A LETTER TO OUR READERS

We understand that this is a difficult time. In an effort to provide some sense of normalcy, we went ahead with this month’s edition of Raider Pride. We wanted to recognize the accolades and accomplishments of our students and staff, while keeping you up-to-date on FIDs, remote/online learning and COVID-19 at Seneca Valley. Visit www.svsd.net for all of the latest details pertaining to the closure. To address COVID-19 concerns, our Safety First and Smart Corner features, athletics page and Alumni Q & A are themed around this topic. Stay healthy and be safe, SV. We will get through this together.
HATS OFF

Rowan students recently had a hand in fashion design!

Third graders in Rebecca Hester’s classroom worked with costume director Jessica Kavanagh to create hats for this year’s musical “The Drowsy Chaperone.”

“The collaboration has been fantastic and a marvelous learning opportunity for my kiddos,” exclaimed Ms. Hester.

The “Drowsy Chaperone” is a loving send-up of the Jazz Age musical, featuring one show-stopping song and dance number after another, and was a hit as Seneca Valley’s All-School Musical!

Hats off to the tremendously talented cast, orchestra and crew. To see more photos from the show, see page 5.
WE APPRECIATE YOU

Evans City Elementary (ECE) and Evans City Middle School (ECMS) hosted a Volunteer Recognition Breakfast honoring school volunteers on Feb. 27.

Parent volunteers – and their child(ren) – were invited to a breakfast in the large cafeteria thanking them for their dedicated service.

“We have been honoring our volunteers for several years,” stated ECMS Secretary Kendra Bertoti. “We gave our volunteers small gifts, flowers, breakfast, and most importantly a heartfelt thank you!”

IN TRIBUTE

For 21 years, Evans City Middle School (ECMS) students have been paying tribute to someone who has made a difference in their lives.

Sixth graders in Nicole Woolslare’s, Jason Bell’s and Joe Ehmann’s classrooms, hosted their 21st annual Tribute Ceremony on March 6.

Students were assigned to write a five-paragraph essay/speech on someone who made a difference in their lives as well as design and create an award that represented that person in some way. After the presentations, a small reception was held for the students and their families.

The best part? The entire event was a secret. Recipients thought they were coming for an entirely different event.

‘I LED THE PLEDGE’

Elementary students from Seneca Valley’s K-4 schools appeared at this year’s school board meetings, where they led the members of the School Board and public in saying “The Pledge of Allegiance.”

For the March work session and regular meetings, two students were proud to do the honors. Haine Elementary second grader Dean Uplinger led the Pledge at the March 2 work session and Evans City Elementary second grade student Shea Skwartz led it at the March 9 regular session meeting.

Both are pictured with Mr. Jim Nickel, Board President and Dr. Tracy Vitale, Superintendent of Schools.

Students are nominated by their building and those who appear receive an “I Led the Pledge” T-shirt along with a Seneca Valley gift.

THE PLACE TO ‘BEE’

CVE was certainly the place to “bee” at their PTO-sponsored “I Love CVE” event on Feb 22.

Families from the district participated in various activities including including karate, karaoke and face-painting; enjoyed food, and had fun taking pictures in a photo booth.

GOING FOR THE GOLD

Elementary students from Seneca Valley’s K-4 schools appeared at this year’s school board meetings, where they led the members of the School Board and public in saying “The Pledge of Allegiance.”

For the March work session and regular meetings, two students were proud to do the honors. Haine Elementary second grader Dean Uplinger led the Pledge at the March 2 work session and Evans City Elementary second grade student Shea Skwartz led it at the March 9 regular session meeting.

Both are pictured with Mr. Jim Nickel, Board President and Dr. Tracy Vitale, Superintendent of Schools.

Students are nominated by their building and those who appear receive an “I Led the Pledge” T-shirt along with a Seneca Valley gift.

Austin Harmon recently stood atop the podium.

The talented gymnast and third grade student at Evans City Elementary School won gold medals in the all-around and pommel event at the 2020 PA Men’s State Championship in gymnastics for Level 4 (ages 7-8) on March 8.

He also won silver in the floor event and bronze on parallel bars. Austin is the captain of the Level 4 Pittsburgh Northstars boys gymnastics team based out of Jewart’s Gymnastics. The Level 4 team placed third at the meet.
READING ACROSS SV

As Dr. Seuss famously said, “The more that you read, the more things you will know. The more that you learn, the more places you’ll go.” Students celebrated “Read Across America Day” and Dr. Seuss’s birthday earlier this month. There were read-a-thons, guest readers and dressing up as a favorite Dr. Seuss character. Additionally, Rowan Elementary hosted author Ryan Haack. Mr. Haack was born missing his left forearm and discussed the limb-different community and how being different is awesome! Evans City Elementary School and CVE both hosted the talented children’s book illustrator Ralph Masiello. Bruce Hale, author and illustrator also visited Haine. All of our schools celebrated with unique activities, including Ryan Gloyer Middle School (RGMS), where math teacher Daniel Dickey took a day off from math to focus on communication skills through the popular Dr. Seuss story “The Lorax.”
‘ALL THE WORLD’S A STAGE’

Evans City Humanities Club recently showcased their dramatic acting chops for the Shakespeare Monologue and Scene Contest, sponsored by Pittsburgh Public Theater and held downtown at the O’Reilly on Feb. 14.

The club includes Evans City students in grades 4-6 and is advised by Evans City Gifted Support Teacher Susan Gebhar.

LEARNING TAKES OFF

The Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) Fems at Haine Middle School conducted a fun experiment that “launched” creative thinking.

The future scientists and engineers worked in teams to design launchers to see which group could launch an “army man” the furthest.

Using only a plastic spoon, popsicle sticks, rubber bands and tape, the girls designed launchers, and tested their machines.

After a re-design, the final launch was conducted. The winning team catapulted an army man over 34 feet!

All-in-all, the girls had fun working through the design process and improving their first prototype.

CAREERS & CULTURE

What does Fiji, Morocco and Egypt have to do with engineers, flight attendants and nurses?

A fun day of learning at Haine Middle School (HMS):

HMS hosted both their exploratory career day and a student cultural day on Feb. 28.

For career day, presenters included careers in fields such as engineering, hospitality, medical, technology, and various arts. Students had the opportunity to explore four different and unique presentations.

In addition, students also participated in a cultural fair during the afternoon. Haine Middle School Spanish Teacher Tabitha Waltman had been working with students since September on researching and learning about a country of their choice. Students were given the task to create a presentation and an activity for a 15-minute block of time. All middle school students circulated through four different stations.

CARDS FOR A CAUSE

Haine Middle School students’ hearts were in the right place this Valentine’s Day.

Fifth graders in Kelly Skelton’s and Jackie Schoeffel’s classes recently sent Kyree Beachem of Ellwood City Valentine’s cards.

As noted on KDKA-TV, Kyree’s rare transplant surgery captured worldwide attention and she captured the hearts of people all over the region.

Haine’s Valentines were just some of the estimated 5,000-7,000 Kyree received!

BEYOND THE CLASSROOM

Sixth graders in Mr. Peter Tucciarone’s took a trip to Latin America - without ever leaving their classroom.

The social studies class at Haine Middle School researched an island in Latin America. They studied the economy and customs of the island inhabitants and wrote a report highlighting what they discovered.

The world travelers also learned about latitude and longitude and made T-shirts with the GPS coordinates of the island using computer programming software and a heat-press machine in the Creativity, Innovation & Research Center (CIRC) lab.
‘THE DROWSY CHAPERONE’

Congratulations to the entire cast and crew of “The Drowsy Chaperone” for three amazing performances earlier this month. They were all met with rave reviews! In case you missed it, we’ve compiled a video with some fantastic footage from the show. Click here to watch it!

Photo credit: Bill Paterson
WREATHS ACROSS AMERICA

Elise Ketler, a student at Ryan Gloyer Middle School (RGMS), has a cause that is near and dear to her heart and she wanted to share it with her peers.

The eighth grader has been involved with helping Wreaths Across America, a nation-wide initiative to place wreaths on Veteran gravestones to honor their service and sacrifice. For the past two years, she has held fundraisers to donate to the cause and she recently coordinated the mobile educational unit to visit the secondary campus.

“The exhibit respects not only the program, but also the fellow soldiers,” stated Miss Kelter (pictured top left with fellow eighth grade student Samantha Moury). “Volunteering with Wreaths Across America and seeing all of the gravestones, you realize how many people have given their life fighting for our country and our freedom.”

The Wreaths Across America mobile education exhibit was open to RGMS students throughout the day on March 10.

Miss Ketler was also featured in WPXI Channel 11’s Proud to be from Pittsburgh segment. To watch it, visit: https://www.wpxi.com/video/?id=4858923.

STRONGER THAN HATE

It’s a difficult subject. Tough to teach, difficult to see and hear.

Seneca Valley Intermediate High School students took part in several activities to study the Tree of Life atrocities that took place over a year ago in Squirrel Hill.

As part of this study, students participated in a gallery walk at the school where they learned more about the Tree of Life victims, and viewed videos of media coverage, including maps of the building and area. Students were also asked to think, reflect and write about insights they gained regarding hate crimes, hate groups and how we can end hate today.

Sophomores also attended a special presentation at the school given by Avi Ben-Hur, a Jewish studies expert on March 5. He presented a Q&A session for students which focused on the rise of global antisemitism.

“It is important for students to understand that the hate surrounding the Holocaust did not end in 1945, stated Seneca Valley Intermediate High School Librarian Megan Kelly.

IN THE LAB

Seneca Valley students had the chance to host Quaker Valley students in a hands-on lesson that yielded amazing results.

The Quaker Valley students, aka QV Creekers, collected samples from Little Sewickley Creek and Big Sewickley Creek and transported them to the genetics lab here at Seneca Valley Intermediate High School (IHS).
**CHALLENGE ACCEPTED**

The Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) announced that a team of students from the Seneca Valley School District has been selected as the PennDOT District 10 winner for its third Innovations Challenge.

Mentored by Seneca Valley Senior High School Gifted Support Teacher Dean Walker, team members include Ty Brinkley, Darius Zalnasky, Sydney McMurray, Brady McConnell and Kathleen Monahan.

The winning regional team’s innovation was “Litter Gitters,” which are specialized trash receptacles that would be installed at strategic locations where motorists could dispose of trash that has accumulated in their vehicle.

“"This is a very interesting group of kids, each of which brings something original to the table," said Mr. Walker. "Watching these students work, it’s clear that they have a robust understanding of the engineering design process. They had several great ideas that might have been effective but would have been quite complex. Rather than settle with the first few viable solutions, they persisted and ended up designing a solution that’s beautiful and elegant in its simplicity. I’m excited to see how they continue to develop and improve the project."

Now in its third year, the PennDOT Innovations Challenge invites high school students in grades 9-12 to use their problem-solving, creative and strategic-thinking abilities to solve real-world transportation challenges. The Innovations Challenge aims to not only help students explore actual transportation challenges that PennDOT is facing, but also open their minds to the very real possibility of working for PennDOT after graduation.

“"We congratulate Seneca Valley on their selection and wish them luck as they advance in the competition," said Brian Allen, PennDOT District Executive. "We continue to be impressed with the creativity of the participants in this challenge and are excited to see it grow in 2021.""

---

**SV STUDENTS NAMED 2020 CARSON SCHOLARS**

Seneca Valley School District has two students who have recently been announced as 2020 Carson Scholars and two who have renewed their status.

Seneca Valley Senior High School sophomore Nicholas Nedzesky and junior Faith Condrick are two of 477 students across the nation who received a $1,000 college scholarship award and the coveted honor of being named a Carson Scholar.

In addition, 912 students have renewed their Carson Scholar status, including sophomore Kate Lipscomb and senior Coryn Ferguson. Miss Lipscomb and Miss Ferguson and the other previous winners have maintained high academic standards and a strong commitment to their communities and are being named 2020 Recognized Carson Scholars for their efforts.

To date, the Carson Scholars Fund has awarded 1,400 scholarships to students in Pittsburgh and its surrounding areas who epitomize academic excellence and commitment to their community. **‘TIS THE SEASON**

Students in Kathy Mahony’s personal finance class are prepared – no extension necessary.

Ms. Mahony teaches her students basic financial information including how to do their federal, state and local taxes.

These future accountants learned how to complete their taxes both on paper and online.

The junior pictured here recently brought in her W-2’s for Ms. Mahony to check.

"I was so pleased that she was taking what she learned in personal finance and using it at home, which is always the goal in this class," stated Ms. Mahony.
SV ART STUDENT BRINGS HOME GOLD

Keely Lisco, a Seneca Valley Senior, was recently announced as a national gold medal and a national American Visions Award winner in the 2020 Scholastic Art and Writing Awards Competition.

Miss Lisco won for her mixed media piece titled “Over the Mountains.”

Works receiving Gold Medals will be on display at Parsons School of Design at the New School June 3-5.

Senior Emma Burd won a national silver medal for her ceramics and glass piece titled “Sloth.”

Additionally, three other Seneca Valley students had their artwork adjudicated in New York City on March 16 after winning Gold Keys in the 2020 Scholastic Art & Writing Awards Competition.

In addition to Miss Lisco and Miss Burd, regional Gold Key winners include Kayla Moon, Cierra Denny and Taylor Healy.

Seneca Valley Silver Key recipients include Shawn Mill, Kayla Moon, Kristen Bedell, Max Carpenter, Kathryn Curtis, Kelsey Gianfrancesco, Angelina Khoury, Faith Liston, Victoria Lydon (two Silver Keys), Addy Maia, Reagan Neff, Emilee Neuman, Lexi Peffer, Mary Reese, Ella Reynolds (two Silver Keys), Bethany Rice, Taylor Stofko, Corin Trejchel and Sean Tweed.

Also, several students from Seneca Valley High School received Honorable Mentions for their entries including Veronica Grassell, Adrien Koromaus, Kayla Moon, Mariah Baker, Kathryn Curtis, Kelsey Gianfrancesco (six Honorable Mentions), Taylor Godleski (two Honorable Mentions), Madison Hatcher (two Honorable Mentions), Grace Hilling, Allison Jaecke, Simren Jayaraman, Katie Kamarec, Keely Lisco, Grace McSwaney, Tia Myers, Emilee Neuman, Chloe Roy, Rachel Smith, Maura Taylor (three Honorable Mentions), Brian Whitney and Claire Williams

More than 1,600 entries were entered from students across the region.

CODING A WIN

Three Seneca Valley students finished first at a computer programming competition held at Carnegie Mellon University on March 7.

Teams worked for three hours solving eight challenging programs. Seneca Valley Senior Sam McCune and juniors David Choi and Vincent Horvath completed six of the programs correctly, leading them victory.

The competition had 27 teams from local high schools and from Maryland.

Seneca Valley teams that competed included Sam McCune, Vincent Horvath, David Choi, Renhan Xu, Andy Chrzansowski and Rachel Spear who are in Advanced Placement Computer Science A or College in High School (CHS) Introduction to Programming.
A COLLEGE VISIT

The Evans City Middle School (ECMS) sixth grade band traveled to Slippery Rock University (SRU) to work with the music education majors in Dr. Kathy Melago’s Instrumental Methods course on March 3.

The sixth graders performed the songs they were preparing for an upcoming adjudication trip and received feedback from the college students.

The SRU music majors led sectional rehearsals for the ECMS students, allowing our young musicians to gain instrument-specific feedback and best practices. Following a tour of the campus and lunch, the sixth grade band students ended the day by listening to an inspiring performance by the SRU Wind Ensemble, under the direction of Dr. Jonathan Helmick.

“It’s important for young band students to see the musical opportunities that exist beyond our school,” stated Ms. Tracy Glass, ECMS Band Director. “Learning is a life-long process. This trip allowed my students to see and hear what is possible with continued dedication and effort on their instruments. It was wonderful to be able to provide this experience for the ECMS students and SRU students to learn from each other.”

ORCHESTRAL INFORMANTS

Evans City and CVE fourth grade orchestras performed for their first-ever “informance” earlier this month. During the event, the musicians demonstrated all that they have learned on their instrument since the beginning of the year for their family and friends.

“The idea of the informance has many benefits,” said Ms. Amanda Lesney, Evans City Elementary/CVE Orchestra Teacher. “One being that it helps students reflect upon all they have learned thus far, and another is that it helps students overcome the fear of performing on stage for the first time.”
March 5, 2020. There are moments in an athletic director’s daily life where we welcome the solitude of a four-hour car ride to Hershey, PA en route to the PIAA wrestling championships. For a brief period, I was afforded the time to put my cell phone down, step away from the chaos of when winter and spring sports overlap and reflect on where this journey was taking me. Every other year the state wrestling and swimming championships happen back-to-back, and this journey would take me from Harmony, PA to Hershey, PA and then on to Lewisburg, PA and Bucknell University for swimming. Eventually -to be exact eight days later- I would find my way back home to Harmony having just witnessed the competitive excellence of our Raider student-athletes.

Along the Pennsylvania turnpike my immediate thoughts were centered on our wrestlers. Would Dylan capture his first gold medal? What a battle Alejandro would have for that coveted third-straight state title. What a remarkable year for Chanz Shearer, making his first appearance at PIAAs. How much did Antonio learn from his experience at the PIAA championships last year? And, how would our coaches – Kevin Wildrick, Joe Montalbano and Jake Calvin manage this quartet with such high expectations? The evening’s first round didn’t disappoint. All four Raiders picked up opening night victories and were settled into what many consider the toughest state tournament in scholastic wrestling. The journey was off to a great start.

March 6, 2020. Friday was a short day for wrestling. Dylan and Alejandro won their quarterfinal bouts. Chanz fell in the quarterfinals and consolations to close out the tournament with a 2-2 record. Antonio picked up two key wins in the consolation round to advance into Saturday’s medal rounds. All four Raiders fought their hearts out – other than Alejandro’s decisive quarterfinal win, all other matches were down to the last second, including Antonio’s come from behind 4-3 win in the waning seconds of his third-round consolation match. It was an exciting day and one that made this Athletic Director very proud. As I sat for dinner that evening, I was thinking of our spring sports which had just concluded their tryout week. And, I couldn’t help but notice the uptick in media coverage surrounding COVID-19.

March 7, 2020. This was a big day at the state tournament – semifinal matches in the morning and parade of champions that night. Seneca Valley would have three medalists for certain; uncertain was where they would all land on the podium. Dylan started the morning with a 3-0 victory in his semifinals; he had done it. He was onto the finals for what had been his goal all season – the chance to take one last step and win that elusive first-ever state title (he was runner-up a year ago.) Next up was Alejandro. There was a buzz around my seat as many were aware that Alejandro was on the path for his third straight state title. His match and his effort didn’t disappoint. The beauty of wrestling is each bout puts on display the talents and tenacity of one athlete versus another; there are no teammates to assist. It is you and your opponent, and these two young men put on a show for the Hershey Giant Center crowd. At the end of three periods we were tied. Through three more extra-time sessions we were still tied. It all came down to the flip of a coin and a 30-second UTB – ultimate tie breaker. Whoever won the coin toss chose top or bottom. Alejandro’s Bethlehem Catholic opponent won the toss, chose top and held on dearly for 30 seconds to step off the mat a 5-4 winner. In this moment, there was no loser. Both young men put on a brilliant display of sheer determination, incredible physical prowess and wrestling acumen of the highest degree. As I watched the final seconds tick away, my heart sank for Alejandro. But what followed lifted my spirits. You see, there was no pouting or throwing of the head gear. Rather, there was a display of respect and admiration directed at his opponent by Alejandro. One doesn’t reach the pinnacle of wrestling without respecting the sport and all of the possibilities. On this Saturday morning, Alejandro didn’t lose his bout; instead, his opponent was simply a few seconds better and Alejandro respected the outcome. The maturity and class on display made me proud to have the SV on my chest. The morning ended watching Antonio lose a tough fourth-round consolation match, but there was a victory as well. I was remembering a year back when Antonio lost early and found himself out of medal contention. Fast-forward and here was a young man with a secured spot on the podium; the only question to be answered later this evening was, what place? The iconic voice of Jim McKay used to lead off every episode of ABC’s “Wide World of Sports” with “The thrill of victory, the agony of defeat.” Anyone who participates in sport most likely experiences this sentiment. The best of the best is confident enough to put their talents on display and courageous enough to accept either possibility. Dylan Chappell has been laser focused all season with the goal of winning a state title. He has not been afraid of this pursuit; rather, he has embraced the weight of expectation and has soared through his competitors. But as sport can do, we can be humbled in a moment and forced to look defeat in the eye and stand tall. Dylan fell 4-2 to his Manheim Central opponent who
had entered the tournament with a record of 34-2. Once again, he had to face the cruel lesson sport teaches us – sometimes our best may not be good enough at that moment. While the sadness was evident immediately, later that evening in talking with Dylan, I was reassured in knowing this result was a teachable moment and was absolutely no reflection of Dylan’s commitment, talent or character. The evening concluded with Alejandro picking up a fourth-place medal and Antonio getting his first-ever medal at eighth place. As I walked out of the Giant Center my thoughts centered on this: success isn’t only measured in medals. There are many victories in how we carry ourselves, how we compete and how we respect our sport. In the first leg of this journey, Seneca Valley was well ahead on the scoreboard.

March 8, 2020. On the two-hour drive north to Bucknell University, COVID-19 and its world-wide impact was trending on all radio talk shows. I was becoming increasingly more aware of hand hygiene and people in my immediate surroundings.

March 9, 2020. Monday provided me the chance to touch base with work and assess the start of spring sports. Weather was cooperating, teams were scrimmaging and all seemed on course. Sticking in the back of my mind: Italy had just suspended all domestic sports. Previously, on March 4, they had announced sports would happen without spectators. Five days later all Italian domestic sport was suspended.

March 10, 2020. Raider swimmers arrived in Lewisburg for registration and practice. Their excitement level was high as they eagerly awaited the start of preliminaries. My former colleagues in collegiate coaching informed me the Ivy League had just canceled their basketball tournaments and spring sports would be conducted with limited spectator viewing. I was beginning to ponder what the full impact of COVID-19 on the world of sport might be.

March 11, 2020. PIAA swimming championships commenced with morning preliminaries in 200 medley relay, 200 free, 200 IM, 100 fly and 200 free relay. On the boys side the medley relay advanced to the finals as well as Daniel Simoes in the 100 fly. On the girls’ side both the medley relay and Kendall Craig (200 IM) advanced to the evening finals. Sandwiched between the preliminaries and finals was boys diving and Seneca Valley was well represented with WPIAL runner-up Trevor Elliott and fellow classmate Matt Laslavic. Trevor and Matt both advanced through the first round and Trevor advanced to the finals, finishing 15th in the state. A great showing by two first-time participants in the state’s diving championships. However, the news occupying my Twitter feed was raising a level of concern for teams back home. The Ivy League announced the cancellation of all spring sports; the NCAA was raising a level of concern for teams back home. The conclusion of morning preliminaries, the PIAA announced the suspension of their basketball tournaments, AA swimming championships and the abbreviation of their AAA championships.

What did this all mean for our athletes resting for this evening’s finals? The harsh truth was confirmed by PIAA officials; there would be no finals. The championships would conclude following the girls diving finals. The morning preliminary times would stand as the finals. To the ordinary eye the impact may not seem so great. For Seneca Valley, the impact was personal. (Flashback four years ago: I stood in Sojka Pavilion on the campus of Bucknell University and assured Owen that while he didn’t make the finals that particular day I was certain we would see him on the podium at some point during his time as a Raider.) You see, this truncation denied Owen Blazer the opportunity to compete for a gold medal. In as selfless an act as one will find from an athlete, Owen willingly swam less than his best in prelims (a common swimming strategy) to conserve energy to assist his relay teammates in qualifying for the finals. The clock doesn’t lie. The entire Pennsylvania swimming community knows who swam the fastest time in the 100 backstroke this year - a true champion for his selfless leadership, Owen Blazer of Seneca Valley with a time of 47.83. And we were here again – success isn’t only measured in medals. It’s also measured by how we carry ourselves, how we compete and how we respect our sport. In the final leg of this journey, Seneca Valley was atop the scoreboard. With my journey cut short I began my travels home in the very same manner as when I started – cherishing the solitude of silence for hours. Only this time my thoughts oscillated between the gratitude I have and rewards I get for serving this District as its Athletics Director and wondering what tomorrow would bring. Little did I know COVID-19’s impact on sport was just beginning.

March 12, 2020. The day sport came to a halt. Preliminaries in the 100 free, 100 back, 100 breast and 400 free relay took place this morning. Raider athletes were performing well under the great leadership of coaches Brian Blackwell, Jeff Gavin, Lisa Wilson, Nancy Laslavic and Mike Caccamo. Owen Blazer, seeded first in the 100 back, has swum the fastest time in the state by more than 1.3 seconds and the boys 400 free relay was seeded fifth. Owen swam the 100 back and two events later, anchors the boys 400 free relay. To ensure both events will feature Raiders in the finals, Owen swims well enough to earn a middle lane with the third fastest preliminary time. He conserves energy to be stronger for his teammates two events later. With Owen anchoring this group of Kevin Donaldson, Daniel Simoes and Max Skeen, the relay swam fast enough to earn a sixth seed in the finals. All had gone according to the coaches’ plans. We talk of “controlling the controllables” in sport. And just like that at 11:37 a.m., following the conclusion of morning preliminaries, the PIAA announced the suspension of their basketball tournaments, AA swimming championships and the abbreviation of their AAA championships. The truncation in sport was just beginning.

ATHLETICS & ACTIVITIES
WINTER SPORT FINAL RECAP

Swimming – Boys Finish Runner-Up at WPIAL Championships and Seventh at PIAA’s

Our Raider boys’ swimming and diving team capped off an unbelievable season finishing second at the WPIAL championships and seventh in the state for AAA schools. The depth of this squad was evident at Trees Pool in late February with Seneca Valley boys bringing home a total of 22 medalists, including a two-time WPIAL champion in Owen Blazer. Owen took home gold in both the 100 fly and 100 backstroke and his time of 47.83 in the 100 back set a new WPIAL record. In total, the boys sent nine swimmers to Bucknell University for the PIAA championships where they competed in 10 of 12 events.

On the girls’ side, Seneca Valley finished in fourth place at the WPIAL championships – their highest team finish since 2008. They, too, sent a contingent of five swimmers to Bucknell University to compete in four separate events. Junior Kendall Craig collected four WPIAL medals and two PIAA medals to lead the Raiders this past season.

Medalists from WPIAL & PIAA Championships:

Boys team finished as WPIAL runner-up with 9 PIAA qualifiers and 22 WPIAL medalists. Their final standing from PIAA AAA championships was 7th place. The list of medalists includes:

- 200 Medley Relay – 2nd place (Owen Blazer, Haihan Xu, Daniel Simoes and Max Skeen)
- PIAA – 4th place
- 200 Free – Kevin Donaldson, 3rd place
- 200 IM – Daniel Simoes, 3rd place; Haihan Xu, 8th place
- PIAA – Daniel Simoes, 8th place
- 100 Fly – Owen Blazer, 1st place; Daniel Simoes, 5th place
- PIAA – Owen Blazer, 2nd place
- 100 Free – Kevin Donaldson, 5th place
- 200 Free Relay – 8th (Max Skeen, Zach Lozowski, Gavin Blazer and Kevin Donaldson)
- 100 Backstroke – Owen Blazer, 1st place
- PIAA – Owen Blazer, 3rd place
- 100 Breaststroke – Haihan Xu, 6th
- 400 Free Relay – 2nd place (Kevin Donaldson, Daniel Simoes, Max Skeen and Owen Blazer)
- PIAA – 6th place
- Diving – Trevor Elliott, 2nd; Matt Laslavic, 5th

Girls team finished in 4th place at WPIALs with 5 PIAA qualifiers and 14 WPIAL medalists. The list of medalists includes:

- 200 Medley Relay – 4th place (Ria Dietz, Edie Sawyer, Julia Listwak, Kendall Craig)
- PIAA – 8th place
- 200 IM – Kendall Craig, 3rd
- PIAA – Kendall Craig, 7th place
- 100 Fly – Julia Listwak, 7th place
• 100 Free – Kendall Craig, 6th place
• 100 Backstroke – Ria Dietz, 8th place
• 100 Breaststroke – Edie Sawyer, 6th place
• 400 Free Relay – 7th place (Julia Listwak, Bella Stefanowicz, Annabel Morrisard and Kendall Craig)
• Diving – Mackenzie Clark, 4th place

Wrestling – Raiders Claim Two WPIAL Champions!
For the second straight year Dylan Chappell and Alejandro Herrera-Rondon walked away from the WPIAL championships as gold medalists. Dylan took home the title at 120 lbs. with a pin at 2:32 of the match over Jace Ross of Connellsville. Alejandro had a chance to avenge an earlier season loss at Powerade to Gabe Willochell of Latrobe. Willochell came into the finals undefeated at 33-0 but suffered his first loss at the hands of Herrera-Rondon 4-2. Chanz Shearer (4th, 138 lbs) and Antonio Amelio (3rd, 145 lbs) joined classmates Dylan and Alejandro on the medal stand and all four made their way to Hershey for the PIAA championships the first weekend of March.

Medalists from WPIAL & PIAA Championships:
• Dylan Chappell (120 lbs): WPIAL, 1st place; PIAA runner-up
• Alejandro Herrera-Rondon (132 lbs): WPIAL 1st place; PIAA 4th place
• Chanz Shearer (138 lbs): WPIAL, 4th place; PIAA qualifier
• Antonio Amelio (145 lbs): WPIAL, 3rd place; PIAA, 8th place

The Female Athlete of the Month was senior basketball forward Maddie Karchut.
Maddie averaged 17.5 points and 7.5 rebounds per game in four contests in February. Maddie played a vital role in assisting the Raider girls’ basketball team to a 15-7 regular season record and a berth to the WPIAL 6A quarterfinal matchup against the Blue Devils of Mt. Lebanon. In the quarterfinals, Maddie led all scorers with 26 points and grabbed nine rebounds in a 54-40 loss. She finished the season leading her team with 13.9 points per game and finished second in rebounds with 6.7 per game. For her efforts, Maddie was named to the Big 56 Conference Section 1 First Team All-Section.

The Male Athlete of the Month was junior wrestler Antonio Amelio. Antonio won 14-6 during the month of February including six wins by fall and four come from behind victories. At the WPIAL AAA Section 3 tournament, Antonio finished runner-up in the 145-pound class qualifying for the WPIAL AAA Championships. After falling in the quarterfinals 3-2 to Jared Keslar of Connellsville, Antonio wrestled back through the consolations with four straight wins including defeating Keslar 4-3 in the third-place bout to earn a trip to Hershey. At the PIAA State Championships, Antonio earned a medal finishing in 8th place. He finished the season at 37-18 and now has a career record of 100-50. For an outstanding month and junior campaign, we recognize Antonio as the February Athlete of the Month. The Bucknell University recruit will now prepare for his senior season.
Tori Scott is 2008 Seneca Valley Graduate works in the tourism industry and is also a teacher. She lives off on an island in southern Italy, off the coast of Naples. The major COVID-19 outbreak is in northern Italy around Milan. We asked her to catch us up on what she is doing and how Seneca Valley influenced her life and career.

Q: Catch us up. Tell us what you’re doing today:
A: After Seneca Valley, I went to Mercyhurst University and graduated with a bachelor’s in arts in dance performance. After Mercyhurst, I went to dance professionally onboard with Carnival Cruise Lines. I got to cruise through the Caribbean while dancing and performing.

Today I am living in Ischia, Italy. My family and I are both healthy. We are on complete lockdown. The first week of the lockdown we were able to enjoy walks outside but that has now been taken away. We can only leave our house for necessities. And only one person per family can go to the grocery store. The groceries only let a certain number of people in and usually you have to take a number to wait in line. I’m taking it day by day and keeping spirits positive. I teach English online to Chinese students, so I have been able to keep busy with that. The photo (at right) is of the Italian flag that my neighbor hung up. It says: Together we can do it! Come on, Italians!

Q: Please share with us some information about your family.
A: I live in Italy with my husband who is native to the island of Ischia. We met while working onboard with Carnival Cruise Lines. He is currently onboard as Safety Officer, he’s third in command onboard. My parents still live in Cranberry Township and I love coming back to visit!

Q: What might (someone) be surprised to know about you?
A: I speak fluent Italian! And I never stepped on a cruise ship until my first day working on one!

Q: How did Seneca Valley help you become the person you are today, both personally and professionally?
A: Seneca Valley allowed me to grow a love for learning. Since my days at Rowan, I loved learning! Seneca Valley also allowed me to get a special permission to leave high school after seventh period so I could go to Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre for my ballet classes. Without this, I never would have been able to really dive into my intense ballet studies. This was many years before the Seneca Valley Academy of Choice Dance Program, and I am very proud that current students have the ability to do both academics and ballet at Seneca Valley now!

Q: What do you think makes Seneca Valley such a special place to learn and grow?
A: Seneca Valley is a very special place to learn. Seneca Valley allows students to grow and prepare for life outside of school. Seneca Valley truly preps their students to be well rounded.

Q: Who was your favorite teacher/coach/SV staff member?
A: This is hard! I had so many wonderful teachers at Seneca Valley. One that really touched my life was Ms. Rebecca Hester, my third grade teacher. She cared about her students in and out of the classroom. She supported my dancing and even made it to one of my dance competitions when I was in third grade. Mr. Patrick O’Shea is another one of my favorite teachers. I had Mr. O’Shea in eighth grade for social studies. He opened my eyes to history and history in the world.

Q: What is one of your favorite memories from your time at Seneca Valley?
A: One moment I can really recall from my time at Seneca Valley comes from the fourth grade. I had Mr. Vince Burgess (he is now retired). Mr. Burgess had a hobby of making mosaics. We studied Pompeii and learned about mosaics. He showed us the mosaics that he made. Mr. Burgess fueled my passion for history! Many years later on my first trip to Italy, I finally got to visit Pompeii and see the famous mosaics firsthand.

Q: If you had one message for teachers or staff, what would it be?
A: THANK YOU! Thank you for always going above and beyond for all your students. Thank you for supporting your students in the classroom and outside in extracurricular activities. Thank you for motivating and inspiring students to learn and follow their dreams every day.

Q: What do you wish other people knew about Seneca Valley?
A: Even though Seneca Valley is such a huge district, it truly has a small feel. From kindergarten to the 12th grade the teachers and staff always make you feel valued!
SAFETY FIRST

By Jeff James, Seneca Valley Supervisor of Safety and Security

Few things anger me more than criminals who take advantage of good people in the midst of a crisis. Unfortunately, it’s no surprise to hear there are those out there who are defrauding victims and using what’s in the news to do it.

I’d like to make you aware of scams that are going on now related to the spread of COVID-19 (Coronavirus), and the national census that will take place this year.

My former agency, the US Secret Service, is currently warning citizens about three schemes related to COVID-19.

The first of the three schemes is a “Phishing” scheme. “Phishing” is the fraudulent practice of sending emails purporting to be from reputable companies in order to get you to reveal personal information, including passwords and credit card numbers. Phishing scams have become a constant fixture through email communications and ecommerce. Cyber criminals are exploiting COVID-19 through the wide distribution of mass emails posing as legitimate medical and/or health organizations. In one particular instance, victims have received an email purporting to be from a medical/health organization that included attachments supposedly containing pertinent information regarding COVID-19. When unsuspecting victims open the attachment, malware infects their system, or prompts the victim to enter their email login credentials to access the information, resulting in harvested login credentials. This type of incident enables further occurrences of cyber financial crimes such as theft of personally identifiable information (PII), ransomware and account takeovers. Another side effect of COVID-19 is increased teleworking, which furthers the reliance on email for communication. This adds yet another multiplier to these email fraud schemes. More of these incidents are expected, so remain vigilant regarding email communications.

Another emerging fraud scheme exploiting COVID-19 is the utilization of social engineering tactics through legitimate social media websites to solicit donations for charitable causes. Criminals are exploiting people’s desire to help by seeking donations to fraudulent causes surrounding COVID-19. As always, use caution when donating to charitable organizations.

A third fraud scheme surrounds non-delivery scams. Essentially, criminal actors advertise an in-demand supply company that sells medical supplies to protect against COVID-19. The criminals will demand upfront payment or initial deposits, and then simply never deliver the ordered products.

Here are some tips to help you avoid being defrauded:

- Phishing Emails / Social Engineering – Avoid opening attachments and clicking on links within emails from senders you don’t recognize. These attachments can contain malicious content, such as ransomware, that can infect your device and steal your information. Be leery of emails or phone calls requesting account information or asking you to verify your account. Legitimate businesses will NEVER call or email you directly for this information.
- Always independently verify that any requested information originates from a legitimate source.
- Visit websites by inputting the domain name yourself. Certificate “errors” can be a warning sign that something is not right with the website that you’re directed to.

Another scam that we’re seeing deals with the 2020 Census. In this scenario, scammers will call or email you saying they are from the Census Bureau, and they will ask you for your personal identifying information (PII).

To avoid being victimized, it is important to remember that the Census Bureau will NOT send unsolicited emails to request your participation in the 2020 Census, and they will NEVER ask for your Social Security number, bank account or credit card numbers, or money or donations. In addition, the Census Bureau will not contact you on behalf of a political party.

If someone visits your home to collect a response for the 2020 Census, you can do the following to verify their identity:

- First, check to make sure they have a valid ID badge, with their photograph, a U.S. Department of Commerce watermark, and an expiration date.
- If you still have questions about their identity, you can call 844-330-2020 to speak with a Census Bureau representative.

It’s sad that in this time of crisis we have to protect ourselves from unscrupulous actors, but forewarned is forearmed, and I want you to be able to protect yourself.

Until next time, remember, if you see something SAY something; and until we get through this crisis, be careful, be healthy and STAY HOME.

SOURCES: SecretService.gov and 2020census.gov
FEELING ANXIOUS? TALKING ABOUT IT SKILLFULLY WITH YOUR KIDS AND TEENS

Talking skillfully with youth in our life about our emotions — past and present — and the ways we navigate such feelings are some of the best resiliency teachings we can do as parents.

Naming the feelings we have, and how we handle them, is something kids, and teens appreciate.

So now, in this time of high anxiety, it is a good time to consider talking more openly about your present and/or past feelings and things you have done or are doing to manage the emotions.

In doing so here are just a few of the positive things you will be modeling:

• That it is natural to be feeling all sorts of feelings — anxious, worried, angry, sad, and yes, also happy at times too — and not to feel guilty about that.

• That trying to understand what we are feeling can be challenging. For example, when we say “stressed” what do we mean? Overwhelmed? Afraid? Getting to the core of an emotion can help address it more effectively.

• That no one can fully control the thoughts and feelings that come into one’s head. So, that might mean maybe, for you, the parent, your anxious feelings don’t fit the facts.

• That we have choices of how we want to handle challenging emotions. You model this when you talk about the things you have tried to help handle your emotions. For example, maybe you say, “I am feeling anxious, and it just makes me want to avoid the feelings and watch movies, but actually that is making me feel worse. I realize I need help so I am going to start talking with someone who can help me.”

Psychologist and author, Laura Kastner, PhD, says in Screenagers NEXT CHAPTER about parents who want their teens to open up to them about what is going on emotionally for the teen, but who don’t model this openness themselves: “Have these teenagers seen their fathers or even their mothers talk about mistakes, embarrassment, shame, disappointment, regret. It’s an emotional language that they need to learn from our modeling it at the dinner table and other places. But it’s also a sense of vulnerability that they need to sort of master.”

In the movie Screenagers NEXT CHAPTER one family in which the dad, mom, and son talked about how the father changed from telling his sons to “man up” to valuing discussions about emotions.

The dad says, “I come from India, and over there, you know, you don’t show the sign of weakness. Crying is the sign of weakness. And I didn’t want them to be weak. And I’d say, “Why are you crying?... So what’s wrong with you?’ And they will try to explain, and I say, “Come on, be a man, man up.”

Then his son says, “When I’m stressed out, it’s helpful to just talk about it with someone. ‘Cause it’s like you don’t wanna hold in all that emotion because it’s just not healthy. I kind of feel like I try and make it so that he doesn’t feel uncomfortable talking to me.”

The dad, “And he’ll say, ‘So you can talk to me, you know that, right.’ And I say, ‘Yeah, I know.’ “

The son, “I think mom is good at talking with people. I do think that she does tell me when she’s going through something emotional.”

The dad, “Now, I see how they approach it with their mother, and I see the positive impact it’s having on the kids. If I had not recognized that or changed that, they would have been different kids today.”

This is not about overwhelming our kids with our hard emotions. But gently and skillfully naming what emotions are here for us at this moment in time.

One final point is to remember now that when we tell our kids or teens that we are having a hard day, one of the things they often enjoy doing is helping us to feel better.

When they were little, they might have brought us a warm cloth for our head, and now maybe they lean in to hug us. Letting them feel needed is a real gift. All of us want to feel needed at times. It is truly empowering when we, as humans, get to help others.

And the beauty is: it reduces anxious feelings of the person who receives the help and also reduces the stress of the person giving the help. Standing at the
sidelines and seeing someone in emotional pain and not being able to do anything is very stressful.

Here are some questions to start a conversation about anxiety:

1. Have you felt any new feelings of anxiety lately?
2. Do you notice that anyone else in the family is feeling anxious?
3. How does that make you feel?
4. Is there anything that you do to help make you bring down feelings of anxiety? Are there any ways that you have helped others this week bring down their levels of anxiety?

Article and photo provided by Screenagers.

APRIL IS AUTISM AWARENESS MONTH

Students in Ryan Gloyer Middle School (RGMS) used their creativity – for a cause.

RGMS’s adaptive art class recently designed an Autism Awareness T-shirt. Each student in the class created a letter in the words “Autism Awareness.” The students then assisted in making the T-shirts with a vinyl plotter and heat press. The students sold the shirts to raise money for the supplemental support classroom.

Be sure to support autism awareness and inclusion next month. For more information on understanding and accepting people with autism, visit www.autismspeaks.org/world-autism-month.

Download the new and improved SV MOBILE APP

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

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

AT&T

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

AT&T

Download the new and improved SV MOBILE APP

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

AT&T

Download the new and improved SV MOBILE APP

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

AT&T
• The Raiderthon event may be canceled, but you can still donate to the cause! Visit https://www.gofundme.com/f/2020-raiderthon to help SV Senior High School Student Council reach their goal of raising $20,000 for the Miracle League of Southwestern PA!

• Freshman Corbin Edge presented his positive experience representing Seneca Valley as the 2019 Prudential Spirit of Community Award State Honoree to the School Board earlier this month. While there, he updated them about his 2020 fundraising efforts for the American Diabetes Association (ADA). To help Corbin raise money for the ADA, click here.

• The U.S. Census Bureau is looking for temporary employees to assist with the 2020 Census. Learn more here.

• Subscribe to our YouTube Channel!

• Join our team! SV is hiring administrative, secretarial and paraprofessional employees.

Become a Lifeguard

Part-time Seasonal Positions Available

Responsible for overseeing the Waterpark and ensuring the safety of the patrons in the swimming area

• Must hold a current American Red Cross Lifeguard Certification (or be able to provide one prior to the start date)
• Flexible work schedules (15-35 hours/week)
• Competitive wages - Starting at $10/hour
• Related experience is a plus

Apply online at CranberryTownship.Org/Employment

EOE/M/F/D/V
LA ROCHE UNIVERSITY
IS WHERE YOUR POTENTIAL LEADS TO POSSIBILITY.

- More than 50 career-focused majors
- Study abroad opportunities included in tuition
- Active student life and NCAA Div. III athletics program
- More than $11 million awarded in merit scholarships per year

- Located 15 minutes north of downtown Pittsburgh in a residential area offering plenty of opportunities for employment and entertainment within walking distance
- La Roche ranks first among schools in the Pittsburgh region with the lowest average student debt

Multimillion-dollar renovation of the Science Center opened in 2020

Apply: laroche.edu  |  Take a virtual tour: laroche.edu/virtualtour