicians as well as fellow fifth grade students from a different building. Soon after, everyone gathered into the high school band room to rehearse as a full group of nearly 200 musicians!

HMS saxophonist Max Wilkinson said, "When we played 'Tambora!' together, it was the best thing ever! It was so much fun!"

All students worked together incredibly well, bringing to life the music that fifth graders will perform at their spring concerts.

The event concluded with a group lunch where students continued to make new friends while sharing stories about their favorite moments.

ECMS clarinetist Audrey Converse shared, "What I learned from our fifth grade collaboration trip was that in high school you can do more than one band including the marching band, the jazz band, and some other bands!"

ECMS trumpet player Maddie Harmanos also added, "When you're in high school you will have so many options for band. You can decide to play in jazz band or in marching band, but you don't have to be in either if you don't want to."

The fifth grade musicians came well prepared thanks to their directors Mrs. Kelly Levere (HMS) and Mrs. Tracy Glass (ECMS). Thank you to these fantastic directors. Special thanks to the parent volunteers who supported the event.



Volunteer Kristin Dice said, "Today was excellent! It was an amazing use of time, and it was great for kids to experience upperclassmen and different teachers. Thanks for creating a well-organized and meaningful experience!"

Throughout the day, fifth grade instrumentalists were able to meet and work with the secondary band directors and our SV Academy of Choice (SVAOC) percussion artist in residence.

"It was really cool when they said that we can't give up when it gets hard, because that's when it is about to get really fun!" said HMS saxophonist Brady Hinman. "We have to work through the hard stuff to get to the good stuff!"

Seneca Valley Band staff include:

Mr. Varden Armstrong - Director of Bands 9–12 and Performing Arts Coordinator

Mr. Robert Babick - Director of Bands 9–12

Mrs. Sara Snyder - Director of Bands 7–8

Mr. Brian Croach - Director of Bands 7–12

Mr. PJ Gatch - SVAOC Percussion Artist in Residence

Mrs. Tracy Glass - Director of Bands 4-6

Mrs. Kelly Levere - Director of Bands 4-6

It was an inspiring, music-filled day that showcased teamwork, talent and the bright future of the district's band program!















BUILDING A SNOWMAN

What does it take to build a snowman? For the Seneca Valley All-School Musical cast and crew, it didn't take a flurry of snow, but rather six weeks of intense engineering, design, and a lot of heart.

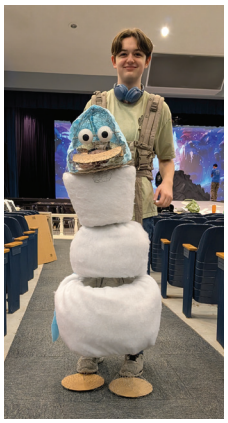
While the entire cast and crew of "Frozen" delivered a breathtaking performance earlier this month, one particular "cast member" stole the show before he even spoke a word: Olaf. The beloved, bouncing snowman was the result of the incredible talent and technical skill of student Megan Gates.

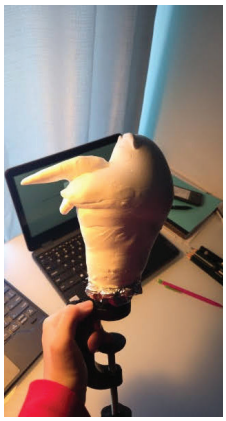
From Sculpture to Stage
Bringing a character as dynamic as Olaf to life was no small feat. Megan's process was a masterclass in theatrical engineering:

- The Blueprint: Miss Gates began by hand-sculpting a precise scale model using air-dry foam to capture Olaf's iconic silhouette.
- Scaling Up: Using this model, she developed a custom pattern to translate those small-scale proportions into a full-sized stage puppet.
- The Details: Over a period of six weeks, Miss Gates utilized raw materials and creative problem-solving skills to give Olaf his personality. This wasn't just a static prop—she engineered him with:
  - Blinking eyes for expressive storytelling
  - A moving mouth for expressing his thoughts
  - Articulated arms for the ability to "give warm hugs"
  - A signature "bouncing" body to capture his whimsical movement

A Community Celebration
Olaf was just one piece of the magic that swept through our auditorium. The All-School Musical brought together 150 dedicated students to tell a story of sisterhood and courage.

The impact was felt far beyond the stage lights. Over 4,000 members of the Seneca Valley community attended the performances, proving once again that when our students combine technical, STEM skills with the arts, the results are truly chilling—in the best way possible!





"Megan's work on Olaf is a perfect example of the innovation and dedication our students bring to the stage," said Ms. Jessica Kavanaugh, musical producer. "It's more than just a show; it's engineering in action."

AN EPIC TRIP

The Seneca Valley Chorus traveled to Orlando, Florida to perform on the Universal STARS Stage! Seven Seneca Valley Choirs performed including the Show Choir, Eighth Grade Chorus, Treble Choir, Men's Choir, Concert Choir, Grades 9-10 Choral Union and the Madrigal Singers! The educational value of travel in large groups is immeasurable. The choirs were well received by international Universal Studios audiences who watched throughout the many performances! The students enjoyed visiting Universal Orlando Resort theme parks: Islands of Adventure, Universal Studios, and the new EPIC Universe. The choir groups also made an exciting pit stop at the highly recommended Buc-ee's convenience store for snacks, refreshments and eclectic-themed shirts and knickknacks. After performing, they all dined together at the Hard Rock Café Orlando. The students had a flawless trip and were complemented everywhere they went for their manners and exemplary behavior. The grand finale of the trip was attending a show celebrating Black History Month, which was held on the same stage students performed on. The show featured celebratory song and dance and even included a special shoutout to the Seneca Valley choirs for joining in on the celebration! The show's producer, a Pittsburgh native, graduated from Duquesne University with SV's own Ms. Bobi-Jean Alexander!







Congratulations to all who represented themselves and Seneca Valley so well!



By Heather Lewis,
Seneca Valley Athletics & Activities Director

WINTER SPORTS FINAL RECAP

Boys Basketball

For the first time since 2013, Raider Boys Basketball returned to the PIAA playoffs thanks in large part to the contributions of a senior class that played together for the better part of three seasons. To open WPIAL playoffs, the Raiders hosted the Spartans of Hempfield Area. It was not an easy night for SV, but the trademark of this program is to never stop believing. Trailing by one point with the Spartans at the free throw line and less than eight seconds to play, the Raiders season came down to one missed free throw. Andrew Omasits grabbed the rebound off the missed free throw, drove the length of the court and was fouled with 1.8 seconds left. Calmly stepping to the line, Omasits sank both and Seneca Valley came away victorious 45-44. The win set up a semifinal contest against top-seeded Upper St. Clair including their 6' 7" player who has dominated the WPIAL all season long. The Raiders were tough defensively, holding Upper St. Clair to a season-low 42 points, but the size in the paint was too much and SV fell 42-35. Following a loss to Central Catholic in the 3-4 seed game, Seneca Valley went on the road to play Red Lion High School out of York, PA. Despite getting out to a quick 16-10 first quarter lead, the hot-shooting Red Lion squad started connecting on their home court and came away 69-62 winners to advance. We congratulate the 2025-26 squad on a wonderful season and wish seniors Easton, Owen, Reese, Jaxon, Andrew, Ryan and Nico all the best. You have worn the SV well!

Girls Basketball

Raider Girls Basketball was handed a difficult path in the WPIAL playoffs, playing all games on the road despite their second consecutive section title. To the credit of the players and coaching staff, they were undeterred. Facing fellow co-section winner Pine-Richland at their court in the opening round, the Raiders came out with a fierce competitive mindset and never trailed at the end of any quarter. With the game tied in the closing seconds of the fourth quarter, senior guard Natalie Hambly took the ball to the rim and was fouled with under four seconds to play. She confidently sank both free throws and SV held off the Rams' last second shot to come away a 31-29 winner and advance to play top-seeded Canon-Mac in the semifinals. In addition to Hambly's 13 points, Makayla Canty chipped in 10 to lead SV in the win. Against Canon-Mac, the game was a back-and-forth affair, but the Big Macs prevailed 47-42 on the strength of sinking some key free throws in the waning moments. Faced with a road game at Upper St. Clair for the right to claim the third and final spot in the PIAA bracket, the road-weary Raiders simply did not have enough despite 14 and 11 points from Hambly and Canty, respectively. It was a tough draw for this year's squad, and they handled the adversity like champions. We congratulate the team and coaches on their second consecutive section title and wish seniors Makayla, Brooke, Natalie and Erica all the best. Your class will go down in history for bringing back championship-level play to our Raider Girls Basketball program. Thank you!

Boys & Girls Swimming & Diving

The postseason is complete for the boys and girls swimming & diving teams and listed below are the medalist performances from both the WPIAL and PIAA championships. On the team side, the girls program finished in fifth place overall at the WPIAL championships and the boys came in 12th.

Medalists from WPIAL & PIAA Championships:

Girls team WPIAL & PIAA medalists

- WPIAL Diving, 1m – Ali Waters, 2nd place
- PIAA – Ali Waters, 4th place
- WPIAL 200 Medley Relay – Kyra Reinhart, Riley Skwortz, Ava Walker, Audrey Wolfe – 8th place
- WPIAL 200 Free Relay – Kyra Reinhart, Audrey Wolf, Maddie Tomaszewski, Sasha Myers – 3rd place
- WPIAL 400 Free Relay – Audrey Wolfe, Ava Walker, Maddie Tomaszewski Sasha Myers – 8th place

Boys team WPIAL & PIAA medalists

- WPIAL 50 Free – Will Feath, 8th place
- WPIAL 100 Backstroke – Triston Sasala, 5th place

Boys & Girls Wrestling

The postseason is complete for the boys and girls wrestling teams and listed below are medalist individual performances from both the WPIAL and PIAA championships.

Girls team WPIAL & PIAA performances

WPIAL Results

- Adele Shih-Calabro (112 lbs.): went 4-2, fourth-place medal, advanced to PIAA West Regional
- Hannah Hornick (190 lbs.): went 3-1, runner-up, advanced to PIAA West Regional
- Kaeleigh Tuell (148 lbs.): went 4-1, third-place medal, advanced to PIAA West Regional

PIAA West Regional Results

- Adele Shih-Calabro (112 lbs.): went 1-2, did not advance to PIAA's
- Hannah Hornick (190 lbs.): went 2-2, 4th place; advanced to PIAA's
- Kaeleigh Tuell (148 lbs.): went 1-2, did not advance to PIAA's

PIAA Championship Results

- Hannah Hornick (190 lbs.): went 1-2, did not advance to medal round

Boys team WPIAL & PIAA performances

WPIAL Results

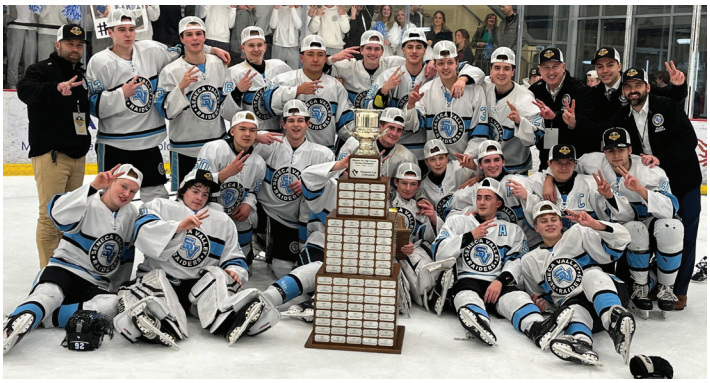
- Zach Hill (145 lbs.): went 3-2, 7th place; advanced to PIAA West Regional
- Riley Smith (107 lbs.): went 4-2, 5th place; advanced to PIAA West Regional
- Tommy Wuycheck (285 lbs.): went 3-2, 7th place; advanced to PIAA West Regional

PIAA West Regional Results

- Zach Hill (145 lbs.): went 1-2, did not advance to PIAA's
- Riley Smith (107 lbs.): went 3-3, 6th place; did not advance to PIAA's
- Tommy Wuycheck (285 lbs.): went 2-2, did not advance to PIAA's

THE WEIGHT WAS NOT TOO MUCH

When you win the Penguins Cup and follow up with a state championship, the weight of repetitive success can burden a team, stifle their talent and create mental roadblocks that are often too great to overcome. For the 2026 Raider Ice Hockey Program, under second-year head coach Tyler Mesisca, the shoulders were broad enough to carry the weight, and the minds were steady and strong enough to erase any doubt. There is no denying who the best 2026 ice hockey team in the state of Pennsylvania is – your Seneca Valley Raiders! With only one blemish on a 20-game regular season schedule (a 3-2 loss in a shootout), the Raiders entered the PIHL bracket as the top seed and with the opportunity to repeat as Penguins Cup Champions. In quarterfinal round action, SV handily defeated Upper St. Clair 5-1 and followed that with a gritty 2-1 win over Pine-Richland in the semifinals, setting up a finals contest between Peters Township and Seneca Valley. True to form, the Raiders were standouts on the ice, scoring five goals before the Indians got on the board. The third period provided plenty of excitement as Peters Township closed the gap to a 5-4 score, but a stingy Raider defense held strong through three minutes of power play, coming away victorious 5-4. The back-to-back Penguins Cup champions would hit the road for a rematch of last year's state title game facing the Firebirds of Holy Ghost Prep. This game was a mirror image of the 2025 contest as the Raiders were on the board early and often, bringing home the 2026 Championship trophy following a 7-2 win over the Firebirds, ironically the exact same score from a season ago. Cooper Hoehn and Braden Morin scored hat tricks and Chris Nichols was his steadying self in the net, turning away so many quality chances from Holy Ghost. What the Raiders of 2026 did was not easy. To carry the burden of holding two trophies, to face the best from each opponent every night, to withstand determined playoff teams and still have the grit, composure and mental tenacity





is a testament to the resolve of the players and the steady hand of the coaches. We congratulate this team on back-to-back Penguins Cup and PIHL state titles!

COLLEGE COMMITMENTS – CLASS OF 2026

Raider student-athletes have recently made their college commitment official, officially signing to attend their college of choice. We congratulate these seniors for achieving their goals of continuing their athletic and academic careers at the next level. Each of you is a tremendous representative of Raider Athletics and we are immensely proud of your efforts in the classroom, in competition, and in the community.

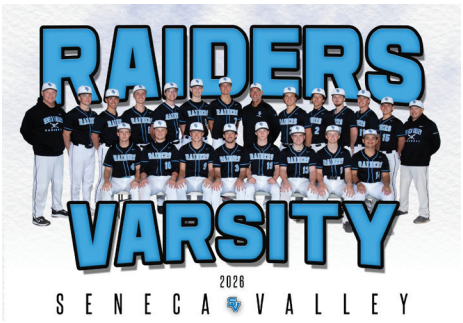
Name	Sport	College/University	Major
Jake Berg	Football	Saint Vincent	Education
Danny Drennan	Baseball	PSU Behrend	Mechanical Engineering
Mason Fisher	Baseball	PSU Behrend	Computer Science
Ryan Priester	Basketball	Allegheny	Biology
Addie Weaver	Track & Field	Slippery Rock	Exercise Science
Tommy Wuycheck	Football	Grove City	Education

SPRING SPORTS ARE UNDERWAY

The seasons keep coming and, already, spring sport teams are in action – some even facing section competition in mid-March. Here is a quick look at the upcoming spring season.

Baseball

Head Coach Eric Semega, entering his 26th season, fields a roster of 19, including 13 seniors. This senior-laden team is looking to repeat their championship form from a season ago when they brought home the WPIAL title. Leading the way will be returning Big 56 players Danny Drennan (OF), Micah Olayer (INF), and Ryan Rebholz (P). The Raiders are off to a 3-1 start collecting wins over Hempfield, Charlotte Latin and Charlotte Country Day and their lone loss coming to the Mustangs of Plum.



Softball

It is a new era for Raider Softball as Joe DeCristoforo takes over the reins as head coach. DeCristoforo has been on staff as an assistant the previous four seasons and the expectation is that the program will not skip a beat. Leading the way will be a senior class seven strong of Samantha Boussie, Hannah Hornick, Abby Kalkowski, Neve Miller, Emry Rice, Paige Volz and Brielle White. Kalkowski and Rice are both returning Big 56 performers, and they will help lead this team back to championship form in 2026. The team is off to a quick 2-0 start picking up wins over Harbor Creek and Armstrong.



Flag Football

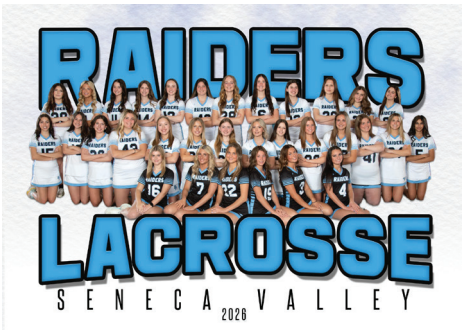
Head Coach Chris Eden, in his third year, returns a roster of 40 players intent on capturing their first-ever championship title. The 2026 season is the first as an officially sanctioned WPIAL and PIAA sport. Seniors Madi Barnyk and Abbi Speicher, founding members of this program, are expected to lead the Raiders this season.

Boys Lacrosse

Ryan Greer enters his first season as head coach for Raider Boys Lacrosse and the team, returning 10 seniors, is working extremely hard to put themselves in a position for a return to the WPIAL playoffs. Seniors James Bidoli, Ethan Bulvin, Josiah Funyak, Ronald Johnson, Braden Ketler, Nash Kraemer, Gabriel Livingston, Andrew Loebig, Alec Pezzuti and Ryan Sain will provide steadying leadership and experience at key positions.

Girls Lacrosse

Katie Smolter, in her 15th season as head coach, leads a team of 33 players and she will rely on the experience and leadership of seniors Lily Eppinger, Alexa Hanson, Isabella Leggett, Ashlee Libby, Rowan Welch and Alaina Wencil. The squad has an eye on a return to the WPIAL playoffs, starting with a focus on getting better each day.



Boys Tennis

First-year head coach Andrea Morrisard has the team off to a great start, winning their opening three matches against Riverside (5-0), Knoch (4-1) and Mars (3-2). The initial strength ladder and lineup feature the following singles players: Marcos Lopez (1st), Gianni Varlotta (2nd), and Liam Schley (3rd). Doubles teams are made up of Kylan Meiers, Jackson Brandt, Dylan Howe and



Billy Conway. Members Connor Eggleston, Jace Conway, Trent Gordon, William Richart, Parker Smith, James Wagner and Andy Weng round out the roster.

Track and Field

Both the boys and girls track & field teams - under head coach Ray Peaco, in his 18th season – opened their season with key section meet wins against Shaler and Fox Chapel. The boys squad beat Shaler 118-9 and Fox Chapel 96-54. The girls team scored 111-16 and 98-52 wins over Shaler and Fox Chapel, respectively. Early in the season, there have been notable changes to the program's top-ten list: Allie Lemke moved into a tie at 10th place in the Pole Vault (10′ 0″), Dakari Payne moved to No. 4 all-time in the Triple Jump (44′ 10″) and No. 7 all-time in the Long Jump (21′ 6″), Ed Strong moved into 9th place all-time in the Triple Jump (43′ 10″) and Tenny Voll moved to No. 3 all-time in the Pole Vault (11′ 6″).





Boys Volleyball

Head Coach Brett Poirier, in his sixth season at the helm, has a team currently ranked No. 2 in the WPIAL preseason poll. Talk about a competitive section, the top three teams in the preseason rankings all come from the Raider's section, making for great competition every single night. Unique to the season is the squad only has two seniors, Malachi DeGraaf and Isaac Parkinson, both of whom will play valuable leadership roles to the underclassmen. They will be supported on the court by a junior class of 11 strong and several talented sophomores and freshmen. SV opened the season with victories over Central Catholic (3-0) and Armstrong (3-1) and a loss in a five-set thriller at Meadville.



ALL-CONFERENCE SELECTIONS ANNOUNCED IN BASKETBALL

The Big 56 Conference recently announced its basketball honorees, and the Raiders were well represented. The following Seneca Valley student-athletes were recognized for their excellence on the court this season.

BOYS BASKETBALL

2nd Team

Owen Congdon
Andrew Omasits

GIRLS BASKETBALL

1st Team

Natalie Hambly
Reece McFadden

2nd Team

Makayla Canty
Brooke Dufford

Coach of the Year

Head Coach Dorothea Epps

RAIDER ATHLETICS PARTNERS

The Seneca Valley Athletics Department is proud to partner with many community organizations and families whose support goes a long way in helping provide a quality athletic experience for our student-athletes. Listed below are our current Raider Athletics Partners – we thank you for your support!

NexTier Bank
"We're more than just a bank – we provide personal and business banking solutions that support our communities and help you reach your dreams."
www.nextierbank.com

Myers Law Group
"Official Law Firm Partner of Raider Athletics."
www.jpmyerslaw.com

Allegheny Health Network
"Official Sports Medicine Partner of Raider Athletics."
www.ahn.org

Field Turf, USA
"A world leader in artificial turf and field surface for Raider Athletics."
www.fieldturf.com

Hawkins Financial Services
"We strive to exceed our clients' long-term goals."
www.hawkins-fs.com

Captivating Imagery
"Your local professional portrait photographer and proud sponsor of Raider Athletics 'Athlete of the Month' program."
www.captivatingimagery.com

Heritage Seubert Financial Baseball Field
"We help families, businesses and institutions grow, preserve and transfer wealth."
www.heritageseubert.com

ATHLETES OF THE MONTH, JANUARY 2026

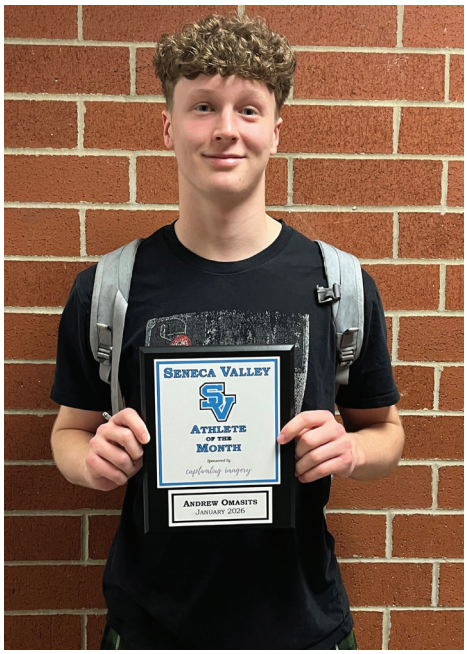
Sponsored by Captivating Imagery - Your local professional portrait photographer

captivating imagery

The "Captivating Imagery" Female Athlete of the Month for January was senior girls basketball player Natalie Hambly. Natalie has had a stellar season and played a part in a second consecutive section title for the Raiders. Over a six game stretch, she totaled 80 points, eight assists, 15 rebounds and eight steals. Natalie became just the third player in Seneca Valley Girls Basketball history to reach the 1,000-point milestone. She took this one step further and became the all-time leader in points after scoring 13 against Butler to eclipse the previous record of 1,062. Her efforts were recognized by area coaches as she was named First Team All-Section for the Big 56 Conference. We recognized Natalie as the January Female Athlete of the Month. Congratulations, Natalie!



The "Captivating Imagery" Male Athlete of the Month for January was senior boys basketball player Andrew Omasits. Andrew was a key member of a team that finished the regular season 13-8 (8-6 in section) earning the fourth seed in the Western Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletics League (WPIAL) Playoffs. Over a 10-game stretch, he averaged 11.5 points, 2.9 assists, 4.9 rebounds and 1.4 steals. Andrew's stand out game came in a section win over Pine-Richland where he poured in 16 points, dished out four assists and grabbed four rebounds while shooting 50% from the field. On the season, Andrew has 255 points, 61 assists and 67 rebounds. He was also named Second Team All-Section for the Big 56 Conference. For an impressive month, we recognized Andrew as the January Male Athlete of the Month. Congratulations, Andrew!



MR. SOWA-DOKU NAMED ASSISTANT ATHLETIC DIRECTOR OF THE YEAR

Congratulations to our very own Mr. Sowa-Doku, recently honored by the Pennsylvania State Athletic Directors Association (PSADA) as the 2026 Assistant Athletic Director of the Year. Mr. Sowa-Doku was recently recognized at the annual PSADA conference in Hershey, PA. Entering his fifth year as Seneca Valley Assistant Director of Athletics and Activities, Mr. Sowa-Doku primarily oversees all team services operations, from transportation to scheduling, equipment to technology. In addition, he, along with Ms. Lewis and Mr. Kurtz, serves our student athletes through the voices and advocacy of the Student-Athlete Leadership Team (SALT). There is no denying the impact Mr. Sowa-Doku has on our Athletics Department, our student-athletes, coaches and our #SVRaiderNation community. Congratulations, Mr. Sowa-Doku; an honor well deserved!



SENECA VALLEY IMPACT PROGRAM CELEBRATES STAFF

At Seneca Valley, we believe in the power of recognition to uplift and celebrate our incredible staff. The Seneca Valley Impact Program celebrates SV colleagues who go above and beyond to make a positive difference in our school community and who exemplify excellence in qualities like empathy, resilience and creativity. Many staff members were nominated for the lasting impact they make on students and one another. From those nominations, one winner was randomly selected from each building. Winners had the opportunity to choose professional development or try their luck in the Cash Cube for a chance to win up to $250!

Congratulations to this semester's Impact Program winners! We are grateful for everything you do to support our students, colleagues and the entire Seneca Valley community.

- Connoquenessing Valley Elementary School: Ms. Anyah Booker
- Ehrman Crest Elementary School: Ms. Kristi Dietz
- Ehrman Crest Middle School: Ms. Carey Beachem
- Rowan Elementary School: Ms. Amy Brush
- Haine Elementary School: Ms. Karissa Lambert
- Haine Middle School: Ms. Jessica Rupolo
- Ryan Gloyer Middle School: Ms. Pamela Volz
- SV Intermediate High School: Mr. Erik Carlberg
- SV Senior High School: Mr. Varden Armstrong
- Seneca Valley Academy of Choice: Ms. Jennifer Whitling

A special thank you to the Seneca Valley Foundation (SVF) and our Cash Cube sponsors, First Student and the Butler County Chamber of Commerce, for helping make this celebration possible.









REWARDING RESEARCH

A total of 18 Seneca Valley students in grades 7–12 presented independent research projects at the 69th Annual Pennsylvania Junior Academy of Science (PJAS) Region 9 competition held at Slippery Rock University on February 21.

An astounding 14 students earned first-place awards and are now eligible to compete at the state level competition at Penn State University in May.

First Place:

- Paige Chesler (7) – *How Does Temperature Affect Plants?*
- Anaya Kandikuppa (7) – *Effect of Air Pollution on Plants*
- Lucia Parise (7) – *How Plants Respond to Their Environment – Touch*
- Cam Swope (8) – *How Flywheel Characteristics Affect Energy Conservation*
- Maryn Zupancic (8) – *How Long Do Batteries Really Last?*
- Maddalyn Beichner (9) – *How Does Gray Water Affect Our National Parks?* (Perfect Score)
- Cruz Sanders (11) – *Aquatic Moss and the Pollution of Water*
- Everly Harrell (11) – *The Effect of Host Bacteria on pGLO Plasmid Growth*
- Abby Huppert (11) – *Identifying Radiation Types Using a Cloud Chamber*
- Mariana Marino Escobar (11) – *Classical Conditioning, Hear and Act*
- Peyton Mounty (11) – *Does the Color of Your Dish Affect the Taste of Food?*
- Mac Wilson (11) – *Filter Size Impact on Soil eDNA Extraction and Purification*
- Teagan Hmel (12) – *Using Geneious to Advance Salamander Metabarcoding Studies*
- YukKwan (Wilson) Li (12) – *Using Low-Cost Sensory Device for Assistive Technology*



Second Place:

- Alyssa Mossor (7) – *Coin Composition*
- Emily Schweitzer (7) – *Biology Project*
- Imogen Culley (10) – *When One Choice Leads to Infinity*
- Ziva Schmitt (11) – *Pollinator NGS Metabarcoding*

Special awards:

- Cam Swope (8) received the Ernst P. Hall Award in Junior High Physics ($25 cash prize) for "How Flywheel Characteristics Affect Energy Conservation."
- Anaya Kandikuppa (7) earned the PJAS Region 9 Director's Award in Junior High Biochemistry ($30 Staples gift card) for "Effect of Air Pollution on Plants."
- Maddalyn Beichner (9) received the SRU Junior High Biology Award for "How Does Gray Water Affect Our National Parks." This award included $100 for the student and $200 for her sponsor. She also earned a perfect score on her project.

"I am incredibly proud of these students and the dedication they've shown as they invested time outside of class to conduct research, evaluate their results, prepare presentations, and present their projects in front of peers and multiple evaluators — a challenge that requires both courage and discipline," said Ms. Kelly Weston, Seneca Valley Senior High School AP Chemistry teacher, Science Department Chair and Science Honor Society advisor. "Watching them grow in confidence and take ownership of their work has been incredibly rewarding, and I'm excited to see them represent Seneca Valley at the state competition in May."

This year's participation saw increased involvement from Ryan Gloyer Middle School (RGMS), thanks in part to senior Teagan Hmel, who focused her Graduation Project action plan on recruiting and mentoring younger students to participate in authentic scientific research.

All projects were completed outside of regular instructional time, with students independently conducting experiments in the Seneca Valley Biotechnology Center, the RGMS greenhouse, and other approved research spaces at school and at home.

Mrs. Erin Bosley, Mrs. Megan Oldenski, and Mrs. Kelly Weston served as project sponsors and judges at the regional competition.

The Pennsylvania Junior Academy of Science (PJAS) is a statewide organization of junior and senior high school students designed to stimulate and promote interest in science among its members through the development of research projects and investigations.

AN EXPEDITION OF A LIFETIME

Thirteen sixth grade students recently traded textbooks for snowshoes during a six-day science expedition in Yellowstone National Park. Along the way, they studied geothermal features, tracked wildlife and even spotted wolves! The experience offered hands-on field research and unforgettable discoveries in the remarkable ecosystem of America's first national park. Read more at

How Seneca Valley middle schoolers visited Yellowstone – Cranberry Eagle





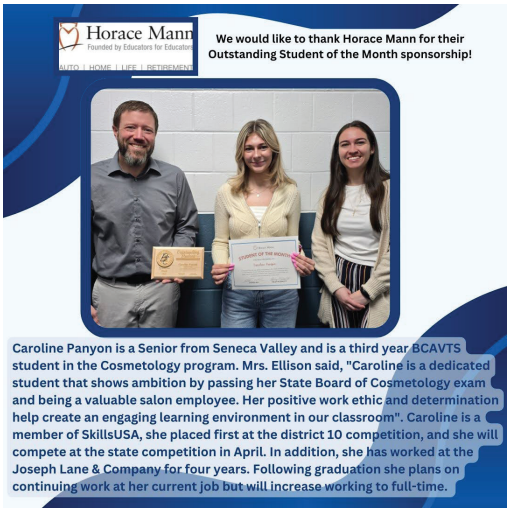






BCAVTS STUDENTS SHINE

Congratulations to SV senior Caroline Panyon on being recognized as the Butler County Area Vocational Technical School (BCAVTS) March Outstanding Student of the Month! Miss Panyon recently earned first place at the SkillsUSA District 10 Competition and will compete at the state competition in April. She's already passed her State Board of Cosmetology exam and is a valued member at a local salon! Congratulations, Caroline!





Congratulations to senior and BCAVTS Health Assistant student Cheyenne Eichenauer on being recognized by the Butler County Health Care Consortium as one of the 2026 Health Care Workers of the Year! Miss Eichenauer was nominated for the award for going above and beyond in her role and exemplifying excellence in the classroom and clinical setting. Great job, Cheyenne!

ERADICATE HATE SUMMIT

Seneca Valley Intermediate and High School students attended the 2026 Eradicate Hate Student Summit Reconvening that took place on March 9, at Acrisure Stadium, bringing together students from the 2025 summit to showcase anti-hate projects. The event allowed students to report on community progress, network and continue developing initiatives to reduce hate-fueled violence.









A POWERFUL DISPLAY

During February and March, in recognition of Black History Month and Women's History Month, a unique and powerful exhibit was on display in the Intermediate High School's BIG art gallery. Pittsburgh mixed-media visual artist and educator, Dr. Ashley Jones presented to students in the IHS LIGHT Center and led an after-school workshop in the art room.

This exhibit focused on colorism and "The Brown Paper Bag Test" in which a person's skin tone was compared to the shade of a brown paper bag to determine inclusion, acceptance or belonging. This form of discrimination, examined throughout the exhibit, existed within black communities, and as highlighted by the artist, often impacted black women in particular.

According to her website, Dr. Jones' work has been exhibited nationally and internationally, acquired by private collectors and public institutions, and featured in numerous books and publications. Her acclaimed series The Colorism Project continues to spark conversations about race, beauty standards, and the generational impact of colorism.















EXEMPLARY ARTISTS

Three Seneca Valley students were recently announced as Gold Key winners in the 2026 Scholastic Art & Writing Awards, while 10 students took home the Silver Key and nine received Honorable Mentions.

Gold Key Winners include seniors Evan Heneghan, Hope Reep and Audrey Wolfe. Gold Key Recipients go on to be judged at the National Level in New York City. Seneca Valley Silver Key recipients include seniors Sophia Aprile, Carly Byrom, Charlotte Acosta, Paige DeStasio, Bella Gianfrancesco, Ashley Meeder, Kylee Punturerі and Audrey Wolfe, Madeline Zimmer and junior Adalay McLean.

Also, several students from Seneca Valley received Honorable Mentions for their entries including seniors Hannah Bennett, Carly Byrom, Sara Breeger, Paige DeStasio (two Honorable Mentions), Ashley Meeder (three Honorable Mentions), Madeline Zimmer (three Honorable Mentions); juniors Samiramiz Rogan, Adalay McLean; sophomore Anna Leggett.

"Our art students are some of the most creative, passionate, and dedicated students in the region," exclaimed Seneca Valley Senior High School Art Teacher Jason Woolslare. “The numerous awards and accomplishments that were earned at the 2026 Scholastic Art & Writing exhibit demonstrates the passion and talent our students have in visual art."

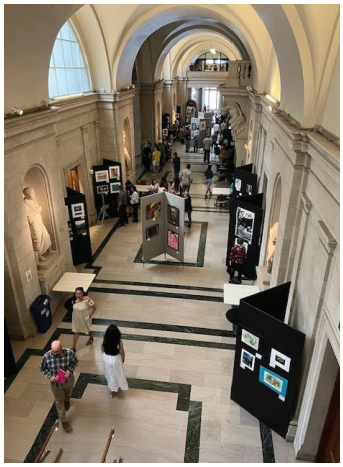
“I am in awe of our student’s talent, strength and creativity,” said Seneca Valley Senior High School Pottery and Ceramics Teacher Megan Bonistalli. “It takes bravery to submit personal work for evaluation amongst your peers, so I am always proud of all our Seneca Valley students who choose to enter such a giant competition. Their participation provides them with opportunities to learn about their artistic process, other types of art entered in the competition and how to move forward with feedback.”

Mr. Woolslare continued, "In addition, I am so grateful for Ms. Megan Bonistalli and her willingness to take the lead in coordinating the Scholastic Art show for the Pittsburgh region. It is a huge undertaking and provides an opportunity for thousands of students across the region to showcase their work in a juried exhibition."

The regional Scholastic Art & Writing Awards were held at Carnegie Mellon University’s Hall of Fine Arts & Kresge Theater on March 7. This event has grown to be the nation’s longest-running, most prestigious recognition initiation for creative teens, and the largest source of scholarships for young artists and writers. The Pittsburgh Arts Region encompasses all of Allegheny, Beaver, and Butler counties and is facilitated by the Seneca Valley School District, Pittsburgh Art Affiliate.















SV PRINCIPAL RECOGNIZED AS DISTINGUISHED YOUNG ALUMNUS

Connoquenessing Valley Elementary (CVE) Principal Jeremy Womer has been recognized as a Distinguished Young Alumnus by Clarion University of Pennsylvania during its 60th annual Alumni Association Distinguished Awards.

The Distinguished Young Alumnus award recognizes graduates who have achieved significant professional accomplishments and demonstrated meaningful service to their communities early in their careers.

Mr. Womer has more than 15 years of experience in teaching and school administration. He began his career in Wood County Schools in West Virginia before joining the Seneca Valley School District in 2017. During his time with the district, he has served in several leadership roles, including Assistant Principal and Acting Principal at Haine Elementary School, Acting Assistant Principal at Rowan Elementary School and Assistant Principal at Haine Middle School. He also previously served as a fourth-grade teacher at Haine Elementary.

"I am honored and grateful to receive the Distinguished Young Alumnus award for Clarion University," Mr. Womer said. "Beyond the lessons that continue to guide me, the experiences, connections and life-long relationships have helped me to where I am now. It is a privilege to be recognized and represent Clarion University as the 2026 Distinguished Young Alumnus."

As assistant principal, Mr. Womer helped guide the District's Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) and Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) initiatives. His dedication to educational leadership earned statewide recognition when he was named Pennsylvania's National Outstanding Assistant Principal for 2025 by the PA Principals Association, representing the state at the NAESP National Conference on School Leadership.



Pictured L to R: Amanda Brown Sissem, Samantha Thauvette, Jeremy Womer and Jon Anderson

Mr. Womer earned a Bachelor of Science in Education and played for the baseball team at Clarion University before attending California University of Pennsylvania to obtain his Master of Education degree.

"Jeremy's commitment to students, staff and the broader school community exemplifies the leadership we value at Seneca Valley," said Seneca Valley Superintendent of Schools Dr. Tracy Vitale. "This recognition from his alma mater is a reflection of the positive impact he continues to make in public education."

As principal of CVE, Mr. Womer is focused on building a supportive school culture and fostering strong partnerships with families and the community to help students succeed both academically and socially.

PI(E)ING FOR PURPOSE

Students at Ryan Gloyer Middle School (RGMS) celebrated Pi Day with a purpose!

Students had a blast 'pie-ing' their teachers during a fundraiser organized by the RGMS Hope Squad. They raised over $150 for the Andrew Effect, a nonprofit organization that provides high-quality, developmentally appropriate toys and activities that ignite the imagination of children who would otherwise have limited access to them. A little whipped cream for a whole lot of good!







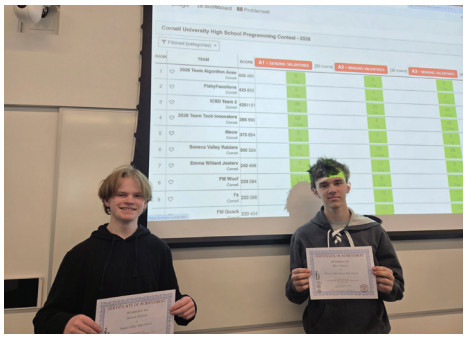




DECODING THE COMPETITION

Two SV juniors Albert Pimenov and Jackson Kephart competed in the 2026 Cornell High School Programming Contest last month in Ithaca, New York. Teams of two or three competed in solving a series of seven challenging problems over the span of three hours, testing their coding skills, problem-solving strategy and teamwork. The SV Raiders programming team placed sixth out of 30 teams representing New York, New Jersey, Connecticut and Pennsylvania!

Our SV computer scientists enjoyed a day of hands-on competition and informative presentations. They also gained insights into the AI field and future of Java development in an educational talk, "Working in (not just with) AI," led by Dr. Judith Spitz, Executive Director of Cornell Tech's Break Through Tech initiative.



STANDOUTS ON THE ICE

Recently, SV students on the Pittsburgh Steel City Selects (PSCS) 19U, 16U Major and 14U Major girls ice hockey teams found themselves as national championship contenders in the all-female hockey team.

The teams each won the MidAm District Tournament, securing the first place championship in their division and qualifying for the 2026 Chipotle-USA Hockey Girls Tier II National Championships! The championships took place earlier this month in Detroit, Michigan (14U Major), St. Louis, Missouri (16U Major) and Boston, Massachusetts (19U). Congratulations, SV athletes!

PSCS 19U Team: Teagan Hmel, Maggie Longwell

PSCS 16U Major Team: Elena Morascyzk, Addison Stevens

PSCS 14U Major Team: Jordyn Tarasi, Mia Baugh, Farrah Scarlatelli, Abby Lewis



SV ALL-STAR

For the month of March, we are pleased to announce the newest member inducted into the SV All-Star Club, Ms. Jessica King, security officer for Seneca Valley Senior High School.

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. King has worked for the district for several years, beginning her service as a roaming security officer on the secondary campus. She would walk the hallways, parking lots and fill in for various posts. Whenever additional support was needed, she stepped in, whether for a single day, week or extended periods of time.

"Jessica was asked to consider stepping into the site supervisor role," said Officer Jason Young, Safety and Security Director. "She accepted the responsibility without hesitation and has since worked closely with our previous Security All-Star Award recipient, Logan Ellsworth. Together, they have helped move our security department forward in a positive and productive way."

Officer Young added, "Over the past year, Jessica has taken on additional responsibilities, including playing a significant role in the interview and selection process for contracted security officers to ensure they are well-suited for work in an educational setting. Our district's security program includes both district security officers and contracted security officers. While they are employed by different organizations, we operate as one team with the shared goal of supporting safe and secure schools. Jessica oversees our contracted security officers and works closely with district staff to ensure consistency and collaboration."

Ms. King has demonstrated her value to the entire security team through her organization, leadership and thoughtful decision making. She consistently goes above and beyond in her role, ensuring that everyone feels safe and respected.



Pictured from L-R: Dr. Tracy Vitale, Superintendent of Schools, Ms. Jessica King, Mr. Eric DiTullio, Board President, and Mr. Jason Young, Safety and Security Director

"I'm very grateful for this recognition, and I'm proud to be a part of this team," said Ms. King. "I especially want to thank Jason Young for his leadership and guidance, and I look forward to continuing to help lead and support our security team in the years ahead."

'I LED THE PLEDGE'

Seneca Valley students from the District's K-6 schools are appearing at this year's school board meetings, leading the members of the School Board and public in saying "The Pledge of Allegiance." School Board meetings were held on March 2 and 9.

For the March 2 work session meeting, we were joined by Enyssa Mertz, a third grader at Connoquenessing Valley Elementary School (CVE).

Enyssa is a proud big sister to her younger brother Colton and enjoys her Spanish and music classes at CVE. When she's not practicing her gymnastics skills, you can find her singing, dancing and entertaining her family at home.



Enyssa pictured with, from L-R: Superintendent of Schools Dr. Tracy Vitale and School Board President Mr. Eric DiTullio

Lincoln Boehm, a fourth grader at Haine Elementary School, proudly served as our "I Led the Pledge" student for the March 9 school board regular session meeting. Lincoln's favorite parts of the school day include his math and physical education classes. Lincoln plays with the SV Ball Hockey Elementary team through the National Scholastic Ball Hockey League and was a top scorer in their recent championship win! He also plays soccer and dek hockey with several club and travel teams. His dream is to be a professional soccer player when he grows up.

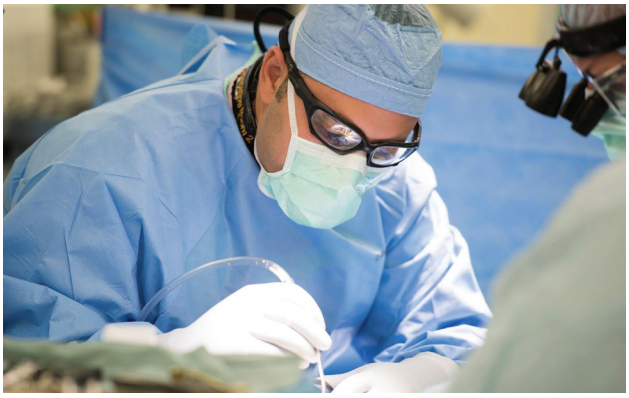


Lincoln pictured with, from L-R: Superintendent of Schools Dr. Tracy Vitale, School Board President Mr. Eric DiTullio, Haine Elementary School Assistant Principal Dr. Thomas McKelvey and Haine Elementary School teacher Ms. Lauren Walsh

SV ALUMNI, WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

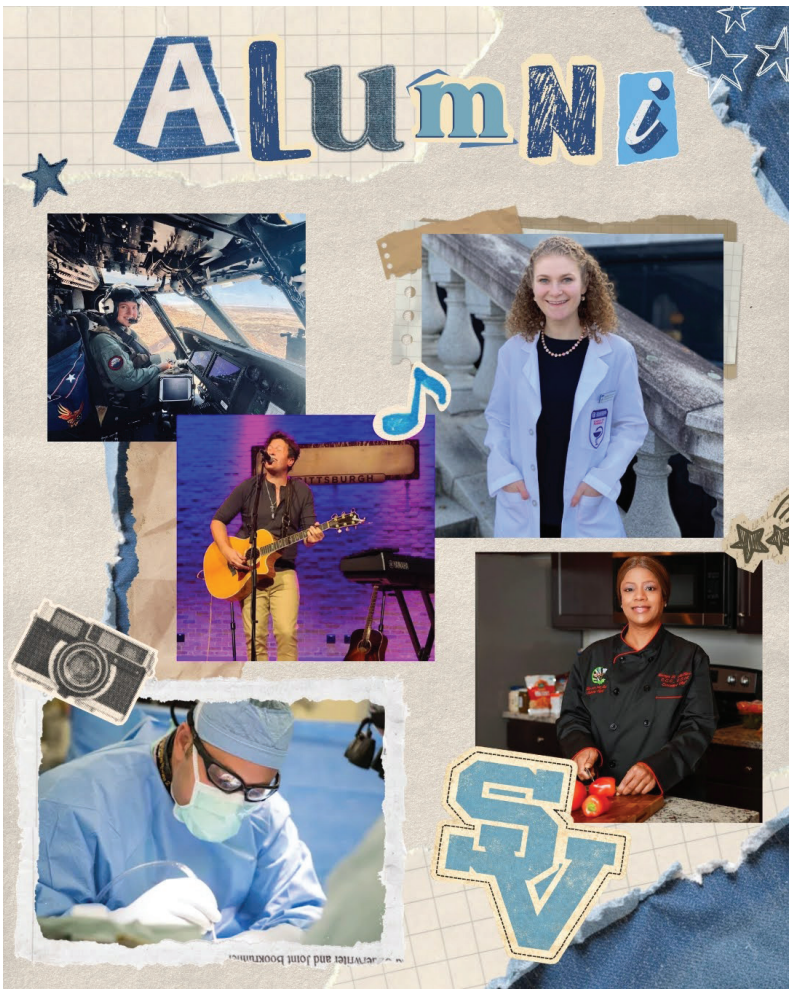
Your experiences as a Seneca Valley graduate matter. Take a few minutes to share your journey with us, from where life has taken you to how SV shaped your path. Your insights will help us celebrate successes, strengthen programs and guide current seniors toward their own bright futures.

Take the brief survey at **SV Alumni Survey - Seneca Valley School District**.



"Seneca Valley is such a special place to learn and grow because of the sheer variety of opportunities it offers. Being a large school district, it allows students to meet and connect with a wide range of peers, enroll in diverse classes tailored to different academic levels and participate in countless after-school clubs, sports and activities. Truly, there's something for every interest! As a proud graduate of Seneca Valley over 20 years ago, I'm amazed to see how much it has grown and evolved. The district has done an incredible job of keeping up with the times while staying committed to fostering an environment of learning, exploration and community. It's remarkable to witness how it continues to pave the way for student success!"

Anthony Mustovich, SV '03
Orthopedic surgeon



Seneca Valley is proud of our graduates who have excelled in their careers. Let us know if you would like to share your story in an upcoming edition of our Raider Pride e-newsletter. For more information email Tiffany Hernandez, Assistant Director of Communications at **hernandeztn@svsd.net**.

5 MAJOR WAYS SCHOOL HAS TRANSFORMED SINCE WE WERE THERE

On the surface, your kid's school might not look that different from the one you grew up in. There's still a drop-off line, lunchtime table drama, cliques, and Friday night football games. But a closer look reveals how school has changed over time, big shifts that not only affect how your child learns and grows but also how they socialize and make their way in the world.

The changes in education for kids today might be difficult to see from the outside — and good luck getting your teen to let you in on the secrets — but knowing how school is different today can help you provide better support. Below, we break down the modern school experience, diving into five major ways that school is different today, what that means for parents, and, because we'd never leave you hanging, how Bark can help.

Technology Is Now Central to Learning

Chalkboards and overhead projectors have been replaced by learning management systems, shared documents, and school-issued devices. According to the National Center for Education Statistics, more than 70% of public schools report teachers regularly using technology for core classroom tasks, and 45% of schools provide a computer for every student. In many districts, assignments, grades, textbooks, and even classroom discussions live entirely online.

That shift has real benefits: instant access to information, personalized learning tools, and the ability to collaborate in real time. But it also has its drawbacks. School-issued laptops, tablets, and Chromebooks move between home and school each day, making screen time a built-in part of learning rather than a separate activity. And staying on top of assignments now involves tracking multiple platforms and digital deadlines.

Communication Happens Online, Not in Notebooks

Apart from learning, personal technology now lives in students' hands throughout the school day. Most kids receive their first smartphone between the ages of 10 and 13, putting constant communication in place before high school even begins. And those phones aren't staying in backpacks despite teachers' best efforts. According to a recent survey by EdWeek, around 97% of students aged 11 to 17 use their cell phones for 40-70 minutes during the school day. Paper notes are also a relic of years past. What's the new thing? Group chats. Group chats for classes, friend groups, and social events are created at the drop of a hat and keep students constantly connected and commenting on what's happening in real-time.

For parents, the shift is just as dramatic. Permission slips and classroom newsletters now live in apps and online portals. That means fewer lost papers and faster access to grades and feedback, but with information scattered across multiple platforms, "checking in with school" can become a complicated game of remembering logins.

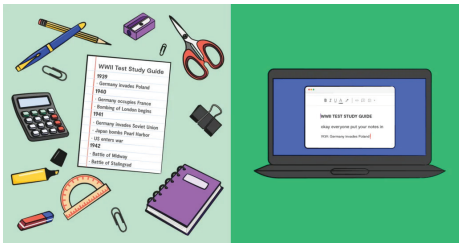
Homework and Studying Look Completely Different

Homework no longer lives in a worksheet or a single textbook. Assignments are posted and submitted through digital portals, group projects happen in shared documents, and studying often means watching recorded lessons or using interactive platforms.

That shift makes collaboration easier and gives students flexible access to class content, but it also ties academic success directly to screen time and reliable technology at home. At the same time, the rapid rise of AI tools is reshaping how students work. A 2025 survey found that over half of high school students are using GenAI tools for schoolwork to brainstorm ideas, edit or revise essays, or conduct research. While schools are still defining what counts as appropriate AI use, more school laptops and learning apps can make it harder for parents to cap screentime and help kids fully unplug.

Social Dynamics Extend Beyond School Hours

Conflicts that once ended at dismissal can now replay for hours in digital spaces. Group chats, texts, and social platforms keep kids connected around the clock. That constant connection can help kids feel included and maintain friendships across



busy schedules, but it also means school problems and stress can follow them home. According to Bright Path Adolescent Mental Health, 26.5% of U.S. teens report being cyberbullied in the past year, with incidents often involving screenshots, exclusion from group chats, and rumors that spread quickly online. Because these interactions happen on devices, they're harder for kids to step away from and harder for parents to see.

Mental Health Is More Openly Acknowledged

Today's students face an onslaught of academic pressure, social comparison, and digital overload in ways previous generations did not. The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) reports that more than 4 in 10 high school students say they feel persistently sad or hopeless, but are unlikely to confide in a parent. To help, schools are increasingly offering counseling services, social-emotional learning programs, and dedicated wellness initiatives. In the 2024-2025 survey of US public schools, 97% offered at least one type of mental health service to their students, from individual counseling (84%) to external referrals (67%). The hope is that this increased openness gives students language for what they're experiencing and more pathways to ask for help.

What This Means for Parents Today

Staying involved in your child's education now requires digital awareness as much as academic support. Knowing which platforms your child uses for school and how they communicate with friends is now a part of everyday parenting. The goal isn't to monitor every interaction, but to understand the environment they're navigating so you can step in when support is needed and step back as they build independence.

Article and image provided by Bark, Inc.

- SVAOC Summer School Registration is Open! Exciting news! Summer School is now available for students currently in grades 8-11. Secure your spot by registering at Summer School Registration. Seats are limited– enroll today!

- As part of our ongoing commitment to employee support and retention, Seneca Valley is pleased to introduce the Food Service Employee Incentive Program for the 2025–26 school year. This new benefit provides free reimbursable school meals for the children of SV Food Service staff members, based on their years of service to the district. The program is designed to recognize employee service, offer meaningful family support and create added value to food service positions. Click here to learn more.

- For the 2025 tax year, the IRS offers several key tax credits and benefits for families with children, most notably the Child Tax Credit (CTC) and the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC). Recent tax legislation passed in July 2025 has increased and made some of these benefits permanent. Parents can learn more at irs.gov/parents.

- 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).

- 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!

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

988

SUICIDE & CRISIS

- 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 Gold Card Club (svsd.net).



- Reality Tour is an accessible substance prevention program that delivers information to get parent and child on the same page.
  - Substance Abuse Prevention for Parents - CANDLE, Inc. (candleinc.org)

- Subscribe to our YouTube Channel!

- Drive for SV! 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. ■



41ST ANNUAL ALL DISTRICT K-6 TRACK AND FIELD MEET

MAY 15, 2026 NEXTIER STADIUM

(ON THE SECONDARY CAMPUS)

FREE TO ALL DISTRICT RESIDENTS IN GRADES K-6

Participants should wear appropriate clothing for running, jumping and throwing.
Please supply your own water bottle!

For participants and spectators' convenience, events will be separated into two meets for grades K-2 and 3-6. Event times are approximate!

5:15 - 5:45 P.M. GRADES K-2 REGISTRATION
5:45 - 7 P.M. GRADES K-2 EVENTS
Pre-k Race (*Parent & Child*) on Football field after K-2 events conclude
6:30 - 7 P.M. GRADES 3-6 REGISTRATION
7:15 - 9 P.M. GRADES 3-6 EVENTS

SPRINTING

Kindergarten: 40 Meters
Grades 1-2: 60 Meters
Grades 3-4: 80 Meters, short/long hurdles
Grades 5-6: 100 Meters, short/long hurdles, optional relays

Pre-K Race (parent and child) on football field at the halfway point of meet!

DISTANCE

Grades K-2: 400 M or 800-Meter Run
Grades 3-6: 400 M or 800-M Run
Grades 5-6: 400 M, 800 M or 1600 M Run

THROWING

Shot Put and Softball Throw

Students from CVE, Rowan, Ehrman Crest and Haine can see their physical education teachers for more details!

Come enjoy an evening of track and field competition! There is no cost in having some fun at the track!

RUNNING • JUMPING • THROWING • SPRINTING

SAVE THE DATE!

3RD ANNUAL SENECA VALLEY

BEST BUDDIES WALK













North Boundary Park
Cranberry Twp, Pa 16066

MAY 30, 2026

9 A.M. – Noon

REGISTRATION OPENS: 9 A.M.

$10 PER PERSON

Special appearances from the Seneca Valley Unified Bocce Teams and SV Cheerleaders!

BEST BUDDIES®

Seneca Valley School District

Beginning Instrumental Music Registration
3rd Grade Instrument Fair

JOIN US FOR OUR FIRST EVER 3RD GRADE INSTRUMENT FAIR!

The Seneca Valley Instrumental Music Program starts in 4th grade, with students making their instrument selection at the end of 3rd grade.

The *optional* Instrument Fair will give all current SV 3rd grade students, parents, and guardians a chance to learn all about the instrumental music program.

Can't make it to the instrument fair? NOT A PROBLEM! We will present the instruments and the program to ALL 3rd grade classrooms later this Spring. All current 3rd grade students who wish to try an instrument will get to do so at the end of May.

Who: All SV 3rd Grade Students
When: Monday, April 6, 2026 (Last day of Spring Break)
Where: Ehrman Crest Music Wing
Times: Morning and Afternoon Sessions
Registration: Reserve your spot by clicking on or scanning the QR code. Spots are limited so register ASAP!

Beginning Instrumental Music



RACE DATE: APRIL 25TH 2026
ARRIVAL @ ZELIE PARK 9:00
RACE BEGINS@9:30

We welcome you to join your CVE community for the 5th annual I love CVE Fun Run! In celebration of our 5 years running, walking, and celebrating together we would love to invite ALL past participants to join us!!

Register Now

MORE INFO

SCAN HERE

$15

SIGN-UP BY APRIL 10TH TO GUARANTEE YOUR RACE T-SHIRT

$20

AFTER APRIL 10TH
NO T-SHIRT GUARANTEE

BC3

PIONEER NIGHTS

Get an in-depth look at programs and the BC3 student experience!



BC3 @ Cranberry
April 8 | 5:30-7:30 PM

BC3 Main Campus
April 15 | 5-8 PM

Apply for FREE at these events!

Learn more at
bc3.edu/pioneer-night

CRANFEST

Cultural Festival

2026

A celebration of community and culture featuring live music, dancing & performances, delicious cuisine and more!

Saturday, April 11 | Municipal Center | 11AM-3PM

CranberryTownship.org/SpecialEvents



CRANBERRY TOWNSHIP

LEARN TO SWIM

June-August

at

CRANBERRY TOWNSHIP WATERPARK

- Outdoor swim lessons all summer
- Choose from small group classes, private instruction, or parent-child aquatics
- Levels available to suit all ages and abilities



Sign up for swim lessons online today!

CranberryTownship.org/Waterpark