HATS OFF TO THE GRADUATES

The Class of 2021, approximately 590 students, graduated at NexTier Stadium on June 1. Congratulations to all SV Graduates!

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DATES TO REMEMBER
First Day Reminder!
The 2021-22 First Day of School will be Wednesday, Aug. 25, 2021.

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

AUGUST

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HATS OFF TO THE GRADUATES

(continued from page 1)

OF SPECIAL NOTE:

Speakers:
Zachary Garcia, Valedictorian
David Choi, Salutatorian
Zachary Donaldson, Speaker-at-Large

Senior Class Officers:
Luke D’Ambrosio – President
Maxwell Van Wormer – Vice President
Maddalyn DiMichelle – Secretary
Ashlea Eaton – Treasurer

Photo credit: Bill Paterson
CELEBRATING OUR SENIORS

The District partnered with the Seneca Valley Foundation to provide yard signs as a way to celebrate and recognize the SV Class of 2021 and their commencement.

Last month, Seneca Valley School Board members, teachers, administrators, staff and coaches hand-delivered over 590 yard signs to our seniors that brought much-needed smiles to their faces and those who delivered them!

The signs were designed by Hunter Reynolds, SV ’21.

To see more photos, visit the web page titled “Graduation Recognition” at www.svsd.net/Classof2021.
SV SCHOOL BOARD AND SVESP REACH AGREEMENT

During a meeting held on June 7, the Seneca Valley School Board of Directors approved a new, five-year agreement with the Seneca Valley Education Support Professionals (SVESP). SVESP voted to accept the new contract on May 20.

The new agreement will be effective from July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2026, and covers the District’s 144 secretaries and paraprofessionals. The current contract is due to expire at the end of this month. The district and labor group have been negotiating since January.

The agreement includes wage increases for each year, with the current average wages for the 2020-2021 school year at $20,394 for paraprofessionals and $34,156 for secretaries, a high deductible medical plan and additional contributions by employees for healthcare.

Dr. Tracy Vitale, Seneca Valley Superintendent of Schools, said she was pleased that both parties were able to come to a resolution before the expiration of the contract. “I am grateful for the work that this group of support personnel achieved on the frontline to keep our children safe and in school as much as possible during the pandemic,” she said.

Brooke Witt, the Region Field Director for the Pennsylvania State Education Association (PSEA), who acted as the lead negotiator for SVESP, said, “This year has been like no other and being able to reach a new agreement in the midst of all of the challenges was a tough task, but an important one. Both the District and SVESP put a lot of work into negotiating this agreement and believe it is a fair settlement for both sides.”

SV BOARD MOVES TO RETAIN ‘RAIDER’ NAME, RETIRE MASCOT

On June 14, members of the Seneca Valley School Board approved a resolution on June 14 retiring the use of the Native American mascot and all associated imagery.

As noted in the resolution, “that imagery no longer fulfills the intended positive purposes of a mascot or reflects favorably upon the Seneca Valley School District.”

The topic of moving away from the Native American imagery is certainly not a new one; however, this recent decision was brought about at Seneca Valley through a grassroots student project. Benaifer Sepai, a recent graduate, spent the better part of her senior year in 2020-21 researching the topic as part of her graduation project requirement. As member of the Seneca Valley Social Handprints Overcoming Unjust Treatment (SHOUT) Student Committee, she was galvanized by her findings and shared those with her fellow SHOUT members. They decided to join in on the effort and presented their vetted research to the School Board on April 12, 2021. In addition to a historical review, their report included recorded interviews with local leaders of the Seneca Nation of Indians and official statements by the National Congress of American Indians. You can view that student presentation here.

Board members, impressed by the detailed effort and findings, conducted their own research of the subject. Additionally, since April, board members have directly received more than 70 written emails and letters; people equally divided on the topic. There have also been petitions for and against a change to the mascot and name, along with comments, all of which have been shared with the board. Also, board members have taken calls, and personally listened to feedback from friends, neighbors and constituents. As it is called upon them to do, they have thoughtfully considered this change. They voted on June 14 to retain the Raider name but to retire the Native American imagery and mascot.

The district will now oversee the development of a student committee to review and provide recommendations upon - and proposals for - consideration of a new Seneca Valley mascot. The Raider name will be retained to be used in conjunction with the new mascot, if adopted.

“I am in complete agreement with eliminating the Native American mascot and associated logo depictions and imagery as the people it was meant to honor are asking us not to honor them in that way,” said Eric DiTullio, Seneca Valley School Board President. “In my opinion, we are obligated to eliminate this imagery. And while I am disappointed, at the end of the day, a rendering of a Native American is not what defines this district.”

To view the school board meeting from June 14, you can do so at this link: School Board Meeting Regular Session 6/14/2021 - YouTube.

A target date for the provision of recommendations and proposals is Aug. 1, 2021, with the objective of soliciting input from the student body during the 2021-22 school year.
BIG PICTURE
Seneca Valley elementary schools are looking at the big picture.

The new Allegheny Health Network (AHN) Wexford Hospital is creating a mosaic mural that will be displayed in the hospital upon completion in 2021. The mural project will take individual pieces of student art and combine them together into one large picture.

Over 2,335 SV students in grades K-6 recently worked on crafting creative submissions that focused on the overall theme of “Caring for Our Community.”

Evans City Middle School Counselor Chrissy Wawrzyniakowski added, “The students were able to create art that illustrated that concept, or use the following keywords to inspire their design: community, quality, compassion, new life, friends, love, joy, patience, family, gratitude, trust, legacy, neighbors, growth, safety, generations, health, pediatrics, hope and hometown.”

SV counselors submitted the students’ artwork which will be some of the hundreds of thousands that create the mosaic mural.

“All of the counselors involved have done a tremendous amount of work to participate in this project,” stated Evans City Middle School Principal Tim Eiler.

Evans City Elementary School Counselor Nicole Moorman added, “I am so excited that our Seneca Valley students were able to participate in a project directly impacting our community. The students worked so hard to make such wonderful pictures in hopes to bring joy to those in the hospital.”

STOMP OUT CANCER
Students and staff from Rowan Elementary and Evans City Elementary/Middle Schools were proud to report that their fundraising efforts for the 13th Annual Saulle’s Teddy Bear Official Memorial Parade (STOMP) Walk raised over $4,600! The substantial check was recently presented to representatives from Allegheny Health Network for cancer research. STOMP participants have raised more than $193,000 over the past twelve years. The STOMP walk began in 2008 in memory of a Kindergarten teacher, Ms. Linda Saulle, who taught at Evans City Elementary and lost her battle with cancer in 2007. Today it honors all families touched by this disease throughout our local area.

ONE PERSON CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE
One student at Evans City Elementary (ECE) is rooting for change and taking action.

First grader Adelyn Badaracco is working with Roots and Shoots, a children’s arm of The Jane Goodall Institute.

Roots and Shoots empowers young people to make a positive change in the world. Students create projects that they take action on to help people, animals and the environment.

Miss Badaracco initiated her first project last month with a food drive. Not only did she coordinate the drive, but she also made and distributed fliers and created a PowerPoint presentation for the morning announcements. The event was held May 10-14, and all donations were given to the Southwest Butler Food Cupboard.

“Adelyn collected a large amount of non-perishable foods to help the families that are in need in our community,” said ECE First Grade Teacher Natalie Ranalli. “I am so proud of this remarkable young woman and her endeavor to make a BIG positive change.”

Her next project? Helping animals. Miss Badaracco is planning a bake sale and will use the money raised to donate to a local animal shelter.
**ONE FOR THE BOOKS**

The story in this book drive comes with an important message.

Anna Ching, a rising Haine Middle School sixth grader (pictured at right), began a book drive in May in honor of Asian American Pacific Islander (AAPI) Heritage Month. The idea came from an area resident and a social media post on the Pittsburgh Chinese American Association social media group. In that post, students were encouraged to start book drives at their schools.

“The purpose of the book drive was to enhance the awareness of the AAPI culture, history and contribution to our great country,” stated Anna’s mom, Clair Song. “Having more books about AAPI culture on school bookshelves will help kids (Asian and other races) learn more about diversity, respect and equality.” Ms. Song added, “I talked to Anna about this book drive and she loved the idea and immediately took action! I am very proud of her!”

Anna first reached out to the other Asian American students she knew for help and asked them to reach out to more people. She also asked for help from her non-Asian friends. With the support of some fellow fifth graders, Leah Malley, Riya Patel, Shantanu Khedkar, Dahlia Marcin and Caroline Holmes, along with HMS Librarian/CIRC Teacher Eric Fogle, they were able to donate 10 books to HMS Library.

“I decided to help Anna with this book drive because she explained it was a way to represent her ethnicity and others,” said Miss Marcin. “I know that preventing hate toward Asians and equality is very important to my friend. I also love books and libraries, so I thought this was a good opportunity to donate to ours. I think this drive was a great idea and Anna did a fantastic job explaining the idea and recruiting books. I’m proud of her and the other people that donated and took action for a good cause.”

“My goal was to just get all the books into the library so that there would be a more diverse range of books so that people like me can see themselves represented on the shelves,” stated Miss Ching. “I hope people from all different experiences and backgrounds would read these books. You don’t have to be Asian American to relate to any of the experiences in these books.”

Anna intends to continue this effort next year and hopes to start earlier to gather more books and involve more people. She is also planning to work with Mr. Fogle to do fun activities like a book club to promote these books next school year.

She added, “If you really believe in or are passionate about something you should take a stand. Even if you think what you’re doing doesn’t have an effect, small things lead to bigger things!”

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**DRESSING UP, COUNTING DOWN**

Everyone loves a theme day, especially Haine Elementary third graders!

The third grade classrooms had a theme week to wrap up the school year. The themes included a beach day, camping day, zoo day, space day and Disney day.

“We had a fantastic time ending a challenging year together in a really fun way,” exclaimed Haine Elementary Third Grade Teacher Rachel Johnson.
LUCKY OPPORTUNITY

Seneca Valley Academy of Choice (SVAOC) students may just be some of the luckiest "kids in the universe."

SVAOC fourth graders in Ms. Lauren McClain’s and Ms. Liz Porco’s classes had the opportunity to meet a New York Times Bestselling Author, Chris Grabenstein, virtually on May 24.

Both classrooms read his newly released book, “The Smartest Kid in the Universe.”

"The kids’ level of excitement over the book prompted us to reach out to Mr. Grabenstein," stated Ms. McClain.

During the Zoom call, the fourth graders asked questions about the book and had an enriching experience interacting with such a well-established author.

Ms. McClain added, "Mr. Grabenstein was not only charismatic but left many of our students wanting to become authors. We even got a sneak peek of his sequel, ‘Genius Camp.’ This experience sparked a love of reading for many and was a fun way to conclude Book Club!"

FOUR SQUARE FUN

Need a fourth player? A local officer recently stopped by Evans City Elementary to participate in a four square match during second grade’s field day.

THE POWER OF THE WRITTEN WORD

The art of letter-writing is not lost on Evans City Middle School student Camden Armstrong.

Back in April he, along with his sixth grade classmates in Ms. Robin Presco’s room, completed a project writing “business letters” to understand composition and format. Camden chose to write his letter to Baierl Ford due to his interest in the new all-electric Mustang Mach-E and in doing so received an amazing opportunity.

The store manager, Patrick McIntyre, replied to Camden and offered him to come in and get a test ride in the new car.

Camden’s father Varden Armstrong, said “I contacted Mr. McIntyre at Baierl Ford and he went above and beyond to make it an awesome experience for Camden. He offered to show me the vehicle and let me take the car home to surprise Camden. We were allowed to have the car for a few hours and Camden loved taking family members for rides and explaining all the cool technology with the car.”

“One of our company’s core values is ‘earn customers for life,’” stated Mr. McIntyre. “I work here because one of my personal core values is stewardship. So when Camden presented us with an opportunity to help him with a school project as well as accomplish a dream, it was easy to get behind! Camden and his father were great and we got as much enjoyment out of it as they did!”

“As a father, I could not have been more impressed with a local business taking an interest in our community and school district,” said Mr. Armstrong. “Camden felt so special for having had this opportunity. It is a memory that he will carry with him forever and hopefully share with his own kids someday.”

ON ‘DEK’

Twenty-one Seneca Valley elementary school students who participated in Cranberry Screaming Eagles Dek Hockey recently won their divisions in nationals.

The group traveled to Leominster, MA over Memorial Day weekend to play in the national tournament. The teams won the chipmunk and penguin divisions, beating the hometown Leominster teams 3-1 and 2-1 in the finals, respectively.

The chipmunk division team was made up of 4-6 year old’s from the Cranberry and Mars area. Among those players included SV students Lily Anderson, Adam Baron, Evelynn Buckwalter, Brooklyn Donovan, Eli Kimmel, Chase Perla, Payton Shields, Ryan Stahurski and Milen Whitney.

The penguin division team was made up of 7-9 year old’s from the Cranberry and Mars area. Among those players included SV students Lily Anderson, Adam Baron, Evelyn Buckwalter, Brooklyn Donovan, Eli Kimmel, Chase Perla, Payton Shields, Ryan Stahurski and Milen Whitney.

Thank you for helping us grow

Students in Jordan DiBucci’s second grade classroom celebrated with a great sentiment and photo to end the school year.

Seneca Valley | June 2021
GAME ON

Students from Ryan Gloyer Middle School (RGMS) are golden.

The RGMS Tiger Team recently participated in an Olympic Day on May 21, to celebrate the Greek Olympics, an important part of the middle school social studies curriculum.

Students were assigned to one of five teams, each representing an ancient Greek city-state and signed up to participate in events ranging from sprints, the mile, long jump, discus, javelin and even the perilous “chariot race.”

In the lead-up to the big event, the groups memorized chants and designed logos to demonstrate the importance of teamwork and support for their peers. With the help of RGMS Visual Communications Teacher Mr. Tim Kamnikar, the students printed out their logos to make uniforms for the competition.

“We were blessed with perfect weather,” said RGMS Social Studies Teacher Scott DeVivo. “The students and teachers had a great time and were rewarded for their hard work by a visit from the Kona Ice Truck at the end of the day.”

WE REMEMBER

Memorial Day is a time to remember all who have died while serving this great Nation.

In honor of the day, Seneca Valley JROTC members held a special ceremony at the secondary campus in Jackson Township on May 28 and again at the Evans City Memorial Day Service on May 30.

At the Evans City event, the cadets presented and retired the Colors.

Seneca Valley Intermediate High School Foreign Language Teacher Heather Sibeto went to event and added, “I was able to attend the Memorial Day Service in Evans City yesterday to honor our servicemen. I did so because it has been a family tradition I shared with my dad. Most of all, because this year they read the names of Veterans who passed in 2019 and 2020, one of whom was my father. Although the Evans City Band was unable to attend this year, the JROTC and Evans City Boy Scout Troop represented our students well. It is always wonderful to see our JROTC present and retire the Colors.”

SV MAKES A DIFFERENCE

“Despite the pandemic and the unavoidable challenges presented by it, the Seneca Valley Student Council at the Senior High School did not forget about the Miracle League,” stated Miracle League Board Member Terry Shulsky who shared an impactful moment he recently had with members of SV’s Student Council.

“Your district’s future leaders found a way to support our league without their beloved Raiderthon. Rebecca Beers led the charge and guided the Seneca Valley students to hold a dodgeball tournament to raise funds for our Miracle League players and families and it was perfect timing.”

He went on to say, “After 12 years our scoreboard control panel ceased working on the Miracle League’s opening day this year and a few members of Seneca Valley’s student council came to the rescue. Attached is a photo of Ms. Beers and a few Seneca Valley students accepting yet another recognition plaque from the Miracle League and holding the score board control panel which will be replaced with their contributions this spring.”

To date, the Seneca Valley Senior High School Student Council has raised and donated over $80,000 to the Miracle League of Southwestern PA to advance their mission to provide the opportunity for children and adults with physical and mental disabilities to play organized baseball.

SUMMER READ

Planning a vacation this summer? Travel no further than the pages of a good book.

Recent 2020 Graduate Sophia Kunkel published her first novel that is now on sale at Barnes and Noble!

Back in March, Miss Kunkel was recognized with a Gold Key, the highest standard, in the 2021 Scholastic Art and Writing Awards for the Northeast Writing Region-at-Large. Read more here. Her plan then was to publish her book “Starless Skies and Broken Dreams” on Barnes and Noble Press this summer --and she accomplished that goal!

Congratulations, Sophia!

To learn more about her book or to order it, click here.
CLASS OF 2021

Harrison Silvester, a recent 2021 Seneca Valley Graduate, was awarded a $4,000 scholarship from the Architecture, Construction, Engineering (ACE) Mentor Program of Western PA.

Mr. Silvester has been a participant in the ACE mentor program throughout all four years of his high school career. He was a member of the marching band, the soccer association, the boys’ volleyball team and the ultimate frisbee team. He also participated in several music ensembles and community band organizations.

“In his scholarship application essays, Harrison gave a lot of credit to his mentors in the ACE program for helping to firm up his career choice of architecture, which he will pursue at Penn State University in the fall,” stated ACE Western PA Executive Director Anastasia Dubnicay.

Congratulations, Harrison!

Owen Beck, Seneca Valley Class of ’21 was selected as a 2021 Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT) Scholarship winner. He will be awarded a $32,000 scholarship in recognition of his leadership, service and achievements in computing, creativity and innovation.

“I am extremely thrilled that Owen was selected to receive this award – his grades, determination, and overall character made him the perfect candidate,” said Seneca Valley Academy of Choice Teacher Ken Macek. “When I found out Owen was selected, I was both eager and excited to share the news and felt Owen had been rewarded for his diligence throughout his high school career.”

Mr. Beck added, “I’m so honored to be recognized by RIT with this award. RIT stands out as a leader of merging creativity and technology. It’s my sincere hope to attend there after graduation to pursue a degree in game design and development. I’m so grateful for Mr. Macek and the guidance office for nominating me for this scholarship.”

RECOGNIZING EXCELLENCE

We are proud of the many accomplishments from the Class of 2021. Several Seneca Valley students were awarded local scholarships and award recognitions at the senior high school’s annual Award Recognition Night that was held on May 17. For a full list of senior awards and photos, click here.

Photo credit: EDI Imaging
Voices, a Podcast from the Seneca Valley School District

Want to hear directly from the voices at Seneca Valley on the most current topics and updates? Join us in listening to Voices, a podcast brought to you by the Seneca Valley School District. This podcast interviews guests who share an inside look at what is happening at SV. The latest episodes provide tips and tricks on interviewing and how to join the SV Team. Be sure to subscribe to SV “Voices” and listen online here or anywhere you listen to podcasts.
‘PLAY ON’

The reviews are in and Seneca Valley’s All-School Musical “Twelfth Night” was a hit! The tremendously talented cast, orchestra and crew put on four remarkable shows earlier this month.
SV ORCHESTRA HOSTS FESTIVAL ADJUDICATION

Students from the Seneca Valley Orchestra participated in the first SV Orchestra Solo and Ensemble Festival Adjudication on May 25.

Participating students had the opportunity to perform solo or small ensemble repertoire with an accompanist and receive feedback from esteemed adjudicators, Dr. Jessica Vaughan-Marra and Dr. Stephen Benham.

Sophomore cellist Tristan Conrad expressed, “I felt the solo ensemble was really beneficial and helped me a lot with bettering my playing techniques and helping me better understand who I am as a cello player. It also gave me a good chance to step out of my boundaries and play in front of an audience on my own.”
SPRING SPORTS FINAL RECAP

Seneca Valley Raider Track & Field sent a strong contingent to the PIAA Championships at Shippensburg University over Memorial Day weekend. The following student-athletes accrued points and/or medals for Seneca Valley:

**Girls PIAA Results**
- Rylie Smith 400m 7th place medal

**Boys PIAA Results**
- Nick Hemer High Jump 11th place
- Aiden Kutchma 300 IH 12th place
- Matt Laslavic Javelin 16th place
- Matt Laslavic Triple Jump 20th place
- Luke Simpson 800m 9th place
- Tyler Yurich 100m 2nd place medal
- Tyler Yurich Long Jump 13th place
- 4 x 100m Relay 8th place (Tyler Yurich, Aiden Kutchma, Nicholas Hartman, Nolan Dworek)
- 4 x 800m Relay 18th place (Sebastian Wary, Luke Simpson, Justin Domencic, James Rodrigues)

ATHLETICS & ACTIVITIES

By Heather Lewis, Seneca Valley Athletics & Activities Director

**BOYS VOLLEYBALL**

Seneca Valley had quite the run through the WPIAL and PIAA championships. The Raiders lost a four-setter to North Allegheny in the WPIAL Championship match to bring home the runner-up trophy. Entering the PIAA bracket the Raiders won their first two matches over McDowell (3-0) and Upper Dublin (3-1) to set up a fourth meeting with the Tigers of North Allegheny in the state semifinals. As has happened all season, the match was a thrilling back and forth affair with the Tigers prevailing in three sets to advance to the PIAA finals. It was a great season Seneca Valley - WPIAL runner-up and top-4 finish in the state. Congratulations, Raiders!

More student-athletes continue to make their college commitment official. We congratulate these seniors in achieving their goals of continuing their athletic and academic careers at the next level. Each of you are tremendous representatives of our District and we are very proud of your efforts in the classroom, in competition, and in the community.

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<td>Colgate University</td>
<td>Undecided</td>
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Three-sport Athletes ~ Something So Rare

The Northern Area Athletic Directors Association (NADA) recently recognized those student-athletes who competed in three sports their senior year. Seneca Valley honorees included Gabby Kutchma and Jonah DeWitt. Both Gabby and Jonah were members of their respective cross-country team, indoor track & field team and outdoor track & field team. Gabby has committed to Clarion University where she will continue her running career while majoring in Nutrition, Health & Sport Sciences. Jonah’s plans include attending Grove City College to major in Conservation Biology/Zoology and continue his running career with the Wolverines’ cross country program. Congratulations Gabby and Jonah and best of luck in your future endeavors.

**RAIDER STUDENT-ATHLETES COLLECTING HONORS**

**Baseball**
- All-Big 56, 1st Team: Conor Carney, Ethan Edkins
- All-Big 56, 2nd Team: Ethan Baer

**Softball**
- All-Big 56, 1st Team: Mackenzie Baker, Courtney Stephenson
- All-Big 56, 2nd Team: Madelyn Gross, Angelina Chardella, Isabella Roule

**Girls Lacrosse**
- All-WPIAL: Payton Riddle
- All-Section: Payton Riddle
- All-Section, 1st Team: Sarah Cypthers, Lorena Lopez, Emily Todd
- All-Section, 2nd Team: Lauren Comack

**Boys Lacrosse**
- All-Section: Reichen Geiselhart, Bady Martin

**Boys Volleyball**
- All-WPIAL, 1st Team: Nate DeGraaf, Michael Devlin
- All-WPIAL Most Outstanding Defensive Player: Coleman McDonough
- All-WPIAL, 2nd Team: James McCarthy
- All-WPIAL, 3rd Team: Evan Howley, Dawson Ward
- All-Section, 1st Team: Nate DeGraaf, Michael Devlin, Coleman McDonough
- All-Section, 2nd Team: Evan Howley, James McCarthy, Dawson Ward
- All-Section, Hon. Mention: Lucas Neuschwander
WE ARE PREPARING FOR 2021-22 – PHYSICAL, DRUG & CONCUSSION TEST DATES

The athletic department has announced its summer physical, drug testing and baseline concussion testing dates for 2021-22. Please note these plans are subject to change.

REMINDEERS for 2021-22:
• All required paperwork for athletic participation in 2021-22 is now available on the SV Portal.
• ALL paperwork is due in the athletic office no later than 3 p.m. on Thursday, Aug. 5. Coaches will not accept paperwork at the first day of tryouts.
• Physicals are first come, first serve on dates noted – see schedule below. We do not take reservations in advance. We encourage families to have their physical completed as soon as possible after June 1, 2021. You may visit your PCP or any Urgent Care Clinic for an athletic physical.
• The PIAA mandates the CIPPE form as the only permissible form for doctor’s signature.
• All student-athletes must be registered in the SV Portal under “Sports Registration” before competing.
• Complete information available on the District’s Athletics website under “Participation and TRYOUT information.”
• Concussion baseline testing only needs to be done every other year.

Physicals, Drug Testing and Baseline Concussion Testing Dates – Senior High School
• Wednesday, July 21, 2021 from 3 – 7 p.m. - Drug testing & baseline concussion testing offered – NO physicals this session.
• Thursday, July 22, 2021 from 8 a.m. – Noon - Physicals, drug testing & baseline concussion testing offered this session. Note: Physicals limited to 60 total between hours of 8 a.m. – Noon.
• Thursday, July 22, 2021 from 3 – 7 p.m. - Physicals, drug testing & baseline concussion testing offered this session. Note: Physicals limited to 30 total between hours of 1 – 3 p.m.
• Tuesday, Aug. 3, 2021 from 3 – 7 p.m. - Physicals, drug testing & baseline concussion testing offered this session. Note: Physicals limited to 60 total between hours of 3 – 7 p.m.
• Wednesday, Aug. 4, 2021 from 8 a.m. – Noon - Drug testing & baseline concussion testing offered – NO physicals this session.
• Wednesday, Aug. 4, 2021 from 1 – 3 p.m. - Physicals, drug testing & baseline concussion testing offered this session. Note: Physicals limited to 30 total between hours of 1 – 3 p.m.
COMING UP ROSES

SVF was thrilled to, once again, provide a white rose to each graduating senior at commencement on June 1. The rose was meant to be shared by the graduate with someone that helped them achieve their goals and dreams. This gesture began in 2020 and was something Foundation Trustees felt strongly about doing again.

Pictured Ms. Lisa Mislan, SV Board Secretary and SVF Secretary, and Brianna Buccini, Class of 2021.

BLAST OFF

Raider Space – a summer camp created for our exceptional students, run by Applied Engineering and Technology Teacher Steve Fortunato, was made possible by an extremely generous donation made to the Seneca Valley Foundation (SVF) by Jim and Eileen Wrubel of Cranberry Township.

Mr. Wrubel stated, “We are happy to support Mr. Fortunato’s vision for this program. It’s an important program for a very deserving group of students and we are honored to play a small part in bringing it to life.”

During Raider Space camp, SV Lifeskills students are provided with experiences throughout the community which are designed to embrace the individualized personality and need of each student. Without the Wrubels’ $10,000 contribution which paid for things like activities, meals and supplies, the camp would not have been possible.

SVF is a private, 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation and is utilized as a vehicle by which charitable donations may be made to the Seneca Valley Foundation. For more information, visit www.svsd.net/SVFoundation.

GET ON THE GREENS

The ninth annual Gift of Hope Golf Classic will be held on Thursday, Aug. 5, at Cranberry Highlands Golf Course and you are cordially invited to join us for a fun day of networking and competition – all for a good cause! This fundraising is our biggest of the year and we need your help to make it a success. Whether you register a foursome, donate a silent auction prize or connect us with a local business to sponsor the event, you will be helping us ensure it is a huge success. To register, donate or for additional information, visit: https://www.svsd.net/GolfClassic.

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Pictured Ms. Lisa Mislan, SV Board Secretary and SVF Secretary, and Brianna Buccini, Class of 2021.
TEACHERS GAIN ‘WORLD OF WORK’ INSIGHT

In 2020, Governor Tom Wolf announced Seneca Valley was the recipient of a $25,000 Teacher in the Workplace grant to enable teachers to visit local employers and learn the skills and industry trends to enhance their classroom instruction, student learning, and career readiness.

Due to the pandemic, this was postponed; however, the grant, awarded through the Department of Education (PDE), was recently extended, and training opportunities were made available to staff this summer.

Some Seneca Valley teachers participated in a five-hour structured job-shadowing program earlier this month, learning more from employers like Steamfitters, Builder’s Guild, Life Design and PNC Bank, near our school district.

“The Teacher in the Workplace program has allowed our staff to see firsthand the current work environment,” stated Seneca Valley Student Services Director Jeff Roberts. “Instead of talking to our students about ‘the world of work’ in general terms, participating teachers will be able to give specific examples. We are committed to providing opportunities for students to understand how to prepare for their next steps in life.”

After debriefing about the experience, the faculty reviewed their school curricula and made recommendations for adjustments that support developing 21st century skills that meet local employers’ needs.

Mr. Roberts added, “Teacher participants were amazed at the high-tech work being done in our backyard. They want what they are teaching to be relevant to students’ futures.”

The Teacher in the Workplace grants from PDE are funded through federal money made available through Title II, Part A, of the Every Student Succeeds Act and from L&I through the Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act. Eligible applicants include local education entities, businesses and chambers of commerce, labor organizations, postsecondary institutions, community-based organizations, public libraries, trade associations, and economic development entities.

SV HIRES SUPERVISOR OF SAFETY AND SECURITY

During Seneca Valley’s School Board Meeting on June 14, board members approved the appointment of Jackson Township Police Department Officer Jason Young as the District’s new Supervisor of Safety and Security.

Officer Young is a familiar face at Seneca Valley as he has served as a School Resource Officer (SRO) on the District’s secondary campus, grades 7-12, for the past six years. During that time, he has collaborated with administrators and teachers to develop crisis plans and provided a secure environment to students, staff and visitors on the Jackson Township secondary campus. He also enforced and reduced juvenile delinquency and has developed trust and rapport with students and families. When school was not in-session, he also served as a Patrolman with Jackson Township Police.

Additional law enforcement experience includes eight years working as a Deputy Sheriff for Butler County where he worked in several public and private schools teaching fifth graders about Drug Abuse Resistance Education (D.A.R.E.); organized safety lectures for teachers on active shooters; and field trained new law enforcement deputies. He also worked for nearly ten years with the Saxonburg Borough Police Department where he started as a Patrolman and was later promoted to Patrol Supervisor. Additional service includes his first year as a Patrolman with the Fawn Township Police Department in Tarentum, Pa.

Officer Young earned his Associates Degree in Applied Science, Emergency Services - Police Services Option from Butler County Community College. He is active in several Butler County non-profit organizations including South Butler County Community Alliance.

Officer Young also comes to Seneca Valley with knowledge of school operational policies and field training officer certification from Pennsylvania State University. He is looking forward to applying his training and expertise across all nine of the District’s facilities.

“This is an opportunity to not only provide a safe environment for students, faculty and visitors so that we can foster a high-quality educational opportunity, but also to serve on a team that will shape and mentor the youth of the Seneca Valley School District,” said Officer Young.

Officer Young replaces Mr. Jeff James, who was recently named Police Chief with the Robert Morris University Police Department in Moon Township.
ALUMNI Q & A

Natalie DiCianna, a 2014 Seneca Valley Graduate, is a casting assistant at Nickelodeon Animation. 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 my time at Seneca, I went to Emerson College in Boston, MA and got a B.A in Visual and Media Arts production. I always had a dream of working in film and television, and in college I produced multiple shows for our television station. I also made it to the second round of Austin Film Festival’s Screenplay Competition in 2017. When I graduated, I moved out to Los Angeles to complete a Disney Professional Internship in their TV Animation Casting & Talent Relations Department. For the past year, I’ve been working as a Casting Assistant at Nickelodeon Animation. As a casting assistant, I work with a team to audition actors and find the right person to portray any character that is created by the show; we do this by accepting audition self-tapes from talent agencies or bringing in actors for in-person audition (or over Zoom as we’re still working from home due to COVID.) Our department also works with production to record all the talent for shows so I get to cover recording sessions. I work on shows in all stages, some that are in development and in the pilot stage and some shows that have been on for multiple seasons. Some of the shows I’m working on right now are “Baby Shark,” “It’s Pony,” “Rugrats,” “Kamp Koral,” and (a personal favorite from my childhood) “SpongeBob SquarePants.”

Q: Who was your favorite teacher/coach/SV staff member?
A: I always have a special memory of my fourth grade teacher from Evans City, Mrs. McMurray. I definitely would slack off a bit in her class and forget about homework assignments (something a few of my former teachers might remember) but she kept pushing me in the right way and never gave up on me.

Q: What is one of your favorite memories from your time at Seneca Valley?
A: The Lip Dub from my senior year really stands out. I worked as one of the directors on it, and yes it was great because it was right up my alley for my interests, but it was also great to see how everyone worked together to be a part of it and how excited we all were when it was posted online. Winning the competition that year was also a sweet moment.

Q: What do you wish other people knew about Seneca Valley?
A: Seneca is a large school with students who have interests all over the map and they’re all still trying to figure out what they want to do and be. Try and encourage the small interests and hobbies of your students, you never know if it’s what they might find their passion in and make a career out of.

Q: What do you think makes Seneca Valley such a special place to learn and grow?
A: When I was at Seneca, there were a lot of opportunities for students to try out different clubs and orgs and even select classes that fit with their interests. I’ve talked about how I was involved with SVTV, but I also loved being in choir from fifth grade up until I graduated.
SOCIAL SECURITY BENEFITS FOR CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES
By Darlynda Bogle, Assistant Deputy Commissioner for Communications

Social Security’s Supplemental Security Income (SSI) program provides cash payments to children with mental and/or physical disabilities whose families have little or no income and resources. A child must meet all of the following medical requirements to be considered disabled:

• The child must have a medical condition, or a combination of conditions, that result in “marked and severe functional limitations.” This means that the condition(s) must very seriously limit the child’s activities.

• The child’s condition(s) must have been disabling, or be expected to be disabling, for at least 12 months; or the condition(s) must be expected to result in death.

Compassionate Allowances is a list of conditions that, by definition, meet Social Security’s standard for disability benefits. Thousands of children receive benefits because they have a condition on this list at www.ssa.gov/compassionateallowances/conditions.htm. Children with a condition(s) not on this list can still qualify for SSI.

A child must also meet other eligibility requirements. Since Social Security only pays SSI to disabled people with low income and limited resources, a child, who is not blind, must not be working or earning more than $1,310 a month in 2021. A child who is blind must not be working or earning more than $2,190. Some older teenagers may have part-time jobs or be involved in work programs, which Social Security will count for financial eligibility.

In addition, if an unmarried child under age 18 is living at home, Social Security may consider some of the parents’ income as the child’s income. We make allowances for the parents, and for their other children living in the home, when we consider the parents’ income.

You can read more about children’s benefits in our publication, Benefits for Children with Disabilities.

Earnings amounts usually change every year. If you are a parent or know a parent, guardian, caregiver, or representative of someone you think may be eligible, visit our Disability Benefits - Apply for a Child (Under Age 18) web page to learn more and apply. We encourage you to apply if you think your child may be eligible.
• We know these unprecedented times are a struggle for many in our community. If you would like to donate your time and/or resources, please click on and complete the “I Want to Help” survey. If you are in need of assistance, please click and submit the survey form under “I Need Help.”

• Subscribe to our YouTube Channel!

• The 2020 Seneca Valley Annual Report is now available for view at www.senecavalleyar.com.

• The Seneca Valley Center for Biotechnology published a year end newsletter. Read it here.

• The Science Honor Society recently had 53 students complete 41 projects in a virtual STEM Fair. Check it out here.

• Learn more about First Tech Challenge (FTC) at SV!

• Voluntary Student Accident Coverage for 2021-22 are available to families and athletes. See more here.

• JOIN SVSD AS A SUBSTITUTE TEACHER

Do you want to make a positive impact on children? Interested in earning extra money while working a flexible schedule?

The Midwestern Intermediate Unit IV Guest Teacher Consortium needs you!

Become an emergency substitute teacher at the Midwestern Intermediate Unit IV and other participating school districts within the consortium. What you need is the desire to work with children and have a bachelor's degree in any field from an accredited college or university.

Through MIU IV’s consortium, potential subs will be required to attend a two-day training session and then apply to the PA Department of Education for an emergency substitute certificate.

With certification through MIU IV, substitutes can teach in any school district participating in the consortium.

From the training, you will be provided with the skills needed to professionally take part in the rewarding field of education.

For more information or to register visit: https://www.miu4.org/Page/96.

• DRIVE FOR US

ABC Transit and Valley Lines are looking for drivers in the Seneca Valley School District.

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To learn more, call ABC Transit at 724-473-4500 and/or Valley Lines Inc. at 724-473-4411.
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