IN SCHOOL AND ‘ON THE HOUSE’

The well-worn phrase “many hands make light work” has taken on a whole new meaning.

Numerous Seneca Valley staff members and students joined forces to launch the No Cost to Shop store which officially opened Nov. 1.

This new store, located in the senior high school, is for students in grades 7-12 who are in need of clothing, food or other items, and are welcome to set up a private time to shop and take what they need - no lines, no checkout.

Last year, Michelle Eppinger, a Seneca Valley Senior High School (SHS) special education job coach paraprofessional, went to senior high school administrators with concerns that some students had additional needs that were not being met due to the pandemic. From there, her vision of a “brick and mortar” store, along with many others, came together and turned this vision into a reality.

Ms. Eppinger, along with SV job coaches, teachers, maintenance workers and various students have been hard at work collecting donations, as well as sorting, folding and categorizing various hygiene items. They were buoyed in June when the Seneca Valley Foundation (SVF) donated $3,000 to assist with the store’s needs, specifically with store fixtures, furniture, racks and décor.

To expand the store and evolve the program even more, Seneca Valley Transition Planning, Career and Vocational Education Coordinator Jess Pyle involved Community Based Vocational Training (CBVT) and Vocational Readiness students and their job coaches. These students currently run the store by taking inventory, checking donation boxes, doing laundry and -best of all- gaining real work experience.

continued on page 2
It is great to see the collaboration of all students working together towards one common goal, said Ms. Pyle. The students in Vocational Readiness and CBVT are gaining employability skills that they can transfer into the community, while providing students in need essential daily living items. Overall, many students are benefiting from No Cost to Shop. It is a positive outcome for everyone involved.

The last detail was ensuring shoppers took part in an authentic retail experience. Students from Jason Woolslare's art classes designed and painted a screen to add artistic flair to the space and SHS teacher Bruce Clark made and donated a bench for students to use when trying on shoes.

So how can you help? The No Cost to Shop store is always looking for donations. There is a bin located in the captured entrance of the senior high school near the main office. See specific needs below. We ask that donations are new or gently used items. Thank you.

**Specific Needs:**

- Hairbrushes
- Hangers
- New hygiene products
- Men's clothing
- Shoes
- Ladies tunics/sweaters

**Additional thanks to:**

Megan Bonistalli  
National Honor Society Students  
Terry Serman  
Jennifer Smith  
Rebecca Grinnen  
Gianna Talento  
Olivia Headley  
Sarah Marip  
Morgan Wazenegger  
Julia Merrick  
Lillie Fowler  
Ken Macek  
Olivia Beaudoin  
Caroline Zulick  
Gregory Young  
Grace Abbott  
Tomas Murra  
Tanner Huckestein  
Tess Kyyashko
WINTER WEATHER UPDATES

Now that winter weather has made an early appearance, we want to take this time to highlight our 2021-22 plans for inclement weather closures, also known as snow days.

The first inclement weather closure will work as a traditional snow day so that students can enjoy the day. We feel it’s important for students to enjoy the outdoors and have fun! Should that first closure occur before Feb. 18, 2022, we will use Friday, Feb. 18, 2022 as the makeup day for the first closure.

Starting with the second inclement weather closure, to and including all other closure days, the District will utilize livestreaming days that will run on a student two-hour delay so that teachers and students can prepare for livestreaming instruction. Students will be expected to log on to the SV Portal and access the teacher-provided livestreaming link(s) in the Announcements section. Logging in is key as doing so electronically collects student attendance. Inclement Weather School/Class Announcements will be made available for student/parent viewing via the SV Portal after 9:30 a.m., on the day of the closure.

K-6 Schedule on inclement weather CLOSURE days:
10:55 a.m. - 3:25 p.m. Remote Synchronous Instruction with Students (teachers will post classroom schedules in the announcement section of the portal.)

Modified A.M. Kindergarten: 10:55 a.m. – 12:43 p.m.
Modified P.M. Kindergarten: 1:37 p.m. – 3:25 p.m.

7-8 Schedule on inclement weather CLOSURE days:
10 a.m. – 2:30 p.m. Remote Synchronous Instruction with Students

Period 1 - 10 a.m. – 10:25 a.m.
Period 2 - 10:30 a.m. – 10:55 p.m.
Period 3 - 11 a.m. – 11:25 p.m.
Period 4 - 11:30 a.m. – 11:55 a.m.
LUNCH - Noon – 12:30 p.m.
Period 5 - 12:35 p.m. – 1 p.m.
Period 6 - 1:05 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.
Period 7 - 1:35 p.m. – 2 p.m.
Period 8 - 2:05 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.

9-12 Schedule on inclement weather CLOSURE days:
10:01 a.m. – 2:33 p.m. Remote Synchronous Instruction with Students

Period 1 - 10:01 a.m. – 10:26 a.m.
Period 2 - 10:30 a.m. – 10:55 p.m.
Period 3 - 10:59 a.m. – 11:24 p.m.
Period 4 - 11: 28 a.m. – 11:58 a.m.
Period 5 - 12:02 p.m. – 12:32 p.m.
Period 6 - 12:36 p.m. – 1:06 p.m.
Period 7 - 1:10 p.m. – 1:35 p.m.
Period 8 - 1:39 p.m. – 2:04 p.m.
Period 9 - 2:08 p.m. – 2:33 p.m.

When Seneca Valley has a closing or delay, the district will first utilize the parent notification system (SchoolMessenger), which will be programmed to call/text the phone number designated for each child. Make sure this information is updated in the parent tab of the SV Portal. In addition to the mass notification call (SchoolMessenger), this information can be found on:

• www.svsd.net
• KDKA Radio 1020 AM
• KDKA-TV Channel 2
• WTVN-TV Channel 4
• WPXI-TV Channel 11
• SVTV Channel 50 (Digital Channel 208, TV Channel 407 for Consolidated Communications)
• SV Mobile App
• The district’s main line - via a recording - at (724) 452-6040

NEWS AND EVENTS
50 DAYS OF FUN

These cool cats recently celebrated the 50th day of school – 50s-style!

First graders at Evans City Elementary (ECE) School had a nifty day learning all about the 1950s and working with the number 50.

Throughout the day, they listened to Chubby Checker, Elvis Presley, Little Richard and learned about record players and jukeboxes. They also played with games and items invented during that time like Sorry!, Yahtzee, LEGOs and Play-Doh, which was first used to clean scuff marks off walls!

ECE First Grade Teacher Natalie Ranalli added, “We counted 50 stickers, stamps and did 50 exercises. It was a day filled with hand jives, Presley, learning and fun!”

GARDEN BOUNTY

Students at Rowan Elementary are planting the seeds for success with an experience provided through Captain Planet Foundation’s (CPF) Project Learning Garden Grant.

At the beginning of the year, students in different classrooms selected, researched and planted various seeds in Rowan’s new learning garden beds.

Students in Ms. Candace McComb’s fourth grade class chose spinach, which they recently harvested. The fruit of their labor resulted in a “spinach salad sampling,” with each student having a role in preparing and facilitating the tasting.

Rowan Elementary Principal Nan Farmar added, “This wonderful learning experience resulted from our staff and students’ energy and passion, along with resources provided through the Captain Planet Project Learning Garden Grant that was written and submitted in collaboration with our Rowan PTA.”

According to their website, CPF has funded over 2,700 hands-on environmental education projects with schools and non-profits that serve children in all 50 U.S. states and 35 countries internationally.

GIVING BACK

Haine Elementary (HE) students learned that you can’t put a price on giving back.

The building kicked off World Kindness Day (Nov. 13) with a coin drive to support Gleaner’s Food Bank in Cranberry Township.

Throughout November, students in grades K-4 were encouraged to donate toward the cause.

Additionally, students read the book “Maddie’s Fridge,” which helped them understand the struggles many families face regarding hunger.

As a whole school, they were able to collect and donate $3,000!

A MESSAGE OF HOPE

Haine Middle School (HMS) students are letting grieving kids know they are not alone.

In honor of Children’s Grief Awareness Day (Nov. 18, 2021), HMS students decorated butterflies in memory of someone, in support of a friend, or as a message of hope.

Pictured is HMS Student Council, aka Voices that Care, who displayed the butterflies in the stairwell for all students to see. In addition, fifth and sixth grade students wore blue to spread awareness and hope for children who are grieving from the loss of a loved one.

‘I LED THE PLEDGE’

The November Seneca Valley School Board (virtual) Meetings featured Reese Abraham, a second grader from Haine Elementary School and Evita Barjolo, a second grader from Connoquenessing Valley Elementary (CVE) School, as they led the Board and public in saying “The Pledge of Allegiance.”

“The students were thrilled to see how small acts of kindness add up,” exclaimed HE Second Grade Teacher Meagan Anderson. “We loved witnessing the joy students found in giving and were thrilled to support our community!”

Both students were nominated by their building administration to represent their grade, and both did an outstanding job! Miss Abraham and Miss Barjolo were rewarded for their efforts with an “I Led the Pledge” shirt, medal and SV spirit wear.

We are pleased to continue the tradition of inviting elementary students from Seneca Valley’s K-4 schools to lead the members of the School Board and public in saying “The Pledge of Allegiance” at both the work session and regular board meetings.
SV HONORS VETERANS

At Seneca Valley, we are grateful for our military service personnel past and present, and the families who support them. In honor of Veterans Day, Seneca Valley students districtwide participated in writing letters to Veterans, holding a drive-thru recognition and sending care packages to active military overseas.

Click the links below to view Veteran tribute videos.

We Remember
‘Thank You, Soldiers’
SV SENIOR EARS PERFECT SCORES

College admission exams like the SAT and ACT bring a lot of pressure for students to achieve a “good” score, but a perfect one on both exams is much harder to achieve.

Seneca Valley Senior Liam Volk-Klos recently received notification that he scored a perfect 1600 on the SAT while simultaneously earning a perfect composite score of 36 on the ACT.

It is incredibly challenging to earn a perfect on the SAT exam. It is estimated that out of the two million students who take the SAT every year, only about 500 earn the highest score. Mr. Volk-Klos scored in the 99th nationally representative sample percentile and SAT User percentile for both his reading and writing and math scores.

When you consider Mr. Volk-Klos also achieved a perfect ACT score, it’s even more of a feat; it’s considered incredibly rare with less than 1% earning such a double honor. In the U.S. high school graduating class of 2020, only 5,579 out of 1.67 million students who took the ACT earned a top composite score of 36.

Mr. Volk-Klos added, “I want to thank all my teachers, the English and math teachers I’ve had; Mrs. Mihalik, Mrs. Armor, Mrs. Kerr, Mrs. Murray, Mrs. Ruggeri; I couldn’t have done this without them. I also want to thank both my mom and my dad. My dad got me into reading which I attribute much of my success.”

“We would like to congratulate as well as celebrate such a rare and distinguished accomplishment,” said Seneca Valley Senior High School Principal Bob Ceh. “The wealth of knowledge and problem-solving ability that is required to score a perfect on both exams is something that is hardly ever seen in high schools.”

IMPACTFUL LESSON

Seventh and eighth grade students in gifted education classes had the opportunity to experience the Holocaust through an interactive and collaborative workshop.

Performer Susan Stein, who has starred in the one-woman play based on the diaries and letters of Etty Hillesum, spoke to Ryan Gloyer Middle School (RGMS) classes on Nov. 4.

While at RGMS, Ms. Stein led activities including close readings of children’s diary entries from the Holocaust years, creating scripts and performing skits. RGMS teachers supplemented these activities by teaching background information, creating poems and offering the opportunity to create an art installation.

GETTING THE SHOT

Ryan Gloyer Middle School (RGMS) gifted students observed nature with a new lens.

The Purpose students in Zeke Stroupe’s class completed a nature photography session as part of their science enrichment this past month.

The lesson required students to observe local biodiversity, log species and practice photography skills around the secondary campus.

Some of their photos included fungus on a tree, a close up of berries and one amazing shot of a crayfish!

“We looked for shots that made the campus look beautiful and also ones that found species that we were able to have students identify,” stated RGMS Purpose Teacher Zeke Stroupe.
PARTNER UP

SV partnered up with employers to help high school students prepare for their future careers.

PartnerUp is an employer-led career-readiness program that provides students with the opportunity to apply and interview at major employers in the region. Through these seven two-hour sessions that are held during the school day, students develop interviewing skills, resume development and more that will benefit them for any career path.

Currently, there are 28 seniors who committed to this first-time partnership.

“If students complete this program, they will be guaranteed at least one professional job interview at the end of the school year with the businesses in the partnership,” said Seneca Valley Coordinator of Collegiate and Career Affairs Darla Ramirez-Lightner. “We are the first and only school in Butler County who participates in this program.”

STANDING TOGETHER

Staff and students at the intermediate high school recognized Children’s Grief Awareness Day on Nov. 18, by wearing blue. This effort was in support of grieving children, adults and families everywhere, and especially in the SV community.

SIGNED, SEALED, DELIVERED

A handwritten note can mean so much.

SV Senior High School (SHS) Learn, Explore, Act, Develop (LEAD) Ambassadors found this out when they delivered handwritten notes of gratitude to bus drivers, maintenance staff, secretaries, cafeteria workers, nurses and security personnel.

The LEAD students also set up tables in the cafeteria, so any student had the opportunity to send a note of gratitude to a staff member or friend.

In total, over 400 notes of gratitude were written and delivered!
The Seneca Valley School District is pleased to present the

23<sup>rd</sup> Annual Senior Holiday Event

Tuesday, Dec. 21, 2021 • 12:30 p.m.
(doors open at Noon)

Location: Seneca Valley Intermediate High School
126 Seneca School Road, Harmony, PA 16037

This special holiday presentation is for senior citizens living in the Seneca Valley School District Community. This year’s event begins at 12:30 p.m. with various performances by high school student groups.

A warm holiday meal will be available for takeout (only) at the conclusion of the performances.*

The event is free. However, reservations are required. Please call (724) 452-6040, ext. 0 by Dec. 14, 2021.

*Auditorium seating will not be available before noon; please do not arrive before that time. Additionally, please note that a sit-down meal is unable to be held this year. We are pleased to provide attendees with takeout meals. Masks are required.
SV BAND ‘BEATS THE DRUM’ FOR CANCER AWARENESS

October may be over, but the impact of one group is far from done.

The week leading up to SV’s Pink Night football game, Seneca Valley Band members held their annual campaign called “SV Band Gives Back.” Their designated charity this year was Cancer Bridges in support of SV’s very own Athletic Director Ms. Heather Lewis.

By the end of the week, they raised over $2,100 - surpassing their goal!

Seneca Valley Music Teacher and Academy of Choice Performing Arts Coordinator Varden Armstrong said, “It is an honor to work with such great students and families that are willing to think beyond themselves and support a great cause for our annual ‘Give Back’ week. Supporting Ms. Lewis and being able to highlight Cancer Bridges made this year’s campaign very special.”

At the game on Oct. 29, the band, along with SV Cheerleaders and the student section, also showed their support by donning pink T-Shirts and ribbons.

“I am so grateful for the philanthropic efforts of our band program and very much humbled they would consider a donation in my name,” stated Ms. Lewis. “Cancer Bridges is a wonderful organization that assists so many through their journey of cancer diagnosis, treatment and recovery. I’m absolutely thrilled they are the recipients of the band’s ‘Give Back’ efforts.”

JAM SESSION

Who’s got spirit? The Seneca Valley Mini-Marching Band Project (MMBP)!

These instrumentalists surprised Haine Middle School and Evans City Middle School students with a musical greeting earlier this month.

The groups were able to promote the SV Marching Band and spread school spirit as students arrived for the day.

“The MMBP was started as a way for students to show their school pride within the District and community,” said Seneca Valley Marching Band Director Varden Armstrong. “It consists of juniors and seniors and is run by the students. This project has been a great way for the students to develop teamwork and student leadership.”
NEW COURSE PROVIDES REAL-WORLD PERSPECTIVE ON MEDIA

While most of SV’s video production classes offer extensive work in production and the aesthetics of multimedia, this year’s new course, Media Literacy and Effects, is giving students much-needed exposure to countless other subjects surrounding media and society.

In just over nine weeks, students have consumed, analyzed, evaluated and created media in a variety of forms and have learned from many experts in the field.

To give students a sense of the importance of clarity in visual communication, they were required to produce an instructional video. The professional productions featured topics ranging from using music recording apps to cooking a perfect grilled cheese sandwich.

Students have also been engaging in weekly deep discussions about media bias, misinformation, disinformation, the importance of fact-checking and the role of news media in democracy. Several media literacy students even attended a fascinating lecture by an expert in extremist movements prevalent on social media.

The class has researched the physical, social and emotional dangers of social media addiction and have even taken part in a “digital detox” day, where they spent a cold and drizzly class period in the woods with no phones. A seemingly simple activity, this day gave students a wealth of information to talk about as they gauged the effects of disconnecting and discussed the benefits of “living in the moment.”

When discussing social media on a corporate and educational scale, Seneca Valley Communications Specialist Katie Huttinger, taught a lesson to the class on using social media wisely and appropriately and the necessity of knowing your audience.

Transitioning into the idea of personal branding and digital footprints, students are currently functioning as social media managers for school clubs. There are many more topics and projects to come in the final weeks of class, including a public service announcement project in December as well as other creative design tasks.

“The relevance of media literacy has become more and more prominent in our everyday lives as we all are exposed to various forms of news on differing platforms,” said sophomore Caleb Magill. “This class has been very beneficial as it has enabled students to explore how companies and individuals convey a message to their viewers and the techniques behind them.”

GRADUATE BRASS QUINTET INSPIRES SV MUSICIANS

Sometimes small events can have a big impact.

Nothing truer could be said of the recent visit by the University of Delaware Graduate Brass Quintet. The Seneca Valley High School band program hosted a lecture recital featuring the group on Oct. 29.

High school brass musicians were invited to take part as audience members and were also involved in a question/answer session, which focused on general musicianship, ensemble playing and music as a career.

“Seeing people from all over come together to perform at such a high quality was really inspiring,” stated sophomore trombonist Bridget Scott. “Not only did we get to hear music of all different kinds, but we were given some of the best advice on how to improve, have fun and where music could potentially take you.”

Sophomore trumpet player Kami Topf added, “It was really interesting to see the way they all interacted with each other on a musical level, like the way they kept eye contact to keep track of their entrances. It was also cool to see the trumpet players switching between the Bb trumpet, piccolo trumpet and flugelhorn. Overall,

I’m very glad I was able hear them play. Not only did they sound amazing, but I learned a lot that will be beneficial for when I start participate in chamber groups later on.”

All members of the University of Delaware Graduate Brass quintet are currently performance graduate students. Members include: Justin Way – trumpet, Stephen Zariello – trumpet, Joseph Herring – horn, Matthew Darr – trombone, and Clayton Dungey – tuba. To find out more about this ensemble, visit http://www.udbrassquintet.com.
GRATITUDE

It only seems appropriate for my November message to center around the opportunity to give thanks and express sincere gratitude for so many. So here goes.

I am grateful to work with so many caring students. The picture on the right is with our Seneca Valley Cheerleaders and representatives from the Cancer Bridges organization. Senior cheerleader Jada Nabry organized fundraising efforts in October with her #SVAllIn pink T-Shirts and joined forces with the Raider Marching Band “SV Band Gives Back” initiative to present Cancer Bridges with a check for $6,105. Cancer Bridges provides so many support services to those impacted by cancer and the philanthropic efforts of our students, staff and community left me speechless on this day.

I am grateful to work alongside what I consider the best coaches in the WPIAL - they are all teachers, leaders and servers to our student-athletes. They lead their teams to unprecedented levels of success; their teachings extend beyond X’s and O’s to more important life lessons, and they serve our students as mentors, counselors and positive role models. I consider myself one lucky athletic director to have a front row seat to their passion, commitment and excellence.

I am grateful to watch outstanding scholar-athletes in action not only in competition but outside the arena as well. I witness student leaders in the hallways; I am awed by the intellectual brilliance on display in classrooms; and I am humbled by their respect and compassion as human beings. They were who I missed most this fall during my leave and joining them on the sidelines in late October was the energy boost I needed!

I am grateful to Diana McCauley, Megan Meeder and Sandy Millett along with all secondary campus administrators who were responsible for the athletics department thriving this fall season. Your work behind the scenes in my absence was nothing short of amazing and there are no words to adequately convey my appreciation. I will simply say “Thank You” for everything you have done this year!

I am grateful to work in a community and for a District that has supported me through one of life’s most challenging journeys. I am not capable of stringing together the right words to express my sincere appreciation for all the support I have received since February. From the team photos and supportive gestures to the notes, emails, and texts I have received, each of them has been so helpful and very much appreciated. While the journey still has a few steps to go, I would not have been able to make it this far without all your support and for that I am truly grateful.

As we bring the fall season to a close and with genuine enthusiasm look forward to the upcoming winter and spring seasons, may we take time during the upcoming holidays to step away and cherish the moments with family and friends. May we all stay present in the day and appreciate all of life’s many blessings. #SVRaiderNation.

COACHING MILESTONES

The fall season provided two long-time coaches the opportunity to collect milestone wins in their careers.

Head girls’ soccer coach Mark Perry collected career win #600 with a 1-0 win in the WPIAL semifinals over Fox Chapel on Nov. 1.

Longtime middle school soccer coach Oliver Wiehe collected career win #200 with a 2-0 win over visiting Mars on Sept. 24. We congratulate Coach Perry and Coach Wiehe on milestone victories this season!
**FALL SPORT SEASON RECAPS**

**Cross Country**

Both the boy’s and girls’ cross country teams finished with identical section records of 6-1 and a second place standing in section competition. At the WPIAL championships held on the campus of California University of Pennsylvania, both teams placed fourth in the team standings, one place out of team qualification for the PIAA State Championships. Individually, Noah Petersen finished fifth overall at WPIAL’s thus qualifying for the state championships in Hershey on Nov. 6. At the state meet, Noah finished 54th out of 239 competitors. On the girl’s side, Ruthie Hughes secured her berth to the PIAA Championships following her 18th place finish at the WPIAL championships. Joining Noah in Hershey, Ruthie completed the race in 40th place out of 238 competitors. We congratulate head coach Steve Strelick and all athletes on another good run this season.

**Football**

The Raiders finished the regular season with a 7-3 overall record and, as a result of their 17-12 win over the visiting Tigers of NA on the last day of the regular season, earned a first-round bye in the WPIAL championship bracket. Following a bye week, SV was on the road to face number two seed Central Catholic on Friday, Nov. 12. The Vikings capitalized on a few early turnovers and never looked back in a 42-21 win that ended the championship hopes of our Raiders. Under the guidance of head coach Ron Butschle, this youthful bunch developed into a formidable team with great promise for the future.

**Boys’ Golf**

Senior Nolan Nicklas led a Raider squad that finished as co-champions of their section with a record of 9-3. Following a second-place finish in the WPIAL Team semifinals, the Raiders advanced to the Team Championship Finals where they finished fourth overall. Individually, SV had four athletes advance from their section qualifier to WPIAL Individual semifinals. From there, Nicklas advanced to the WPIAL Individual Finals where he placed 15th overall. We congratulate head coach Dean Leventopoulos on their section title and another great season.

**Girls’ Golf**

Head Coach Kevin Wildrick led the Raiders to a second consecutive appearance in the WPIAL Team Finals where SV finished sixth. This season’s appearance marked the second time in program history Seneca Valley qualified for the team finals. Individually, Lihini Ranaweera was the section champion for the second year in a row and she was joined by teammate Madison Sharek in the WPIAL Individual finals where Lihini finished 12th and Madison 22rd.
Girls' Soccer

Head Coach Mark Perry, who collected career win #600 in the semifinal round of the WPIAL championships, led the Raiders to a WPIAL runner-up trophy and an overall season record of 16-5-2. As the second-place finisher in section 1, Seneca Valley entered the WPIAL bracket as the fourth seed and advanced to Highmark with wins over Penn Trafford, Norwin and Fox Chapel. Moon had SV's number in the championship game winning 4-0 and the loss sent the Raiders up to McDowell for their PIAA first round game. Despite having control of the play, the Raiders were unable to capitalize on their scoring chances and fell to McDowell 2-1 in overtime to close out their season. It was another great season for Raider girls' soccer, and we wish the 12-member graduating class of 2022 all the best.

Girls' Tennis

After a 13-year drought, head coach Eric Grove led his Raider squad to an appearance in the WPIAL Team championships following a 5-3 record in section play. Despite falling in the first round to the eventual WPIAL champion, Coach Grove and the Raiders are to be congratulated for a great season. The doubles team of Payton Aloi and Anna Winland advanced to the second round of the individual sectional tournament to highlight one of the many outstanding performances this season. We congratulate this team and coaching staff on their commitment and dedication in pursuit of making the WPIAL championships.

Girls' Volleyball

Raider girls' volleyball completed their regular season with a 6-6 section record and overall record of 10-6 to advance to the WPIAL 4A championships. SV defeated USC 3-1 in the opening round of playoffs before falling to the eventual champions in the quarterfinals. During the regular season, the Raiders also picked up tournament championships at Canon-Mac and Norwin. We congratulate head coach Brett Poirier and the entire program on another good season!
A HISTORIC SEASON
Not since Sept. 24, 2020, has our Raider boys’ soccer program tasted defeat. On that night, Seneca Valley fell to host Butler 2-1. What followed were 14 straight wins including a section, WPIAL and PIAA title to end the 2020 season.

In 2021, the Raiders never tasted defeat in the regular season - their only non-win was a tie against visiting Fox Chapel on October 5, 2021. Following an 11-0-1 section mark and regular season overall record of 15-0-1, Seneca Valley entered the WPIAL playoffs as the top-seed, earning a first-round bye. The Raiders ran off three consecutive wins over Allderdice (1-0), Fox Chapel (1-0) and Peters Township (3-1) to take home their second consecutive WPIAL title! At the end of the WPIAL championships, the Raiders extended their overall record to 18-0-1.

The defending PIAA 4A state champions began their quest to repeat with an opening round win (3-0) over visiting Hempfield out of PIAA District III. Moving onto the quarterfinal round, Seneca Valley travelled to Mechanicsburg, PA to face Lower Merion out of District I and come home victorious, 3-0, to advance to the semifinals - their opponent would be none another than Peters Township. The rematch of the WPIAL finals was a back-and-forth affair and certainly did not lack in excitement. Nathan Prex got the Raiders on the board first scoring from a direct free kick. Following a tying goal by Peters Township, Max Marcotte knotted the game winner off a Beaux Lizewski assist with just under seven minutes to play and the Raiders secured their place at Hershey Stadium on Friday, Nov. 19, with a chance to bring home a second consecutive PIAA 4A title.

The Raiders brought a 21-0-1 record into the state final versus Conestoga. Over the course of two seasons, Seneca Valley had not lost a game in 420 days, compiling an overall record of 35-0-1. Despite playing one of its best games of the season, the Raiders met their match in a physically imposing Conestoga team and suffered a difficult defeat 1-0. The difference it the game: one header off a set piece. These two teams were as evenly matched as one will ever find in a title game and played a tremendous game of soccer. Our boys have nothing to hang their heads about. They were composed, competitive, and courageous on the big stage and represented themselves, their program, and our District with absolute class. They finished the season 21-1-1, WPIAL champions and state runner-up and did not lose a game in 420 days. That is a remarkable run of sustained excellence and certainly a season for the ages. Well played and well done, SV!

ATHLETES OF THE MONTH, OCTOBER 2021

The Female Athlete of the Month was senior Emma Davis. Emma was a captain of the girls’ varsity volleyball team and helped lead the Raiders to a 7-2 record in the month of October. SV finished the regular season winning the Norwin tournament with a 10-1 record on the day. In playoff action, the Raiders beat Upper Saint Clair in the first round of playoffs but lost to WPIAL champion North Allegheny in the quarter finals. Emma’s stats for the month of October included 186 kills, 33 digs, 20 aces and seven blocks. Emma is a four-year varsity letter winner and a two-year varsity captain. Emma also earned first team All-Section honors and second team All-WPIAL honors this year. Congratulations on a great senior year, Emma!

The Male Athlete of the Month was senior Nathan Prex. Nathan was a captain of the boys’ soccer team and has led the Raiders to a conference record of 11-0-1 and to a third WPIAL 4A Championship in four years. Individual accolades for Nathan this year include: Big 56 1st team selection, WPIAL 4A Co-Player of the Year, WPSCA 4A All-Section and All-WPIAL selections, PIAA 4A All-State selection. Nathan also broke the All-Time Single Season Scoring Record at SV this year that has stood for over 30 years. The previous record was 32 goals and Nathan is at 36 and counting as the Raiders continue their quest for back to back PIAA state titles. For an outstanding month, we recognize Nathan as the October Athlete of the Month. Congratulations on a great senior year, Nathan!
SENeca Valley does the neighborly THING

Staff and community members of Seneca Valley School District answered a call for help to make the holidays memorable for SV students in need.

“Five Days to $5K” was a one-week fundraiser with the goal of supporting Neighbors for Neighbors (N4N), a local Butler County organization that is committed to fulfilling holiday wish lists of Seneca Valley students in need.

The response was staggering.

“We far exceeded our goal in just five days,” exclaimed Seneca Valley Foundation Development Director Annie Mersing, who posed the fundraising challenge for the second year in a row. “In total, we raised $5,880, over double the amount raised in the same number of days last year. Given the continued impact of the pandemic and the current economic crisis, we anticipate many families will struggle to give their children a memorable holiday season this year. I truly appreciate everyone who donated to this tremendous cause and, once again, showed how generous the people of SV can be.”

N4N was formed in 2011 and has been a longtime partner of Seneca Valley’s fulfilling the wish lists of students and families that often ask for basic necessities such as jackets, shoes, clothes, blankets and toiletries. The organization’s efforts began in Penn Hills, helping single moms who were working two or three jobs but still struggling to make ends meet. Once founder and Cranberry Township resident, Amy Roy, learned of the significant hidden need in Seneca Valley School District, the focus shifted to helping students and families in her own neighborhood. According to Ms. Roy, “N4N is community based and it could not fulfill wish lists without the support of our friends, family, neighbors and organizations like SVF.”

To learn more about and support Neighbors for Neighbors, visit their webpage: http://www.n4npgh.org and their Amazon Wish List: https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/4D2MQY5H3223?ref_=wl_share.

Additional information about SVF’s mission can be found here: www.svsd.net/SVF.

Support SVF Foundation by shopping

With the holidays right around the corner, we are asking you to shop - for a cause!

The Seneca Valley Foundation is registered with AmazonSmile, a program where Amazon donates 0.5% of the price of eligible smile.amazon.com purchases to the charities selected by customers.

To shop and make a donation to Seneca Valley Foundation visit: https://smile.amazon.com/ch/45-4050585.

The AmazonSmile Foundation is a 501(c) (3) private foundation created by Amazon to administer the AmazonSmile program. All donation amounts generated by the AmazonSmile program are remitted to the AmazonSmile Foundation. In turn, the AmazonSmile Foundation donates those amounts to the charitable organizations selected by our customers. Amazon pays all expenses of the AmazonSmile Foundation; they are not deducted from the donation.
SV ALL-STAR

The SV All-Star Club is an awards program developed by the District to express our gratitude to Seneca Valley classified employees (secretaries, paraprofessionals, maintenance, cafeteria) and bus drivers who are often the unsung heroes of our schools. We intend to recognize a new member of this elite all-star club each month.

For November, we are pleased to announce that the newest member inducted into the club is Christi Rice, a paraprofessional at Evans City Elementary (ECE) School, who goes above and beyond daily.

ECE Assistant Principal Dr. Andrew Teti shared, “Mrs. Rice has been a paraprofessional at ECE for nearly 30 years. She genuinely loves the children she works with. She lives in the community and some of our students play with her grandchildren and learn from her even when she isn’t on the clock.”

Mrs. Rice openly struggled with technology when the schools closed back in March 2020.

“She wasn’t sure if she would be able to learn everything required to help our students as she had in the past,” stated Dr. Teti. “However, she persevered and has been highly successful in using TEAMS and the other platforms in order to assist the students she works with.”

“It is an honor to work at Evans City Elementary,” said Ms. Rice. “The teachers and fellow paras, along with Dr. Teti and ECE Principal Ms. Lauri Pendred, have been patient and supportive of me. I learn through them and think we all have made a positive impact on students. The Evans City crew is like family and I am really lucky to be a part of that family.”

Dr. Teti added, “She is a pillar of our school and community, never complains, yet knows when to speak up if she sees something that needs to be corrected. Prior to the pandemic, Mrs. Rice was asked to work with a student who had significant challenges. Initially, it was obvious that Mrs. Rice was uncomfortable with some of the behaviors the student exhibited. She was able to work with the student on his behaviors, ultimately helping him to overcome them and focus on school. She was instrumental in this student’s success. This is just one example of many that I could share - and I have only been here for three years! Mrs. Rice works well with everyone in the building and is always willing to do whatever it takes to ensure the students are successful.”

Congratulations, Ms. Rice!

A BIG WIN

Congratulations to Seneca Valley Senior High School Health/Physical Education Teacher Rob Naylor! Mr. Naylor is the head coach for Montour School District Girls Cross Country Team. He recently led the team to their first-ever PIAA State Championship.

STAFF OF SV

Be sure to check out the latest Staff of SV, a light-hearted feature that was created to share with our followers the more human-interest side of our staff that parents and students don’t always get to see.

This month features Rowan Elementary Third Grade Teacher Christina King and how she went from red-carpet events to the halls of SV. Read more at www.svsd.net/StaffofSV.
ALUMNI Q&A

Christy Lucas, SV ’12 Graduate, graduated from Pennsylvania State University (PSU) College of Medicine in 2020. She is currently a second year Pediatrics resident at Children’s Hospital of Pittsburgh. 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: I graduated from Notre Dame in 2016, where I double majored in Science Pre-professional Studies and Psychology and graduated from medical school at Penn State College of Medicine in 2020. I’m currently a second year Pediatrics resident at Children’s Hospital of Pittsburgh and am hoping to pursue a fellowship after. One of my research interests is the patient experience, so I am working to redesign hospital gowns for patients and providers so that gowns can be more modest, comfortable, functional and humanizing.

Q: Please share with us some information about your family.
A: I live with my twin sister in Ross Township now, but my parents still live in Cranberry. My sister works for UPMC in hospital finance, and I work for UPMC as a physician.

Q: What might (someone) be surprised to know about you?
A: I do not know how to ride a bike without training wheels. It is a strange fun fact, but I see it as a way to stay grounded; it helps me remember that there are many things I can do, but there will always be something that I cannot do (which someone else can probably do very easily).

Q: How did Seneca Valley help you become the person you are today, both personally and professionally?
A: Seneca Valley gave me the space to explore my intellectual curiosities with classes like AP Biology, AP Calculus, AP History, and AP Chemistry that prepared me for college and medical school, but also gave me the chance to embrace creativity and viewing the world from a different perspective with Drawing, Painting, and Senior Career Art—a much appreciated break in my school day.

Q: What do you think makes Seneca Valley such a special place to learn and grow?
A: The teachers—they are incredibly creative and extremely dedicated to their students to make sure they succeed in school and out in the real world.

Q: Who was your favorite teacher/coach/SV staff member?
A: I have multiple favorites! I will probably forget to list someone—Mrs. Hopkins (5th grade), Mr. Roman (7th grade), Mr. Zimmerman (7th grade), Mrs. Butschle (9th grade), Mr. Fetchko (9th grade), Frau Sibeto (9th grade), Mrs. O’Toole (10th grade), Mrs. Hugus (10th grade), Mr. Magill (10th grade), Mrs. McLaughlin (10th grade), Mr. Nagle (11th and 12th grade), Mr. Hanlon (11th grade), Mr. Lucot (12th grade).

Q: What is one of your favorite memories from your time at Seneca Valley?
A: I really enjoyed my first period drawing class with Mr. Nagle during my junior year. For one activity, a student would pick up a prop (e.g., a parasol, book, large hat) and stand on the main table as we did blind line drawings of them. You were not allowed to look at your paper, but rather had to stay focused on who/what you were drawing. The best advice he gave was, no erasing because “you put that line there for a reason.” We then used a line drawing, imperfections and all, to make a piece of art. I continue to remember this lesson because as human beings, we make mistakes and things don’t always go as planned, but that does not mean the experience was not meaningful or valuable.

Q: If you had one message for teachers or staff, what would it be?
A: Thank you for believing that still waters run deep.

Q: What do you wish other people knew about Seneca Valley?
A: I hope people will come to know how kind and hard-working the teachers are, and that so many go above and beyond the job description of “teacher” to help students succeed as intellectuals and human beings. I am grateful for the education that I got at Seneca Valley.
THE TALK TO HAVE ABOUT INSTAGRAM AT HOME RIGHT NOW  By Delaney Ruston, MD

This week I was asked to speak on CNN about how Instagram can impact youth mental health. I was glad to voice my concern, and it has been great to see so many others speaking out. I want to encourage everyone to be vocal right now. Our voices matter.

Let me give an example from the past.

In 2016 FB (and Instagram) asked me to come to their headquarters and show Screenagers to their adolescent division. I spoke about negative emotions that were happening to young people related to social media and my concerns about excessive use and addiction. Our conversation was very much a back and forth, and they were open to discussing the benefits and risks of their platforms on adolescents.

Around that same time, Facebook was talking about developing a Facebook-type product for youth younger than 13. Fortunately, there was pushback from the public, and this never came to fruition.

Now we have learned that they have been thinking of doing the same thing for Instagram — making an Instagram version for kids younger than 13. But the public outcry worked, as they have halted efforts for now.

Our voices matter. Helping our kids become more knowledgeable about the issues transpiring about these companies and platforms can help them become more vocal about these concerns, whether that’s now or sometime later in their lives.

Let’s talk with our kids about the leaked papers that revealed that Facebook has been internally talking about how youth can have very negative emotions on social media but find it hard to pull away.

I know this from talking with youth about this for 10 years. And in “Screenagers Next Chapter,” researcher Vicky Rideout talks about her research finding of this very point. She says,

“What I worry about the most is the young people who say when I’m feeling depressed or stressed or anxious, using social media makes me feel worse, but I do it anyway. I can’t stop.”

When I was interviewing UC Berkeley researcher Ron Dahl for “Screenagers Next Chapter,” he told me his ideas about the phenomenon that teens are more likely to revel in negative feelings than adults. The following quote is from our interview:

“Adolescents are often doing the equivalent of putting their tongue in a toothache with their sadness . . . sometimes what they want to do is explore their feelings just like they like going to horror movies and riding roller coasters.

“It’s not because they like being afraid, but they’re learning to master these strong feelings.

The only way to learn how to deal with strong feelings is to have some experience with them, and some of the proclivity to experiment with strong feelings may actually be quite adaptive. It may help us learn how to deal with those strong feelings.”

There is a lot from above to unpack at your dinner table or in the classroom. When we see things or have interactions over social media that tilt our feelings in a negative direction, what is that like? What are our thoughts? Do we ever purposely feed the negative by continuing on the platform? I say “social media,” but I am also talking about things like Google chats or texting for youth who are not on Instagram, Discord, or other social media sites.

Questions to get the conversation started:

1. See if you can start today’s discussion by sharing a recent time you had a negative feeling related to social media. And did you stay on it, or were you able to stop?
2. Now how would your child or students answer that same question?
3. What does everyone think about researcher Ron Dahl’s theory?

Article and photo provided by Screenagers
• 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!**

• **Drive for SV! Sign-up bonuses are now being offered.**

• Each family is different. An IRS reminder to foster parents, grandparents, aunts or other relatives that they may be eligible for advance Child Tax Credit payments. Learn more at [www.irs.gov/childtaxcredit2021](http://www.irs.gov/childtaxcredit2021).

• **Click here to watch a video of Haine Middle School CIRC Teacher Eric Fogle’s class jump scare robots that students created last month!**

• **Click here to learn more about reporting COVID information to your school nurse.**

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**COLD WEATHER DRIVING TIPS**

Be safe driving this winter with some of these safety tips:

• Check weather ahead of time and give yourself extra time before you leave
• Assess your vehicle
  • Check your tire tread or switch out to snow tires
  • Consider swapping out to winter windshield wiper blades
• Check windshield fluid levels and change out for a winter formula
• Keep fuel level above quarter tank

• Adjust driving speeds for inclement road conditions
• Accelerate and brake slowly
• Allow greater distance when following another vehicle

Items to keep in your car at all times during the winter months:

• Ice Scraper/Snowbrush
• Compact shovel
• Bag of sand or cat litter
• Flashlight
• Blanket
• Hazard triangle or LED flashing light
• First-Aid kit
• Jumper cables/jump box
• Snacks, bottle of water
• Portable cell charger
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