RAIDER PRIDE

A State and National Award-Winning Publication APRIL 2026

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

SV'S DRAFT DAY DEBUT

As the national spotlight turned to the NFL Draft held in Pittsburgh, Seneca Valley School District brought that excitement into its classrooms with a districtwide NFL Draft Day on Thursday, April 23.

Across all schools, students and staff showed their team pride by wearing NFL apparel, creating a sea of jerseys, hats and team colors that reflected both hometown loyalty and the league's national reach.

Throughout the district, classrooms incorporated creative, draft-inspired activities that connected athletics to learning. From team building activities and draft-style competitions, to culinary creations and engineering innovations, students went all in to celebrate!

Photos continued on page 2.









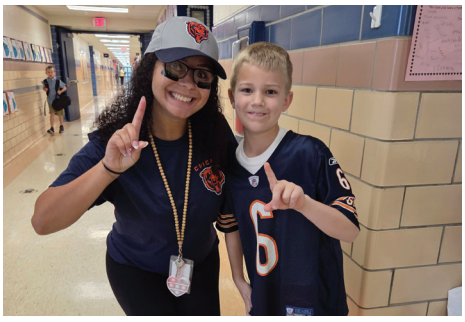








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DATES TO REMEMBER

May 2	SAT Testing
May 4	School Board Meeting, Work Session, IHS Auditorium, 7 p.m.
May 4-15	SHS AP Testing
May 11	School Board Meeting, Regular Session, IHS Auditorium, 7 p.m.
May 15	In-Service Day, No School for Students
May 16	Prom
May 25	District Holiday, No School
May 28	Graduation Day
May 29	Graduation Rain Date

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

IT'S AN HONOR!

Click here to view the 2025-26 Third Nine Weeks Honor Rolls for grades 7-12.

SV'S DRAFT DAY DEBUT *continued*



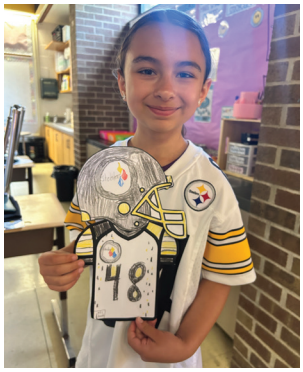
























RAIDER PRIDE ON DISPLAY AT NFL DRAFT

Shoutout to Miss Madi Barnyk, senior captain of the Seneca Valley Girls Flag Football Team, for being honored with the Jerome Bettis Leadership Award! As an award recipient, Madi helped introduce and celebrate the Steelers' first-round draft pick at the NFL Draft in Pittsburgh! To read more about the award nomination, visit Jerome Bettis Leadership Award | Pittsburgh Steelers - Steelers.com





HEART HEROES LEAD THE WAY

Kennedy and Penny may only be in elementary school, but they're already making a huge impact in the community – and they're just getting started!

Ehrman Crest Elementary School (ECE) kicked off the Kids Heart Challenge last month to raise funds for the American Heart Association (AHA) and support children with "special hearts."

Kennedy, who was diagnosed with a bicuspid aortic valve at just two years old, and Penny, a second grader who underwent open-heart surgery in November, haven't let their conditions hold them back. Instead, they've become passionate advocates for the Kids Heart Challenge and have turned their personal experiences into an opportunity to educate and inspire others.

ECE launched their fundraiser with presentations and special activities. Staff, community members, administrators and family members all helped spread the important message of heart health.

Thanks to the enthusiasm of the entire school community, Ehrman Crest



surpassed their goal and raised over $22,800 for the AHA! Shoutout to Kennedy for raising over $2,100 and earning the spot as top fundraiser! These funds will go toward helping fund research and resources for children with heart conditions.



"The fundraiser is very close to my heart," said Ehrman Crest Health and Physical Education teacher Ms. Sara Coon. "Teaching students about heart health at a young age means a lot."

The Kids Heart Challenge, a nationwide initiative by the AHA, promotes heart-healthy habits while empowering students to make a difference. Through education and fundraising, participants support life-saving efforts and learn the importance of cardiovascular health.

Kennedy and Penny's courage and efforts are a powerful reminder that even the youngest advocates can make a lasting impact.

GOING THE DISTANCE

Rowan Elementary School was once again awarded a $500 Kids of Steel grant from P3R (Pittsburgh Three Rivers Marathon, Inc.) in recognition of ongoing participation and dedication to the program.

The funds will be used to upgrade Rowan Elementary's physical education equipment.

"The Kids Marathon has been a strong tradition at Seneca Valley School District, continuing to engage a large and enthusiastic group of elementary students," said Rowan Elementary School Assistant Principal Ms. Jessica Scerbo.

Rowan Elementary's Health and Physical Education teacher, Mr. Mike Pelloni has led this program for the past 10 years. This marks his fourth time receiving the award,



a testament to his dedication, leadership and lasting impact.

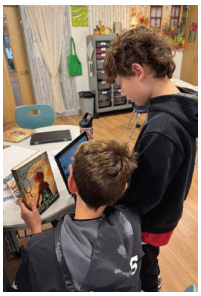
Congratulations to "Coach P." and Rowan Elementary School. We can't wait to see SV pride shine on the streets of Pittsburgh at this year's Kids of Steel Marathon!

BUILDING BRIDGES

Ehrman Crest Elementary and Middle School recently hosted a Building Bridges Day to create meaningful opportunities for students and staff across grade levels to work together.

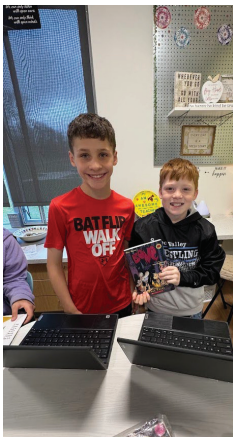
Middle school classes paired with an elementary classroom to incorporate bridge-themed learning, giving students the opportunity to connect with peers, learn from one another and build positive relationships across grade levels.










ROCKING AND ROLLING WITH LAND CHANGES

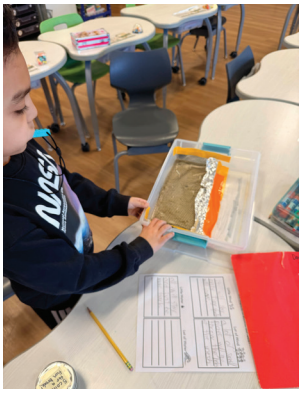
Second grade students in Mrs. Williams' class at Ehrman Crest Elementary recently stepped into the role of scientists and engineers! In their science unit on land changes, our young investigators explored how wind and water change the shape of land. Through hands-on activities, students created models to observe how land moves and changes over time, tested their ideas and designed solutions to minimize land change.

"It's so fun to make different land models," said student Hailey Follett. "My favorite part was building the land bin with my group. We were building a solution to keep the dirt and gravel from moving."

Using their models, the class experimented, observed patterns and even refined their designs.

"As a teacher, it's been fun watching their ideas and creativity come to life," said Mrs. Williams. "This science unit has allowed them to be leaders of their own learning. They've also learned problem solving and how to practice collaboration with others!"






Save the Date!

Kindergarten Countdown





We are thrilled to welcome you to our school community and look forward to the upcoming academic year!

To help your new kindergartener become familiar with our school and meet our staff members, we would like to invite you and your kindergartener to come and visit.

May 15, 2026

Upon completing your child's 2026-27 Kindergarten Registration, you will receive detailed information about Kindergarten Countdown from the building your child will attend.

Register your child today at **www.svsd.net/26-27KRegistration**



A PAWS-ITIVELY PERFECT PROJECT

The smallest acts of kindness can make the biggest impact. At Rowan Elementary School, first graders in Dr. Hannah Hamilton's class are proving just that.

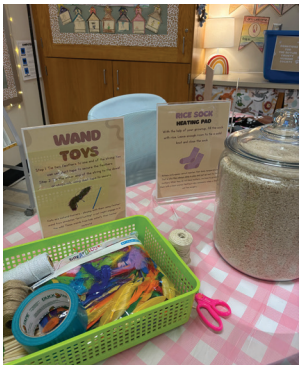
For the second year, students partnered with the Butler County Humane Society (BCHS) to help bring attention to their "long-timer" animals that need some extra assistance finding their forever homes.

Each student used creativity and compassion to write a persuasive essay explaining why someone should adopt their assigned pet. They also designed informational posters highlighting their animal's personality, needs and best qualities. The posters and essays were proudly displayed during Rowan Elementary's Open House, where families and visitors learned more about each animal and the importance of adoption. Students and their families also worked together to create enrichment items for shelter animals, including rice heating pads and fleece toys for dogs and cats.









On Friday, April 10, BCHS representatives Ms. Taelynn Ulakovic and Ms. Nikki Healy visited Dr. Hamilton's classroom to speak on the important work the shelter does in the community and ways to volunteer and help animals in need. Students were very excited to present the visitors with the handmade items and donated supplies collected during their project.

"This project is especially meaningful to me," said Dr. Hamilton. "I am a huge animal lover and started this partnership in honor of my dog. It has been incredibly rewarding to see my students use their writing skills to advocate for animals while also learning about compassion, service and community involvement."

RESOURCES FOR A RAINY DAY

Selected sixth grade purpose students at Haine Middle School recently presented on protecting the local watershed at a Cranberry Township Board of Supervisors meeting held at the Municipal Center.

Alongside gifted support teachers Mrs. Allison Stebbins and Mr. John Schmidt, students delivered a brief presentation and demonstrated rain barrel installation, helping educate residents on the importance of water conservation. Their efforts also contributed to fulfilling a portion of Cranberry Township's MS4 environmental permit requirements.

Congratulations to these students for going above and beyond by participating in a local government event while making a meaningful impact on their community.







NO TRASH TALK HERE

Congratulations to Haine Middle School fifth grader Alec Phipps on being named 2026 Litter Hawk Youth Award winner.

The Litter Hawk Youth Award Program, funded by PA Department of Environmental Protection, provides a way for students in kindergarten through sixth grade to express their concerns about litter through art, writing or video. This was a competitive contest through Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful. Mr. Phipps submitted an essay, and out of more than 500 entries, he was a second-place winner for the fifth-grade category.

Judges were impressed by the many thoughtful submissions that highlighted positive efforts to reduce litter in parks, school grounds and along roadways.

A ceremony recognizing students was held on April 2, at the Pennsylvania State Capitol Building in Harrisburg. Poster-sized displays of winning entries will be on display through April 30.







FORECASTING A SPECIAL VISIT

Connoquenessing Valley Elementary School and Ryan Gloyer Middle School welcomed Mary Ours, CBS News First Alert Meteorologist, to teach students about meteorology and lead them through a daily forecast!



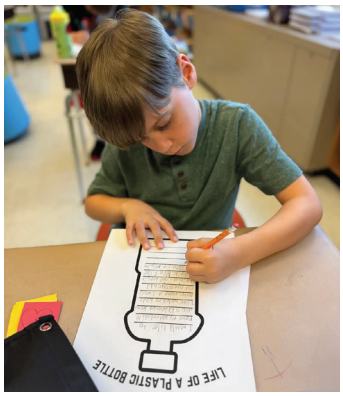
A GREENER WORLD STARTS WITH KIDS WHO CARE

Rowan Elementary students in Ms. Gabriella Harding's class welcomed a special guest to help celebrate Earth Day! Ms. Harding's sister Regina DeSimone (SV '15) shared about her role as a Business Analyst for Waste Management. The class learned about recycling through the journey of a plastic bottle, from crude oil, to manufacturing and its everyday use, to being recycled into something completely new! Students wrapped up the visit by creating their own imaginative stories about a plastic bottle and pledging to help build a more sustainable community.









FROM OUR FLOCK TO YOURS

On Wednesday April 22, students at the Intermediate High School celebrated Earth Day at the LIGHT Center by making bird feeders and coloring Earth Day-themed pictures!







GLOBAL GOALS

Seneca Valley is proud to announce that two student teams from Haine Elementary and Middle School have earned invitations to the KidWind World Championship, taking place May 17-20 at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

The competition is the culminating event of the KidWind Challenge, a hands-on design competition that encourages students to explore the power and promise of clean energy through building and testing small-scale wind turbines and solar structures.

Several Seneca Valley KidWind teams recently competed at the state KidWind championships, held at Penn State University. The solar competition was held on March 5, while the wind competition was held on March 25. To qualify for this state competition, teams had to finish in one of the top three places in our local SV KidWind Challenge, held on February 6, at the Cranberry Township Municipal Center.

Following impressive showings at these events, two Seneca Valley teams earned tickets to the prestigious world finals:

- The solar team from Haine Elementary School, "Einstein Extraordinaires," designed a solar environment that contained a solar laboratory, gardens and shed. At Penn State, they won the Solar Spirit Award. The team is composed of Kevin Husband, Maddox Pindroh, Brayden Hauck, Garrett Schiela and Ronav Mistri.
- The SV Wind Power team from Haine Middle School, "Airborne Military Ducks" won the second-place award. After designing and testing a variety of different gear ratios and blade designs, the team created a turbine with four gears and six identical blades made of corrugated plastic. The team consists of Ihsan Sirazee, Auggy Semblante, Jesse Wabiszewski and Everett Williamson.

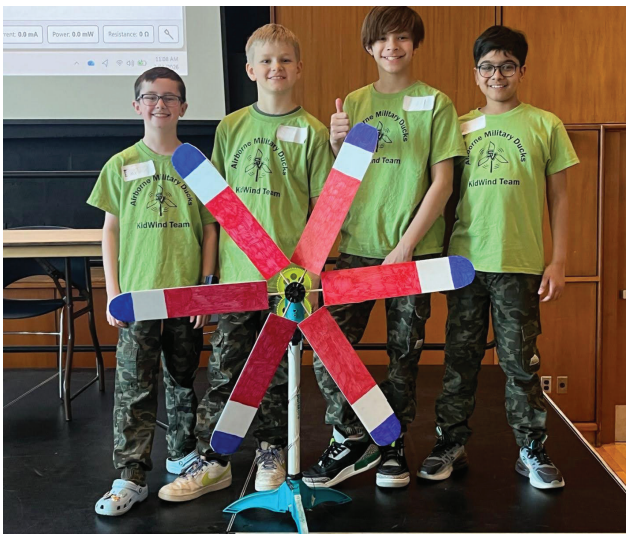
Both teams are coached by Linda Weismann, fourth grade teacher, and Jeremiah Friday, gifted support teacher at Haine Elementary.

The KidWind Project is a national educational initiative focused on teaching students about renewable energy through hands-on, STEM-based learning. A key feature of the program is the KidWind Challenge, where student teams design, build and test small wind turbines or solar projects, applying engineering, problem-solving and teamwork skills. The KidWind Project aims to inspire the next generation of scientists and engineers while increasing understanding of renewable energy and its role in a sustainable future.









BEYOND THE COURT

Students in grades K–6 from across the district welcomed some very special guests, NCAA Division II Elite Eight mens and womens basketball teams. During their visits, student-athletes stepped into classrooms to share what it means to compete at the collegiate level, highlighting the importance of teamwork, leadership and perseverance.

They read with students, introduced them to the fundamentals of basketball and even hosted friendly scrimmages, creating memorable, hands-on experiences.

Extending well beyond the classroom, the players left a meaningful and lasting impact on students, inspiring them both on and off the court.





















By Varden Armstrong,
Performing Arts Coordinator

BACKSTAGE PASS

Seneca Valley students in grades 9–12 recently had the unique opportunity to hear from award-winning actress and vocalist Tamara Tunie during a special in-school program. On Friday, April 17, the SV Senior High School Auditorium was filled with students eager to hear from a professional who has navigated the heights of Broadway, film and television.

A native of Homestead, Pennsylvania, Ms. Tunie earned her Bachelor of Arts from Carnegie Mellon University in 1981 and has built an accomplished career across stage, film and television. Her work includes performances on Broadway and notable roles in “Flight,” “Blue Bloods,” “The Devil's Advocate,” “Snake Eyes,” “Wall Street,” “Beyond the Gates,” “Law & Order,” “As the World Turns” and many more.

Currently serving as an Artist in Residence at the Manchester Craftsmen’s Guild (MCG) in Pittsburgh, Ms. Tunie graciously visited Seneca Valley to share her talents, personal stories and professional journey. Her visit held special significance for students involved in the Performing Arts and those pursuing the SV Career Pathway in Arts, Communication and Media.

During the program, students gained insight into Ms. Tunie’s life, training and rise in the entertainment industry. Students especially enjoyed Ms. Tunie’s





powerful monologue centered on themes of perseverance and overcoming adversity in the entertainment industry.

“It was an amazing experience getting to meet someone who even my mother has been watching and just hearing her story that inspires so many people,” said SV student Wynn Level.

Concluding the program, Ms. Tunie participated in a dynamic Q&A session, providing an engaging experience that offered valuable perspective and encouraged students to explore their own creative paths.

"It was such a pleasure hearing Ms. Tunie speak to us,” said student Hope Reep. “She is such an incredible performer, and it was an honor to meet her."

The impact of Ms. Tunie’s visit was immediate, with many attendees citing her "trailblazing" spirit as a major inspiration.



"She is truly inspiring,” added Julia Brisco. “I think she has re-awakened my passion for theatre and film."

We extend our deepest thanks to Tamara Tunie, Mark Jackovic (SV Artist in Residence and MCG Education and Archives Manger), and MCG Jazz for making this incredible opportunity possible for the SV community. For those interested in her ongoing work with the guild, you can find more information at www.mcgjazz.org.

MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS SHINE AT PMEA EVENTS

This month, fifth and sixth grade students from Ehrman Crest and Haine Middle School were selected to perform at the PMEA District 5 Elementary Chorus Fest held at Lakeview High School. These young musicians had the opportunity to rehearse with a guest conductor throughout the day and concluded the event with a special concert performance.

The guest conductors for the festival were Mr. Steven Schmidt, Director of the Bel Canto Choir for the Pittsburgh Youth Chorus, and Ms. Heather Groves-Edwards,





retired music director for the Slippery Rock Middle and High School choirs. Ehrman Crest Middle School students are led by Mr. David Wingenbach and Haine Middle School students are led by Ms. Elizabeth Schroder.

THE ORCHESTRA AT WORK

Ehrman Crest Middle School and Haine Middle School Sixth Grade Orchestras recently enjoyed an exciting educational field trip to Heinz Hall, home of the renowned Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra (PSO). Under the direction of Mrs. Amanda Lesney and Mrs. Marlina Hasara, students attended a PSO Schooltime concert "The Orchestra at Work," a unique program showcasing the individuals and roles that contribute to the success of a professional American orchestra.

Throughout the performance, students had the opportunity to meet and hear from talented Pittsburgh professionals who work both on and behind the stage. From musicians and conductors to those who support behind-the-scenes production, the concert highlighted the teamwork and dedication required to bring orchestral performances to life.

Students were also treated to a dynamic musical program celebrating the works of American composer Aaron Coplan, selections from "Wicked," and iconic film scores by John Williams.

"The experience provided both inspiration and a deeper understanding of the world of professional music," Mrs. Lesney and Mrs. Hasara added. "It was a memorable day for all who attended!"















CITY-WIDE COLLABORATIONS

On April 10, high school orchestra students attended a fun and educational day in Pittsburgh. Students started their day visiting Pittsburgh's iconic Strip District, before touring the city on Molly's Trolleys and taking a ride on the Duquesne Incline. After the city tour, orchestra students participated in a workshop at Duquesne University's Mary Pappert School of Music. Students in the Seneca Valley String and Chamber Orchestra participated in a collaborative rehearsal with Dr. Stephen Benham, renowned string clinician and educator, and Duquesne University Music Education students. During this clinic, students refined their musical skills, applying new concepts to pieces that will be performed at their upcoming spring concert.

Senior violinist Morgan Roithner commented, "I wish we could have had even more time in the clinic!"





Throughout the afternoon, students had the opportunity to take a self-guided tour of the campus and observe the Duquesne University Symphony Orchestra under the direction of Mr. Daniel Meyer. To end the day, SV instrumentalists celebrated at Dave and Busters with dinner and games.

"It was wonderful to have such a productive, fun and inclusive field trip for all our orchestra students," said orchestra director Ms. Sarah Miller.







THESPIANS PLAN FOR PLENTY OF LAUGHS

Disaster is coming to Seneca Valley—and you won't want to miss it!

Join the Seneca Valley Thespians for a hilarious production of "Noses Off," running May 1 & 2 at 7 p.m. and May 3 at 2 p.m. Witness the ultimate "show must go on" struggle as an amateur troupe tries to stage a whodunit that's falling apart at the seams. Between a vengeful costume designer, tangled cast romances and a very suspicious script that feels eerily similar to Agatha Christie, it's a miracle the curtain rises at all. This high-speed tribute to the classic "Noises Off" features our talented 9-12 grade performers and an entirely student-led crew. Tickets are available at the door.



LIFELONG MUSIC MAKING

The Seneca Valley community can be proud to boast that in addition to all the other amazing groups and activities that exist, there is a vibrant musical organization made up of musicians from the surrounding area. The Harmony Zelienople Community Band (HZCB) has been in existence for over 30 years. Founder Susan VanArsdale created the group as an opportunity to provide a place for adults to play their instruments again in a fun and relaxing environment. Little did she know that the group would not only expand to its current roster of almost 100 musicians, but that community bands have now become quite a popular activity around the country. The HZCB is unique in that its membership is made up of community members, SV alumni, SV teachers and students who all come together for an eight-week season culminating with a concert that was held on April 12, in the Seneca Valley Intermediate High School Auditorium.



The concert featured an exciting variety of musical styles from a Sinatra Medley to the ever-popular "Stars and Stripes Forever." The trombone section was featured in a ragtime-style piece entitled, "Trombone Rag." On a more somber note, the saxophone section performed a piece written by Andrew Karns (SV Class of '97) in memory of Robert Rectenwald, who was a valued staff member and baseball coach. He passed away suddenly in November of 2025.

The HZCB is co-directed by Sara Snyder and Varden Armstrong, instrumental music teachers at Seneca Valley. The band will resume rehearsals in January of 2027. Any community members interested in more information about the group should reach out to Ms. Sara Snyder at snydersw@svsd.net.

PARADING AT PIGEON FORGE

Each spring, the Seneca Valley Marching Band travels to an exciting destination that provides band students with an opportunity to perform for new audiences and crowds. This year was no exception.

The marching band traveled to Pigeon Forge, Tennessee, in March to perform at The Island at Pigeon Forge. In addition to the performance, students attended the Dollywood Stampede Show, toured the Titanic Museum, hiked through Smoky Mountain National Park and spent a day of fun at Dollywood Amusement Park. Mason Tomaszewki, eighth-grade percussionist, said, "It was definitely worth going and I can't wait for next year's trip!"

Traveling each year gives the marching band the opportunity to perform in parades across the country and showcase student talent. These





performances are an extension of what the marching band does throughout the year in the local communities.

Senior Ellie Stewart shared that "the band trip was so much fun and was a great opportunity to spend time with friends and create lifelong memories."

The Seneca Valley Marching Band is under the direction of Varden Armstrong, Bob Babick, Brian Croach and Sara Snyder. Pom advisors are Missy Armstrong and Katie Huttinger. Color Guard advisors are Emily Cramer and Caitlyn Cindrich.







SVAOC MUSIC STUDENTS EARN PRESTIGIOUS ALL-STATE HONORS AT PMEA

This month, 13 Seneca Valley musicians advanced to the highest level of achievement in the Pennsylvania Music Educators Association (PMEA) and attended the annual PMEA All-State conference and festival.

Participation at the all-state level represents the pinnacle of success for student musicians and is widely regarded as the performing arts equivalent of a state championship.

These exceptional students were featured performers in the event held at the Kalahari Resort and Convention Center in Pocono Manor. Students were selected through a rigorous audition process and joined the most accomplished young musicians from across the Commonwealth for an intensive, multi-day musical experience culminating in public performances.

The All-State Orchestra was conducted by Dr. Paul Shewan, Professor of Conducting, Ensembles and Trumpet at Roberts Wesleyan University in Rochester, New York. Students rehearsed extensively under Dr. Shewan over the course of three days, culminating in a concert performance on Saturday, April 25.

Orchestra Participants: Elizabeth Browne – Violin, Benny James – Bass

The All-State Concert Band was led by Dr. Jeffrey D. Gershman, Director of Bands and Chair of the Department of Music at The College of Wooster. The ensemble presented its performance on Saturday, April 25, showcasing repertoire of exceptional technical and musical demands.

Concert Band Participants: Emma Gallie – Clarinet, Gio Salgado – Alto Saxophone, Eli Scanlan – Trombone



The All-State Jazz Ensemble was conducted by Dr. Paul Bratcher, Associate Chair of Piano at the Levine School of Music in Washington, D.C., and Director of Jazz Studies at Georgetown University. The ensemble performed on Friday, April 24, demonstrating advanced improvisational skill, stylistic mastery and ensemble artistry.

Jazz Ensemble Participants: Camden Armstrong – Alto Saxophone, John Rieger – Trumpet

The All-State Choir was directed by Dr. Brian J. Winnie, Director of Choral Studies at Western Illinois University. On Friday, April 24, the choir performed a program that reflected musical excellence, expressive depth and vocal precision.

Choir Participants: Nathan Capizzi – Tenor 2, Aydan Danylo – Alto 1, Jacob Harding – Tenor 2, Autumn Holmes – Alto 2, Shayla Kemp – Soprano 1, Layne Vandenburgh – Tenor 1

The achievement of these students reflects countless hours of preparation, discipline and dedication to their craft. Their success brings distinction to the Seneca Valley Academy of Choice (SVAOC) and stands as a powerful testament to the strength of its music program and the exceptional talent of its students.

A TRADITION WITH NO STRINGS ATTACHED

The Tri-M Honor Society recently hosted their second annual “Guitar Night” on March 18, in the Senior High School Auditorium. The event welcomed seven local guitarists who play in a variety of styles. Following each performance was a question-and answer component for the audience to ask questions regarding guitar equipment and stylistic technique choices from each diverse artist.

"I’m proud to see this tradition continue," said Tri-M President Mia Grant. “This was such a great event last year, and we wanted to see it continue!”

“We reached out to more of our student musicians and got help from our guitar instructor Mila Shadel and community resource John Alexander.”

Elected student officers hosted the event and provided refreshments. Tri-M Music Honor society members include junior and senior students from SV Band, Chorus and Orchestra. Local artists who performed were Oscar Adrian, John Alexander, Jacob Glath, Dan Hayton, Ben Kane, Mila Shadel and Waldo Young. Tri-M thanks these



community volunteers for supporting this free event to enrich our programs here at SV!

“I’m so glad to see this tradition continue to grow,” said SV alum and former chapter president Ayla Alexander. “We even had an SV sixth grader here who was very excited to participate!”

TRI-M Officers/Committee:

Mia Grant – President
Jillian Snyder – Vice-President
Billlie Rape – Secretary
Morgan Roithner – Treasurer
Autumn Holmes – Historian
Jeb Kellar – Sergeant
Jacob Maietta – Parliamentarian

SVTV STUDENTS SHINE IN DMAC CONTEST

SVTV crew members and SV Video Production students swept awards at the Robert Morris University Digital Media Arts Consortium (DMAC) video festival on Wednesday, April 15, winning in several categories. The SVTV volunteer crew won Best in Category in the "Live Event" contest for their broadcast of the girls basketball senior night. Junior Layla Lynch picked up Best in Category in the "Special Effects" genre for her multimedia animation project. Junior Austin Ocrah won in the "Digital Cinema" category for his short film about managing trauma, senior Kian Watt won an Award of Excellence for his documentary about the SV Jazz program, and senior Austin Barclay won in the "Black and White Photography" category for his photo titled "Faith."

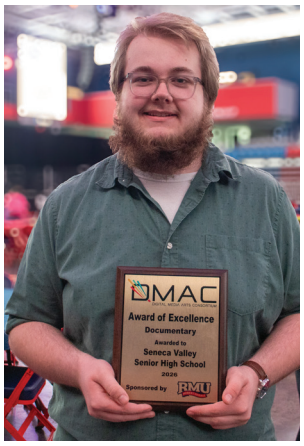
SVTV president London Meyer was also recognized on stage with a Founders Award for her incredible contributions to the club over her four-year career. London has also excelled as a student in several different video production classes and submitted work in the "Photo Illustration" category of the festival. The DMAC student video contest has been in existence for over three decades and celebrates student talent in dozens of Western Pennsylvania school districts. Students can submit their work in the media arts to more than twenty different categories and see the great work of neighboring schools as well. We are so proud of our amazing students!











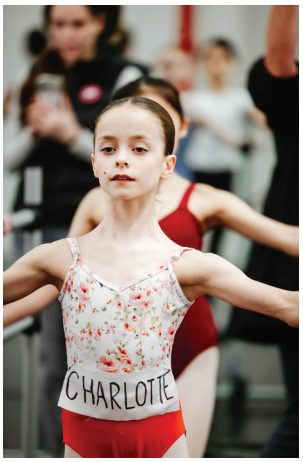


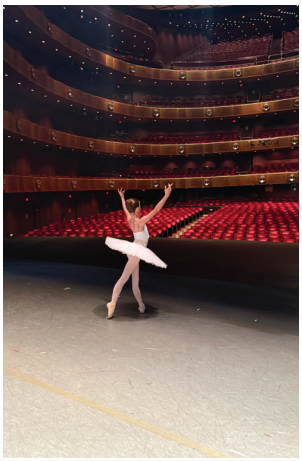


ECMS STUDENT TAKES THE STAGE

Ehrman Crest fifth grader Charlotte Polk was chosen out of thousands of young dancers to perform in the Youth America Grand Prix's (YAGP) "Stars of Today Meet the Stars of Tomorrow" gala on April 16, and the "International Dance School Festival" on April 18, both on the Lincoln Center stage! Charlotte competed in YAGP's Pittsburgh regional in January, earning a top prize and an invitation to perform in both of YAGP's New York City galas at Lincoln Center in April. Aspiring dancers united from around the world to perform a specially choreographed "pièce d'occasion" working with esteemed coaches from internationally recognized ballet schools and the YAGP organization itself.

"It was humbling to watch Charlotte perform on such a big stage alongside such talented dancers from all over the world," said Emily McGoey, Seneca Valley Academy of Choice Ballet Instructor. "To watch her dream come to life is something truly special."





PREPARATION BEHIND EVERY PERFORMANCE

Seneca Valley sixth and seventh grade orchestra and band students recently took the stage for the fourth annual Instrumental Music Performance Assessment (MPA) on April 9, and they did not disappoint!

The MPA provides a meaningful and formal opportunity to showcase students' musical growth, progress and achievement. Sponsored by the Pennsylvania Music Educators Association (PMEA), this assessment allows young musicians to perform for expert adjudicators while gaining valuable feedback to further their development.

The day was filled with outstanding performances by sixth grade students from Haine Middle School and Ehrman Crest Middle School (ECMS), as well as seventh grade students from Ryan Gloyer Middle School (RGMS). Each ensemble performed for a panel of four collegiate music professors who offered professional evaluations and encouragement. One adjudicator even spent additional time with each group as a guest clinician, providing hands-on instruction and insight. Another great benefit of the program is that students watch their peers perform.

RGMS violinist Sophia Ulintz said, "The audience was very respectful. They clapped, were quiet and paid attention."

RGMS flutist Aayla Shorr added, "I really loved getting to hear how amazing the younger students sounded! I truly loved getting to be taught by the adjudicator after our sight reading as well!"

The dedication and preparation of these students were evident in every performance, and the ensemble directors could not be prouder of their hard work and accomplishments.

"As a very serious musician, I very much enjoyed the MPA," said ECMS tuba player Kannon Karcher. "It was a very fun experience that gave us various ways to improve on our songs."

Congratulations to our incredible musicians and the educators who guide them!











Ensemble Directors:

Ehrman Crest Middle School Orchestra 6 – Mrs. Amanda Lesney

Ehrman Crest Middle School Band 6 – Mrs. Tracy Glass

Haine Middle School Orchestra 6 – Mrs. Marlina Hasara

Haine Middle School Band 6 – Mrs. Kelly Levere

Ryan Gloyer Middle School Orchestra 7 – Ms. Sarah Miller & Mrs. Millie Shay

Ryan Gloyer Middle School Band 7 – Mrs. Sara Snyder & Mr. Brian Croach

Bravo to all involved in a memorable and musically inspiring day!

DEDICATION TO MUSIC EDUCATION

Congratulations to Ehrman Crest Elementary music teacher Ms. Erin Sypien on being recognized as the 2026 Outstanding Music Educator Honoree by the Butler County Symphony Orchestra (BCSO)!

According to the BCSO, Ms. Sypien's "passion for music and dedication to her students continue to inspire the next generation," and we couldn't agree more! With over two decades of teaching and leadership in music education, Ms. Sypien's contributions were honored at a BCSO concert held March 28.



DECADES OF MUSIC, SERVICE AND COMMUNITY SPIRIT

For decades, the Seneca Valley Madrigal Singers have been one of the district's most cherished musical ambassadors—an ensemble that not only performs with exceptional artistry but also embodies the spirit of service that defines the SV community. This year has been no exception. In fact, the 2025-26 season has highlighted the group's talent, dedication and heart more vividly than ever.

On April 16, the Madrigal Singers, under the direction of Ms. Bobi-Jean L. Alexander, brought their signature blend of musical excellence and community connection to Sherwood Oaks, a retirement community in Cranberry Township. Residents were treated to an hour-long concert filled with energy, precision and warmth. For many in the audience, it wasn't just a performance, it was a gift. The singers' presence lit up the room, offering joy, nostalgia and a reminder of the power of young voices to uplift an entire community.

The Seneca Valley Madrigal Singers continue to prove that music is more than performance—it's connection, tradition and service. Their decades-long legacy is built on moments like these: students giving back, audiences inspired and a community strengthened through song.







EHRMAN CREST MIDDLE SCHOOL HOSTS FIRST PMEA ELEMENTARY STRING FEST

Ehrman Crest Middle School hosted the first-ever Pennsylvania Music Education Association (PMEA) District 5 Elementary String Fest. This event gave fifth and sixth grade orchestra students from school districts throughout PMEA District 5 the opportunity to come together to make music. Participating students went through an audition process with their respective orchestra teachers. Students who passed the audition process were given music to prepare and spent April 17 working under the direction of Pierce Cook, middle school orchestra director from Mt. Lebanon School District. The day culminated with an evening concert for their families and the community at Ehrman Crest Middle School. Participating school districts included Seneca Valley School District, Blackhawk School District, Butler Area School District, Hermitage School District, Knoch School District and Neshannock School District.





Special thanks to Mrs. Amanda Lesney and Mrs. Marlina Hasara for co-hosting this fantastic event.

By Heather Lewis,
Seneca Valley Athletics & Activities Director

SPRING SPORTS UPDATES

It is hard to imagine but we are in the final weeks of the spring season. Our student athletes and coaches have done a remarkable job adjusting to Mother Nature's wrath this spring and they are to be commended for their perseverance. As of this writing, here is where all teams stand in their respective seasons:

Baseball

4-3 section (2nd place); 10-6 overall

Flag Football, Girls

2-5 section (9th place); 3-5 overall

Lacrosse, Boys

1-2 section (5th place); 7-4 overall

Lacrosse, Girls

0-5 section (9th place); 2-7 overall

Softball

8-2 section (2nd place); 10-2 overall

Tennis, Boys

4-3 section (3rd place); 8-4 overall

Track & Field, Boys

5-1 section (2nd place); 8-1 overall

Track & Field, Girls

4-2 section (3rd place); 7-2 overall

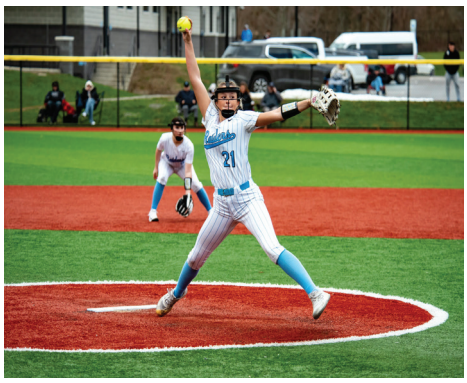
Ultimate Frisbee

4-3 overall (4th place)

Volleyball, Boys

3-2 section (2nd place); 8-3 overall

Photos courtesy of Frank Kendrella and Denny Harsh

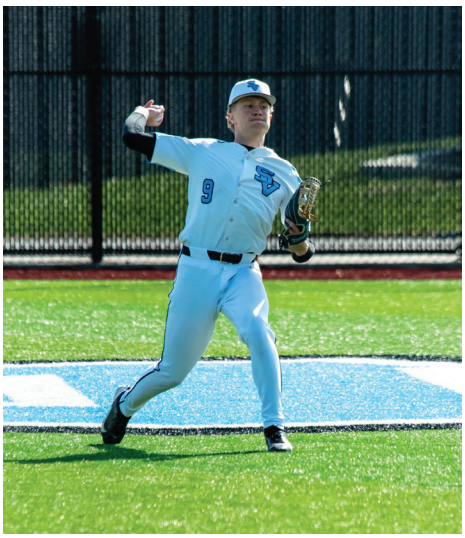
















FLAG FOOTBALL – JEROME BETTIS LEADERSHIP AWARD

Congratulations to senior QB/DB Madi Barnyk who was chosen as a recipient of the Jerome Bettis Leadership Award. Seven flag football athletes were chosen from around the region for going above and beyond in providing mentor-like support to their teammates. The following is the nomination submitted by head coach Chris Eden:

"Madi exemplifies what it means to be a leader for her teammates and her community. A senior for Seneca Valley Girls Flag Football, Madi's character and work ethic elevates everyone around her. She is trusted by her coaches, teammates and friends and is dedicated to her personal growth and leadership development. Madi never misses an opportunity to turn a small task into an opportunity to connect with her teammates, both personally and athletically, to talk about on field tactics as well. Madi's dedication continues far off the field, serving as a head counselor for the YMCA summer camp, coaching youth flag football teams, and officiating games, as well as being a critical member of the school's Student-Athlete Leadership Team. She also volunteers at events through National Honor Society, Haine Middle School Open House, and the Connoquenessing Valley Elementary (CVE) Fun Run."



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
Carson Leslie	Track & Field	Westminster College	Communications
Jordan Skye Monteleone	Track & Field	Duquesne	Biological Sciences

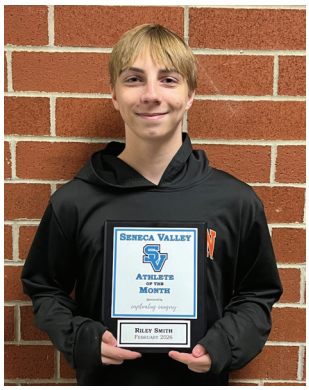
ATHLETES OF THE MONTH, FEBRUARY 2026

Sponsored by Captivating Imagery - Your local professional portrait photographer

captivating imagery



The "Captivating Imagery" Female Athlete of the Month for February was senior diver Ali Waters. Ali capped off a great career with a record-breaking senior season. Of the twelve regular season meets she competed in, Ali came in first place 11 times. She broke her own six-dives pool and school record of 306.8 by scoring 325.35. At the Western Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic League (WPIAL) One-Meter Diving Championships, she finished in second place with a score of 452.40 (11 dives). She moved on to the Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association (PIAA) One-Meter Diving Championships and scored 430.15 to finish in fourth place out of 24 divers, narrowly missing third place by 1.15 points. For a stellar season and career, we recognized Ali as the February Female Athlete of the Month. Congratulations, Ali!



The "Captivating Imagery" Male Athlete of the Month for February was boys wrestler Riley Smith. Riley had an outstanding junior year campaign at the 107 lbs. weight class. He led the team in wins with a 43-6 record and posted a remarkable 27-match win streak. Riley won the Brooke Classic and Indiana Bo Wood wrestling tournaments and placed third at the prestigious Mount Aloysius Panther Classic. Riley continued his stellar form into the postseason as he finished first at sections and then placed fifth at the WPIAL Boys Wrestling Championships. He then advanced to the PIAA Western Regional where he placed sixth out of 16 wrestlers. For an impressive month, we recognized Riley as the February Male Athlete of the Month. Congratulations, Riley!

WE ARE PLANNING FOR 2026-27

Physical, drug & concussion test dates

The athletic department has announced its summer physical, drug testing and baseline concussion testing dates for 2026-27. Please note these plans are subject to change.

REMINDERS for 2026-27:

- All required paperwork for athletic participation in 2026-27 will be available on Parent Portal and the Athletics website starting May 1, 2026. **Reminder:** No paperwork may be completed prior to May 1.
- **ALL fall sport** paperwork is due in the athletic office no later than **Thursday, July 30, at 3 p.m.** Coaches will not accept paperwork on the first day of tryouts.
- Dates for physicals are not yet confirmed. Once dates are set, we will announce. Please note physicals are first come, first served - we do not take reservations in advance. *We encourage families to have their physical completed as soon as possible after May 1. You may visit your PCP or any Urgent Care Clinic for an athletic physical.*
- The PIAA mandates their CIPPE form as the only permissible physical form for the doctor's signature.
- All student-athletes must register in the Parent Portal under "Sports Registration" before tryouts/practice begin. Registration opens May 1.
- Complete information available on the District's Athletics website under "Participation and TRYOUT information" starting May 1.
- Concussion baseline testing only needs completed every other year. Parents may call the Athletics Office at (724) 452-6040, x1752 to confirm the status of their child's baseline concussion test.

Summer Drug Testing and Baseline Concussion Testing Dates – Senior High School (Physical dates to be determined)

- **Tuesday, July 7,** from 3-7 p.m.
- **Wednesday, July 8,** from 8 a.m. - Noon and 1-3 p.m.
- **Tuesday, July 28,** from 3-7 p.m.
- **Wednesday, July 29,** from 8 a.m. - Noon and 1-3 p.m.

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

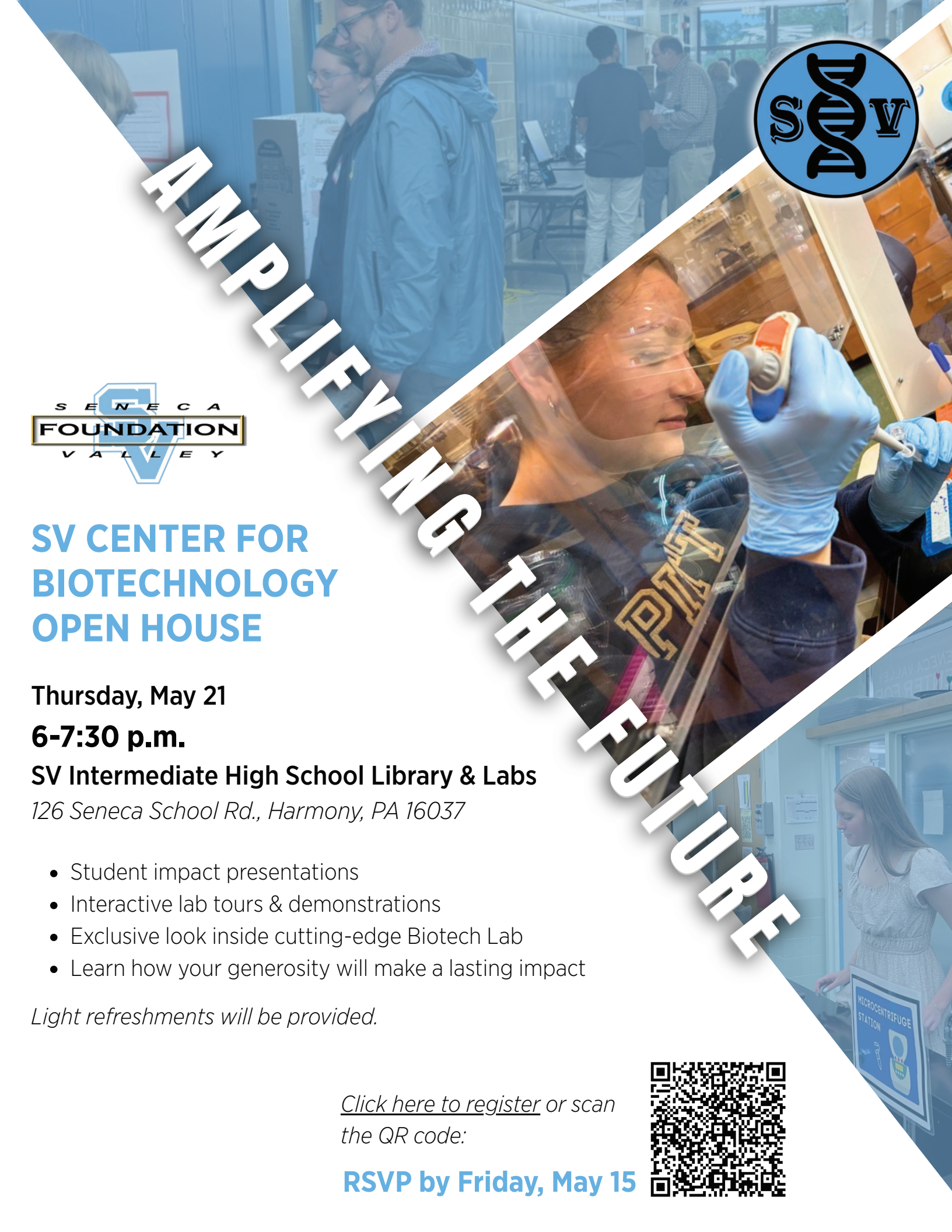
Allegheny Health Network
"Official Sports Medicine Partner of Raider Athletics."
www.ahn.org

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



SENECA FOUNDATION VALLEY

SV CENTER FOR BIOTECHNOLOGY OPEN HOUSE

Thursday, May 21

6-7:30 p.m.

SV Intermediate High School Library & Labs

126 Seneca School Rd., Harmony, PA 16037

- Student impact presentations
- Interactive lab tours & demonstrations
- Exclusive look inside cutting-edge Biotech Lab
- Learn how your generosity will make a lasting impact

Light refreshments will be provided.

Click here to register or scan the QR code:

RSVP by Friday, May 15

THE FUTURE STARTS HERE

Seneca Valley Senior High School is proud to support students as they prepare for what comes next, their future.

On Thursday, April 16, Seneca Valley hosted its annual College & Career Fair for students in grades 10–12. With more than 50 representatives from state universities, private colleges, community colleges, trade schools, military branches and beyond, students had the opportunity to explore a wide range of postsecondary pathways, connect with admissions professionals, and learn about summer internships and other valuable experiences available to them.

Post-Secondary Plans for SV Graduates: Did you know?

- 68% attend a 4-year college/institution
- 18% join the workforce/military/other
- 10% attend a 2-year college/institution
- 4% join apprenticeship/career & technical institution











STYLED AND STEPPING AHEAD

Seneca Valley multiple support students recently attended a Career Readiness Day hosted by the ARC of Butler County. Students participated in mock interviews, learned how to tie a tie and received manicures from Butler County Area Vocational-Technical School (BCAVTS) students.

They also interacted using vocational skits to help hone their professional etiquette and enjoyed a fashion show highlighting professional dress and what to wear to a job interview.













EXPANDING HORIZONS

The Seneca Valley Intermediate High School guidance department recently hosted an inspiring Career Day during flex period, connecting ninth and tenth grade students with professionals from the community who shared their experiences, insights and career journeys. The event ignited new ideas, expanded horizons and empowered students to start imagining the paths ahead.







LEADING WITH PURPOSE

Four Seneca Valley students were recently announced as winners at the Family, Career and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA) State Leadership Conference. Students competed in job interviewing, career investigation, interior design and PA menu planning. The team also won awards for their participation in national programs, including Families First, Student Body and Community Service and took first place in the poster contest.

Gold medal winners include senior Fletcher Boice and junior Jilly Kreke. These gold medal recipients will attend the National FCCLA Competition in Washington, D.C., over July 6–10, where they'll compete with medal winners from across the country and participate in leadership workshops and networking sessions. Also, a gold medalist is senior Leah Paxton, who placed first in her





category in Pennsylvania Menu Planning. Additionally, sophomore Georgie Guzzo won a silver medal.

The mission of the FCCLA is to promote personal growth and leadership development through Family and Consumer Sciences education. Focusing on the multiple roles of family member, wage earner, and community leader, members develop skills for life through character development, creative and critical thinking, interpersonal communication, practical knowledge and career preparation.

The Seneca Valley FCCLA club is led by Ms. Carrie Ehrenberger, Family and Consumer Science teacher at the Intermediate High School. The FCCLA state leadership conference was held at the Kalahari Resort in Pocono Manor, March 23-25. The conference gave students the opportunity to compete in their events and opportunities to attend interactive leadership workshops.

BEYOND THE DIPLOMA

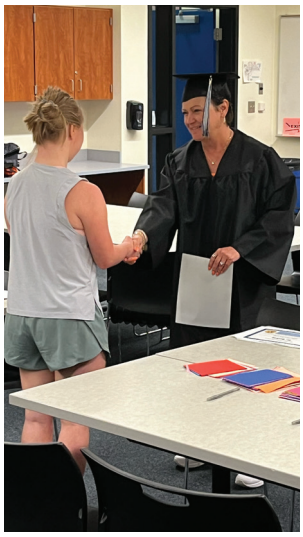
Students in the Social Skills Tutoring (SST) Program recently came together for their final after-school gathering of the year, where they created Mother's Day gifts and celebrated Dr. Rockey in honor of her upcoming retirement.

During the event, students shared their appreciation and gratitude to Dr. Rockey, presenting her with heartfelt "diplomas" filled with well wishes for a happy and fulfilling retirement.













SV WELCOMES DR. SAMANTHA SCHMITT



During Seneca Valley's School Board Meeting on Monday, March 2, board members approved the appointment of Dr. Samantha Schmitt as the District's new assistant principal of Haine Middle School.

A resident of Renfrew, Dr. Schmitt brings more than 15 years of experience in school administration, curriculum design, professional development and education. Her professional experience includes serving as the Director of Curriculum, Instruction, Assessment & Professional Development at ACLD Tillotson School. She was also the Director of Student Services/Coordinator of Equity, Inclusion & Justice and served as the Interim Assistant Director at Falk Laboratory School. She also served many roles within the Duquesne City School District including Dean of Students; Instructional Coach for Science, STEM & Technology; and an elementary teacher and emotional support teacher for intermediate students.

"I am honored and excited to join the Seneca Valley School District as Assistant Principal of Haine Middle School," said Dr. Schmitt. "I look forward to partnering with staff to continue cultivating student success, supporting and uplifting our students, collaborating with families, and contributing to the success of both Haine and the broader Seneca Valley community."

Dr. Schmitt holds multiple advanced degrees, including a Doctorate in Educational Policy from University of Pittsburgh and a Master of Arts in Administration from Duquesne University. She also earned her Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education and Special Education Certification from Duquesne University.

"We are thrilled to welcome Dr. Schmitt to the Seneca Valley team," said Dr. Marie Palano, Assistant Superintendent for Elementary Education. "Her expertise and commitment to building strong school-community connections will play a vital role in advancing our mission to provide a supportive and dynamic learning environment at Haine Middle School."

SV ADMINISTRATORS AND TEACHERS RECEIVE AWARDS FOR COMMITMENT TO EDUCATION

Administrators and teachers from Ryan Gloyer Middle School (RGMS) attended the Pennsylvania Association for Middle Level Education (PAMLE) State Conference, where they earned multiple honors recognizing their dedication to education and their leadership in fostering a dynamic, student-centered school community.

Among the distinctions, RGMS celebrated its fifth redesignation as a PA Don Eichhorn Schools: "Schools to Watch," a program highlighting middle schools that exemplify academic excellence, developmental responsiveness, social equity, and strong organizational structures and processes.

In addition, several members of the RGMS community were individually honored. Eighth grader Rex Woodard received the Joan Jarrett Student Award. Health teacher Ms. Ashlyn Pry was recognized for the Learning to Teach & Teaching to Learn: Student Teacher Recognition Award. Learning Support teacher Ms. Katie Wisniewski earned the PAMLE Promising Practitioners Award: New Teacher Award.







"This recognition is especially meaningful, as it reflects our deep commitment to middle-level education, continuous growth, and the pursuit of excellence," said Ms. Trisha Butschle, Ryan Gloyer Middle School Principal. "These prestigious honors serve as a testament to the dedication of the entire Ryan Gloyer Middle School team, whose strong collaboration and unwavering focus on students help inspire a lifelong love of learning."

The Joan Jarrett Student Award honors outstanding young adolescents who demonstrate leadership abilities, good citizenship, and have made positive contributions to their school and community. The Learning to Teach & Teaching to Learn: Student Teacher Recognition Award honors outstanding student teachers or interns who have completed their middle school student teaching experience during the 2025 calendar year. The PAMLE Promising Practitioners Award: New Teacher Award is presented to teachers who are just beginning their middle school careers and have made a positive impact on both their school and community.

PAMLE is the leading advocate for middle level education in the state of Pennsylvania, dedicated to maximizing student achievement in a safe, innovative and developmentally appropriate environment.

REMAKE LEARNING DAYS PLAY WITH PURPOSE

Seneca Valley welcomes incoming kindergarten students

Seneca Valley School District is proud to participate in the annual Remake Learning Days Celebration! Join us as Ehrman Crest Elementary School hosts "Play with Purpose: Structured Dramatic Play in Action," a family event for incoming kindergarteners to experience the power of structured dramatic play. Students will receive an introduction into structured dramatic play, practice standing in a cafeteria line, take a ride on



a Seneca Valley school bus (students must be accompanied by parent/guardian), and connect with Seneca Valley staff.

Event Details:

- Date: May 19
- Location: Ehrman Crest Elementary School (2070 Ehrman Road, Cranberry Township, PA 16066)
- Time: 6-7:30 p.m.
- Format: In-person, Drop-in (Open House-style) event
- Cost: FREE

To learn more about this event, visit Play With Purpose: Structured Dramatic Play in Action - Remake Learning Days.

We look forward to seeing you there!

STREAM GUARDIANS

A Professional Development Day for Educators on Fly Fishing and Utilizing Streams for Engaging Environmental Education

Seneca Valley is excited to participate in the annual Remake Learning Days Celebration! Join us as Ryan Gloyer Middle School hosts "Stream Guardians," a professional development day for educators on fly fishing and utilizing streams for engaging environmental education. Participants will gain insights into fly fishing skills, ecosystem health, environmental stewardship and more. This event is a fantastic chance for educators to explore how to utilize local creeks and streams for real-world, hands-on learning experiences.

Event Details:

- **Date:** May 14 (Rain make-up date: May 18)
- **Location:** Seneca Valley Aquatic Center (located next to Ryan Gloyer Middle School), 122 Seneca School Road, Harmony, PA 16037
- **Time:** Introductory meeting at 8 a.m. Participants are free to leave as they please. The event will wrap up with a Q&A session at 2:30 p.m. in the Aquatic Center.
- **Format:** "Station Rotation" along the stream on our campus
- **Cost:** FREE
- **Lunch:** Provided for interested participants

Who Should Attend: administrators, science teachers, pre-service teachers, outdoor adventure club leaders, fishing club leaders, educators, camp organizers, youth group leaders.



Please RSVP by visiting our Remake Learning Day website Stream Guardians: A Professional Development Day for Educators on Fly Fishing and Utilizing Streams for Engaging Environmental Education - Remake Learning Days.

If you have any questions, please reach out to Ryan Gloyer Middle School Principal, Ms. Trisha Butschle, at butschletl@svsd.net.

EVERY BODY MOVES!

Elementary Health and Physical Education (PE) teachers recently presented at the Slippery Rock University Mini-Convention, bringing together students, professionals and educators. The PE team presented "Every Body Moves," a session focused on inclusive, student-centered activities that keep every child engaged and successful. From cooperative games to creative modifications, the team highlighted how physical education truly supports everybody.







"We are grateful for the chance to collaborate, learn and represent the incredible work happening in our schools every day," said Ehrman Crest Health and Physical Education teacher Ms. Sara Coon.

Shoutout to Mr. Mike Pelloni for bringing his vision of sharing meaningful games and strategies with both current and future educators to life!

COLLABORATION AND EXPLORATION

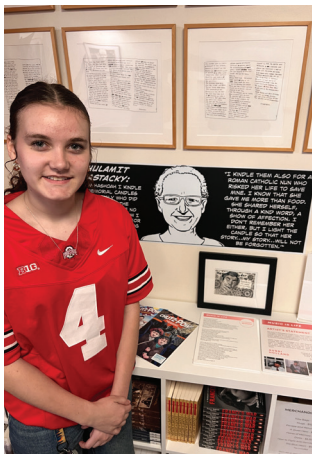
Some members of the new Seneca Valley Black Student Union (BSU) joined Upper St. Clair's BSU for a field trip to the Charles H. Wright Museum of African American History in Detroit, Michigan, where members and friends explored powerful exhibits celebrating African American history and culture.





IMPACTFUL VISIT

Sophomores from Ms. Michele Russo's class recently participated in a field trip to Chatham University. During the visit, students engaged with Holocaust Center of Pittsburgh, where they explored the history and impact of antisemitism, examined the connections between the Jewish community and the civil rights movement and toured the "Revolving Doors" exhibit. Featured within the exhibit were projects created by several Seneca Valley students who were recognized as winners of the 2025 Waldman Arts & Writing Competition.









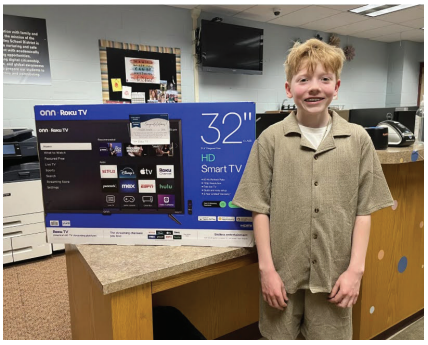


RESPECTFUL, RESPONSIBLE AND READY TO LEARN

Congratulations to the winners of Haine Middle School's PBIS raffle! Students who demonstrate PBIS (Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports) expectations—being Respectful, Responsible and Ready to Learn (the three Rs)—earn Haine Bucks, which are entered into a drawing for exciting prizes.

A special thank you to the Cranberry Township Police Department for their generous donations that helped make these rewards possible.









SENECA VALLEY DEPUTY SUPERINTENDENT NAMED DISTINGUISHED PREK-12 EDUCATOR

Behind every strong school community is a leader whose vision fosters a culture of high expectations and inspires collective action toward a shared future. These leaders turn big ideas into intentional, everyday practices, ensuring students remain at the heart of every decision. The Seneca Valley School District is proud to announce that Dr. Sean McCarty, Deputy Superintendent for Secondary Education, has received the 2026 Distinguished PreK-12 Educator Award from the University of Pittsburgh School of Education.





Presented during the Distinguished Alumni Award Ceremony on April 15 at the University of Pittsburgh, the Distinguished PreK-12 Educator Award recognizes Dr. McCarty for his outstanding accomplishments in the classroom and administration throughout his career.

Dr. McCarty has played a key role in many innovative initiatives throughout his career, including helping lead the design and development of Ehrman Crest Elementary/Middle School, which earned international recognition as a TIME Best Invention in 2022. Throughout his leadership roles in the district, he has helped expand elementary world language programming, introduce the Creativity, Innovation & Research Center (CIRC) and support schools that have received state and national recognition for academic achievement, literacy initiatives and positive school climate.

“I am deeply honored to receive this recognition from the University of Pittsburgh School of Education,” said Dr. McCarty. “While my time at Pitt helped shape my path, this achievement is a reflection of the incredible colleagues I’ve had the privilege to work alongside at Seneca Valley. Their support, collaboration and shared commitment to our students have played a significant role in any success I’ve experienced."

Seneca Valley Superintendent Dr. Tracy Vitale said Dr. McCarty’s leadership continues to make a lasting impact on the district and beyond.

“Dr. McCarty is a visionary leader who continually looks for ways to improve educational experiences for students and staff,” Dr. Vitale said. “His work in developing innovative programs and learning environments has helped position Seneca Valley as a model for schools across Pennsylvania and the nation. We are incredibly proud to see him recognized by the University of Pittsburgh for the meaningful contributions he has made to the field of education.”

Dr. McCarty earned both his master’s degree and doctorate in education from the University of Pittsburgh and has dedicated his career to advancing innovative, student-centered learning. His leadership continues to influence programs and initiatives that benefit thousands of Seneca Valley students each year.

SENECA VALLEY EDUCATOR NAMED PENNSYLVANIA STEM PIONEER

Seneca Valley School District Gifted Support Teacher Jeremiah Friday has been selected as a Pennsylvania STEM Pioneer through a competitive, multi-state initiative led by Penn State University.

Mr. Friday, a teacher at Haine Elementary School, is among a select group of educators chosen to participate in the STEM Pioneers Teacher Corps, a four-year professional learning program focused on enhancing science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) education for students in grades K–5. As part of the cohort, he will collaborate with fellow educators from Pennsylvania, New Jersey and West Virginia to strengthen instructional practices and improve student achievement in STEM disciplines.

The STEM Pioneers program emphasizes building strong foundational skills, connecting classroom learning to real-world applications in science and engineering, and expanding access to high-quality STEM experiences for all students. Participants will also serve as leaders and advocates, sharing their knowledge with colleagues through collaboration and outreach.

"I am excited to work alongside such a dedicated group of STEM professionals," said Mr. Friday. "Through collaboration with teachers from across the region, I will gain exposure to innovative ideas and programs that will expand my current knowledge and practice."

Throughout the program, Mr. Friday will receive specialized training from STEM education experts affiliated with Penn State University, West Virginia University and other partner institutions. The initiative also provides participating educators with classroom materials to support the development of new STEM learning opportunities, as well as access to local and national conferences to further their professional growth.

Mr. Friday noted that the true value of the program lies not in recognition, but in the opportunity to grow as an educator and bring meaningful experiences back to his students.



"Mr. Friday demonstrates a strong commitment to providing students with meaningful STEM learning opportunities during the school day, as well as before and after school and on weekends," said Haine Elementary School Principal Dr. Kristen White. "His dedication to fostering collaborative learning environments and empowering students to take ownership of their learning is truly commendable."

Through his participation, Seneca Valley students will benefit from enhanced STEM instruction designed to spark curiosity, build confidence and foster innovation, preparing them for success in an increasingly complex and technology-driven world.

SV ALL-STAR

For April, we are pleased to announce the newest member inducted into the SV All-Star Club, Ms. Michelle Feil paraprofessional at Ehrman Crest Elementary 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. Feil works as a paraprofessional in Ehrman Crest Elementary's STEP classroom; a classroom created for students with behavioral needs. For the past two years, Ms. Feil has worked alongside every student who has been part of the Ehrman Crest STEP classroom. With each student, she built authentic, compassionate and trusting relationships.

"Michelle's calm, gentle, and compassionate nature create the perfect combination for her to make every child feel seen, heard and valued," said Dr. Bridget Miller, Principal of Ehrman Crest Elementary School. "Whether she is building a replica of a World War II ship, using Legos to create an imaginative new world, or counting pretend money to decide which prize can be earned, Ms. Feil meets students where they are. She reaches in and touches their hearts and helps them recognize that they have the power not only to control their behavior, but to change it."

Ms. Feil began her career at Evans City Elementary School as a learning support paraprofessional. For 20 years, she worked alongside learning support teachers and general education teachers, supporting our youngest learners with reading, writing, math and most importantly, relationships. She helped students with IEPs remain included alongside their general education peers by providing the "just right" accommodations to successfully learn and grow. While in the STEP classroom, she continues to support students inside the general education classroom.

Dr. Miller added, "Michelle Feil exemplifies the fourth 'R' Robert Waldinger and Marc Schulz wrote about in 'The Good Life,' relationships. Through her relationships, she changes lives, strengthens our school community and reminds us all where the true heart of education lies."

Ms. Feil is an invaluable asset to our District. We are grateful for her dedication and the outstanding character she brings to school each day.



Pictured from L-R: Dr. Superintendent of Schools Tracy Vitale, Board President Mr. Eric DiTullio, Ms. Michelle Feil, ECMS Principal Dr. Bridget Miller, ECMS Assistant Principal Ms. Tesin Amoscato, and Director of Student Services Dr. Cassandra Doggrell.

You may have read about **Gary Jordan, SV '10**, in a recent Pittsburgh Post-Gazette or CBS News article covering the Artemis II mission. Just a few weeks ago, Mr. Jordan was speaking from mission control at the Johnson Space Center in Houston, where he manages communications and public affairs. We asked him to catch us up on what he is doing and how Seneca Valley influenced his life and career.

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

A: I'm currently documenting and organizing lessons learned from the NASA Johnson Space Center Public Affairs community from the Artemis II mission. I need to compile the feedback and organize a follow-up meeting to discuss. The same team will implement improvements for Artemis III.

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

A: My parents are originally from Wilkes-Barre. We moved to Cranberry in 2004, and my parents are still there today. I am in Houston, TX, with my wife and two kids. My brother Cory (also a Seneca Valley grad) lives in Colorado with his wife. They are expecting a baby boy any day now.

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

A: I've lived in Houston for more than 11 years at this point and still refuse to say "y'all." Still doesn't sit right to me.

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

A: I consider Mr. McKosky (my TV Production teacher in high school) an inspiration for setting the course to get where I am professionally. Even living in Houston, I still consider my SV friends some of my best friends. We continue to reunite periodically.

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



A: Friends, opportunity and a great launching point for higher education.

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

A: Mr. Dan McKosky.

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

A: In my sophomore year, I had the lead role in a senior's project that was a parody play of "The Odyssey." On and off stage, that was my favorite play.

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

A: Kids can be silly and reckless (I know, as a former silly and reckless kid). But, it may be the silly and reckless moments that serve as a launch point to define that kid's career.

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

A: It is a great school. If you work for it, expansive opportunities can open up, not limited to the local area (as great as it is), if that's the course for you.





AI IS ALL OVER YOUR TEEN'S SOCIAL MEDIA. BUT IS IT SAFE?

Back in 2023, Snapchat released their My AI chatbot at the top of every user's chat feed, with no way to opt out except by paying for Snapchat Plus. No joke.

And even then, Snapchat+ only let users unpin it from that location, thereby hiding it rather than removing it.

Instagram also has an AI chatbot for all Instagram accounts. There's no opt-in, it's just automatically there.

And if you have followed the recent lawsuit against Meta, you may have heard about Meta's internal documents revealing that their policies allowed minors to be served inappropriate content by their AI systems. When AI chatbots acted in this way, they created more engagement.

When companies are not only failing to make their platforms safe but also actively serving this type of content to kids, that is horrifying.

Let's look at the AI features embedded in Snap and Instagram and discuss some concerns about them.

Snapchat:

Overview of Snapchat AI

Snapchat has My AI at the top of every user's "friend page." It's a chatbot similar to ChatGPT. It can answer questions, give advice, etc. Users can personalize their avatar. One has to pay for Snapchat+ ($3.99 a month) to hide it from view. You can't fully delete or disable it.†

Overview of Snapchat+ AI

Examples of features that come with this monthly subscription:

- AI camera mode lets you take photos with AI-enhanced effects, filters, or scenes based on a single prompt. AI captions automatically generate text for Snaps.
- Text to image: A text prompt can be made into an AI image
- Image to 5-second video
- Movie poster simulations, which let the user be in the poster.



- Lens+ gives access to hundreds of exclusive AR (Augmented Reality) lenses and AI video lenses

Concerns about Snapchat, Snapchat+, and AI

Chatbots are a huge issue.

Teens themselves are sounding the alarm about environmental impact, starting to rely on them for advice on how to text or talk with someone, using them as a friend instead of other people, and the list goes on.

And the premium AI tools only add fuel to the fire, with features designed to keep users on the platform longer.

Instagram:

Overview of Instagram AI

Meta AI is available on Instagram (as well as WhatsApp and Facebook). It sits in the search bar, in DMs, in comments by default.

There is no way to disable Meta AI.

Anyone can create an AI character based on their interests, and creators can even build an AI extension of themselves.

Concerns with Instagram and AI

There is a specific, well-documented problem: safeguards eroding over time.

Meta has indicated it will not allow romantically personal conversations with its AI, but no safeguard is foolproof, and with AI chatbots, extended conversations are where those protections tend to break down most.

The chatbot starts off refusing to engage in certain types of conversations, but then starts doing so over time.

Also concerning is that, as of a few months ago, Meta is using interactions with Meta AI to personalize ads across Instagram. When a person chats with Meta AI about their hobbies, plans, etc., those conversations are now available for advertisers to see!

Teens' conversations are being used to target them with ads. Users need to know this!

Questions to get the conversation started with youth in your life:

1. What benefits do you see in having AI chatbots and other AI on these platforms?
2. What are the risks you see with these AI features in social media?
3. Should there be an option not to have AI chatbots on these?

Article provided by Screenagers.

- SVAOC Summer School Registration is Open! 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 2026 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). 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!



- 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.

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

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

CLICK OR SCAN TO REGISTER!

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



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







Join the SV Team!

Teacher positions now available!

SENECA VALLEY SCHOOL DISTRICT







CRANBERRY SUMMER NIGHTS

SPONSORED BY UPMC | PASSAVANT

July 9 - 11, 2026 ❋ 4-10 pm

at Cranberry Community Park



Carnival Lights + Thrills



Cool Drinks + Cool Friends

SIGNATURE EVENTS:

New! Artisan Market ❋ The Terrace at Summer Nights

- ❋ Carnival Rides
- ❋ Cranberry Chase 5k
- ❋ Cruisin' Cranberry Car Show
- ❋ Food Vendors + Trucks
- ❋ Kids Zone (Saturday)
- ❋ Lions Club Pancake Breakfast
- ❋ Live Music
- ❋ Local Businesses + Vendors
- ❋ Pyrotecnico Fireworks
- ❋ Rotary Vine + Ale Garden

CranberryFoundation.org/SummerNights

Cranberry FOUNDATION

CRANBERRY TOWNSHIP



Music to Our Ears!

Introducing: The Terrace at Summer Nights

There's a unique and new way to experience the weekend via The Terrace at Summer Nights, a private hospitality space offering premium food, drinks, designated parking, and more. This space not only provides a relaxing lounge atmosphere with the best view of the live entertainment, but it also serves as a fundraiser for the Cranberry Foundation.

Visit CranberryFoundation.org/Terrace to learn more and secure your tickets.