

around the VALLEY

AUGUST 2017



929 lakeshore drive
leesport, PA 19533-8631

SCHUYLKILL VALLEY SCHOOL DISTRICT NEWSLETTER

SV Graduates: Class of 2017



HONOR STUDENTS

Row 1: Brynna Haupt, Bethany Hepner, Jacqueline Marusiak, Daniel Behler, Kylie Brown, Steven Phan, Lydia Forsythe, Alysa Bainbridge, and Thoneca Akhter.

Row 2: Hannah Degler, Elyse Geiger, Nicole Frank, Madison Sisco, Hunter Rice, Trevor Winkler, Tristan Weller, Bethany Schlott, Jenna Phillips, Annabella Kolasa, and Kacie Jones.

Commencement exercises for the 139 members of the Schuylkill Valley Class of 2017 were held on Thursday, June 8, at the high school stadium. Our valedictorian was **Steven Huy Phan**, son of Nghia and Suong Phan, Ontelaunee Township. **Kylie Rae Brown**, daughter of Gary and Padget Brown, Bern Township, was salutatorian.

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Monday, August 28, is the first day of school!

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**SCHUYLKILL VALLEY
SCHOOL DISTRICT**

929 Lakeshore Drive
Leesport PA 19533-8631

ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

Dr. Cindy Mierzejewski

Superintendent

Mr. Michael T. Mitchell, Jr.

High School Principal

Mrs. Maggie E. Drake

High School Assistant Principal

Mr. Joshua Kuehner

Middle School Principal

Mr. Jeremy L. Crills

Assistant Middle School Principal

Mrs. Melissa Kelchner

Elementary School Principal

Mrs. Melissa A. Rhoads

Assistant Elementary School Principal

Mr. Brian F. Lacey

Director, Special Education & Pupil Services

Mr. Michael Billman

Director, Information Technology

Mrs. Wendy Boarder

Business Manager

Mrs. Changming Wang

Assistant Business Manager

Mr. Craig A. Strunk

Director, Buildings & Grounds

Miss Stephanie L. Deibler

Athletic Director

Mrs. Becky Robinson

Director of Food Services

Ms. Robin Brightbill

Director of Human Resources

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Mr. Kevin Raudenbush, *President*

Dr. Jay R. Melvin, *Vice President*

Mrs. Linda R. Lash, *Secretary*

Mr. Paul L. Bendigo

Mr. Robert M. Dempsey

Mr. Jeffrey B. King

Mr. George H. Mertz III

Mr. G. Dane Miller

Mr. Geoffrey P. Miller

BOARD MEETINGS

Committees generally meet the third Monday of the month at 6:30 p.m. Board meetings are generally held the fourth Monday of the month at 7 p.m. in the high school's LeRoy K. Seip room.

TELEPHONE NUMBERS

Administration	610-916-0957
High School	610-926-1706
Middle School	610-926-7111
Elementary School	610-926-4165



superintendent's MESSAGE

It is my honor to begin my tenure as superintendent of the Schuylkill Valley School District. Thanks to the support of the School Board of Directors and **Dr. Warren Mata**, I had the opportunity to have several weeks of transition time into my new role. It was wonderful to be at Schuylkill Valley during the end-of-year activities. There were so many accomplishments celebrated at all levels and in all areas across the district. Of course, the ultimate celebration happened on June 8, with the graduation of 139 members of the Class of 2017. I was proud and grateful to be part of these celebrations.

The theme of the work that has been done during my transition and over the summer is **Continuing Forward**. We want to keep what is positive about our district and schools and move forward in refining and enhancing what we have. As we continue forward, we will look for opportunities to challenge and support our students and staff, and we will have many things to talk about.

One of the first topics that I would like to share is communication. I am

sure that you are aware of the various means that SVSD uses to communicate with students, staff, parents and the community. This summer, SVSD launched its new website (www.schuylkillvalley.org) that provides good resources and information for parents and community members. The district also has a presence on Facebook under the name Schuylkill Valley School District. We use these social media resources to promote the wonderful, positive work that our students and staff are doing and the great things that are happening at SVSD. I encourage everyone in the community to do the same: use these powerful resources in a positive manner to share what we know is good and to encourage those who are working hard to achieve for themselves, for the district and for the community.

Lastly, I would like to share my contact information. My email address is cmierzejewski@schuylkill-valley.org and my office number is 610-916-5441. If I can be of any assistance, please let me know.

Dr. Cindy Mierzejewski
Superintendent

Pride of SV Preview

We are proud to announce the inductees for the Pride of Schuylkill Valley Awards to be presented at a luncheon on Saturday, October 21:

Mrs. Gwen Tranquillo Andrews

Mr. John Barbis

Mr. Shawn Gundrum

Mr. Mervin Moyer

Mr. Dennis Werner

Ms. Corielle Yarde

Mr. Frederick "David" Yoder

Valedictorian Steven Phan



Salutatorian Kylie Brown



SV Graduates: Class of 2017

continued from front cover

Summa cum laude honors (4-year GPA 4.000 or higher):

Steven Phan	Bethany Hepner
Kylie Brown	Alysa Bainbridge
Madison Sisco	Tristan Weller
Thoneca Akhter	Hannah Degler
Jacqueline Marusiak	Nicole Frank
Daniel Behler	

Cum laude (4-year GPA 3.500-3.749):

Megan Lynam
Bailey Miller
Payton Shekalus
Jessica Visbisky
Aaron Danks
Gracey Butsack
Abbie Bailey
Olivia Roth
Maggie Marando
Matthew Orlando
Cecily Godfrey

Magna cum laude honors (4-year GPA 3.750-3.999):

Lydia Forsythe	Bethany Schlott
Elyse Geiger	Trevor Winkler
Brynna Haupt	Annabella Kolasa
Kacie Jones	Hunter Rice
Jenna Phillips	

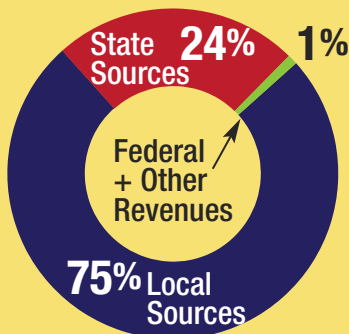
In June, the Schuylkill Valley Board of Directors approved a budget of \$38,001,092, which did not include a tax increase. This is the third year out of the last four years that the Board has avoided raising taxes. Business Manager **Mrs. Wendy Boarder** said that some positive developments contributed to an increase in revenue. The district's property tax rolls grew by about \$9.2 million, adding \$235,000 in new tax revenues. In addition, increased earned income taxes contributed \$100,000 in extra revenue.

The approved budget did not cut any jobs and filled all four retiring teacher positions, in addition to providing for the hiring of a middle school special education teacher, a full-time long-term technology substitute for the high school and middle schools, and a long-term substitute for the elementary school, if needed based on enrollment.

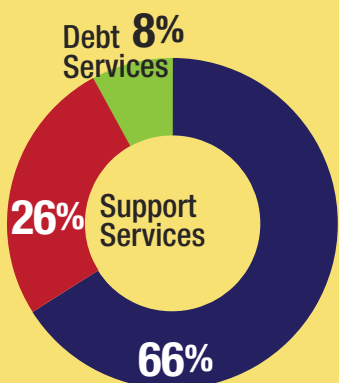
As a result of the distribution of state gaming funds through Act 1 of 2006, school property taxes were reduced by \$154.65 this year for all property owners who qualified as homesteads and/or farmsteads. The annual tax bill for a property assessed at \$100,000 will remain at 27.07 mills, or \$2,707.

For more information about the Schuylkill Valley School District budget, please visit www.schuylkillvalley.org and click on Administration>Business Office.

Revenue



The budget for 2017-2018 has total expenditures of \$38,001,092, which is an increase of \$885,626, or 2.39%, over 2016-2017 expenditures.



Expenditures

2017-2018 District Budget

FUTURE PLANS

Paige Marie Adam
Flagler College

Thoneca Akhter
Temple University

Ethan C. Anthony
Employment

Kane Michael Baez
Reading Area
Community College

Abbie Williams Bailey
Lander University

Alysa Danielle Bainbridge
St. Joseph's University

Ryan J. Bausch
Kutztown University

Daniel L. Behler
Lebanon Valley College

Benjamin James Bowers
Full Sail University

Nathan R. Braucher
Temple University

Alaric O. Bresler
Penn State University

Emma L. Bressler
University of
Massachusetts

Brenden L. Brown
Employment

Dustin M. Brown
Coastal Carolina
University

Dylan P. Brown
College – Undeclared

Kylie Rae Brown
Long Island University

Anna Elizabeth Bunnick
Lehigh University

Rebecca Burkert
Harcum College

Brianna Ashley Burkhart
Millersville University

Gracey A. Butsack
Rutgers University –
New Brunswick

Gavin Camlin
Becker College

**Paige Margaret
Campfield**
Employment

Brandon Lee Colon
Employment

Yazmeen Jade Crespo
Northampton
Community College

Aaron Harold Danks
Temple University

Hannah Marie Degler
Penn State University

Ethan C. Everson
Temple University

Brianna Emily Faith
Employment

Lydia Marie Forsythe
Rutgers University –
New Brunswick

Brina M. Franckowiak
East Stroudsburg
University

Nicole Marie Frank
Susquehanna University

Anthony R. Funez
Penn State University

Karleigh Ann Gangwer
West Virginia University

Elyse Elizabeth Geiger
University of Alabama

**Courtney Nicole
Genslinger**
Alvernia University

Cecily R. Godfrey
Western Governors
University

Nathaniel S. Goff
U.S. National Guard

Olivia Marie Gonzales
College – Undeclared

Chontel Nicole Good
Reading Area
Community College

Kale M. Graybill
Mount Saint Mary's
University

Dylan Paul Haas
Employment

Nicholas M. Hanson
Penn College of
Technology

**Bryinna Mackenzie
Haupt**
Temple University

**Haley Nicole
Heffelfinger**
Millersville University

Bethany A. Hepner
Lebanon Valley College

Jailene Hernandez
Kutztown University

**Riley Paige
Himmelberger**
Morrisville State College

Brian B. Hoffman, II
Penn State University

Blaise Julianna Hoster
College – Undeclared

Jake Owen Johnson
Coker College

Kacie Alexandra Jones
Delaware Valley
University

Austin C. Katchur
Employment

Brock D. Klahold
Wilkes University

**Annabella Marie
Kolasa**
Penn State University

Nicholas T. Krell
Belmont Abbey College

Kaitlyn Nicole Krick
Alvernia University

Kayla M. LaFaver
Millersville University

Hunter Adam Lamm
Employment

James T. Lanshe, Jr.
Penn State University

Kyle John Lanshe
Penn State University

Nathaniel A. Lash
Kutztown University

Noah C. Lassandro
Concordia University

Max Steven Lauser
Penn State University

Alyssa Marie Lerch
Reading Area
Community College

George Peter Limberiou
Lebanon Valley College

Teddy N. Limberiou
Kutztown University

Corey Kristian Lopez
Bucks County
Community College

Megan L. Lynam
Florida Atlantic University

Anthony R. Maggiaro
California University of PA

Maggie Marie Marando
Penn State University

Sabrina Raye Maressa
Employment

**Jacqueline Marie
Marusiak**
Ithaca College

Yacinda Lynn Menendez
Reading Area
Community College

James J. Milanek
Kutztown University

Bailey E. Miller
Mansfield University

Cody J. Mish
DeSales University

Hunter Alan Mountz
DeSales University

Kaitlin Rose Moyer
Reading Area
Community College

Justin E. Nawrocki
Penn College of
Technology

Erica J. Orlando
University of New Hamp-
shire

Joel Michael Orlando
Hofstra University

Matthew Evan Orlando
Syracuse University

Tyler A. Perfetto
Berks Career & Technology
Center

Mikala Persky
Alvernia University

Steven Huy Phan
Penn State University

Jenna Laine Phillips
Penn State University

Samantha S. Phillips
Albright College

Seth M. Pine
Kutztown University

Garrett M. Polityka
East Stroudsburg University

Sierra Lyn Pullano
Indiana University of
Pennsylvania

Mona Lilly Raggad
Pace University

Yelitza Ramos Rivera
Lebanon Valley College

Rachel Leigh Rehrig
Temple University

Hayley M. Reichardt
Reading Area Community
College/Penn State

Hunter E. Rice
Penn State University

Andre T. Robinson
Employment

Nicole Marie Rockey
Reading Area Community
College

Kevin J. Rosado
Penn State University

Parker John Rost
Penn College of Technology

Olivia Marie Roth
York College

Soubha Soufia Sadiq
Long Island University – Post

Austin Schaeffer
Reading Area Community
College

Bethany T. Schlott
St. Michael's/Susquehanna
University

Devin J. Schlottman
Employment

Devin L. Schweitzer
Kutztown University

Payton Celeste Shekalus
Messiah College

Madison Caroline Sisco
Philadelphia University

Samantha M. Sites
Millersville University

Courtney Lyn Smith
Kutztown University

Brett Michael Snyder
Employment

Katelynn Snyder
Hiram G. Andrews Center

Shelby Renee Snyder
Employment

Jethro S. Solomon
Kutztown University

Ian Spangler
Employment

Richard William Spatz
Norwich University

Katelynn E. Spyker
Wilson College

Colby Brian Stichter
Employment

Nathan J. Strause
Penn State University

Mason A. Strohl
Employment

Joseph William Stump
Shippensburg University

Shannon Lee Sullivan
Albright College

Kaylee Anne Swain
Edinboro University

Lauren Marie Swavely
Penn College of Technology

Tyler Lee Szilli
Employment

Collin W. Teprovich
Employment

Sebastian Tomasz Tota
Penn State University

Kahlan Tripp
Kutztown or
Wooster University

Alex R. Tytler
Kutztown University

Skylar M. Ulrich
Employment

Jessica Danielle Visbisky
Alvernia University

Amber Rose Walters
Indiana University of
Pennsylvania

Tristan N. Weller
Rochester Institute of
Technology

Jessica Lynn Wertz
Gwynedd Mercy University

Matthew Thomas Wholaver
Penn State University

Phillip S. Wholaver
Penn State University

Hunter L. Williams
Penn State University

Trevor E. Winkler
Penn State University

Zairen Winns
Employment

Ryan David Worrell
Penn State University

Lindsey M. Zimmerman
Washington & Jefferson College

CELEBRATING **NOTABLE** ACHIEVEMENTS



Retired high school math teacher **Mr. Charles Gerhart** with SV junior **Alex Engel-Swift**.

SV Sophomore Graduates from RACC

Rising SV junior **Alex Engel-Swift**, a son of Andrea and Sean Swift of Bern Township, is ahead of the curve when it comes to educating himself. In May, Alex graduated with an associate degree in science from Reading Area Community College. Alex, a member of SV's marching, jazz and concert bands, climbing club, tennis team and Science Olympiad, is grateful for the teachers who have helped him build his math and physics foundation, especially math teacher **Mr. Jeff Chillot**, physics teacher **Mr. Ronald Andrew**, and retired math teacher **Mr. Charles Gerhart**, who has become a life mentor to Alex. "Schuylkill Valley has done an amazing job preparing Alex for the next phase, which includes enrollment in classes at Kutztown University this fall" said the Swifts, whose daughter, Alyssa, also graduated from RACC one month before her SV graduation in 2016. "We are very proud of his accomplishments."

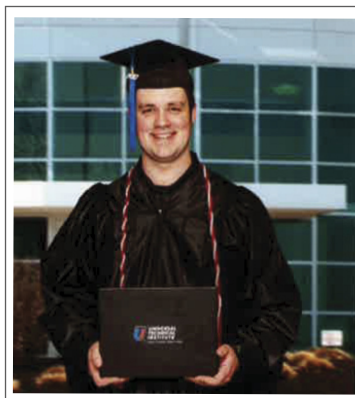
SVMS: National School to Watch



Mr. Cody Bender, **Mrs. Christine Wysocki**, middle school principal **Mr. Josh Kuehner**, **Mrs. Dana Heins**, and **Mr. John Jenkins** attended the "National Schools To Watch" Conference.

In June, members of the middle school faculty traveled to Washington, D.C. to attend the National Schools to Watch Conference. As part of the conference, they presented information about Schuylkill Valley's middle school programs and received the award redesignating the middle school as a National School To Watch.

ALUMNI NEWS



Dana Schreffler, SV class of 2014, graduated from Universal Technical Institute in February of 2017, as an automotive/diesel technician. Mr. Schreffler was honored as a member of the Alpha Beta Kappa National Honor Society, four-time Student of the Course Award, Director's List Award and Attendance Award. Mr. Schreffler is pursuing his career at Ryder Truck of Allentown.

PTO Special Events

Free Family Movie Night– Outdoors!

"Moana" – Friday, August 18
at 8:00 p.m. SVES Fields.
Free admission and free popcorn.

No-Cook Night

Monday, August 28 at
Andali's Family Restaurant

First PTO Meeting of School Year

Tuesday, September 12 at 6:30 p.m.
in the SVES Cafeteria



Special Olympics

On May 4, 41 student-athletes and 43 buddies traveled to Hamburg Area School District to participate in the Special Olympics Northern Berks Track and Field Meet. Our SV student-athletes participated with students from Antietam, Brandywine Heights Area, Fleetwood Area, Hamburg Area, Kutztown Area, Oley Valley, and the Police Athletic League Program.

The Special Olympics Track and Field meet gives our athletes a chance to participate with their own-ability leveled peers and to experience individual athletic success. Each student-athlete competes in two to four events, including standing long jump, running long jump, softball throw, shot put, 50-meter run, 100-meter run, 200-meter run and 400-meter run. While everyone earns a ribbon, the experience also creates other rewards beyond measure.

Parents and staff get to share the excitement as our athletes grin from ear to ear winning their ribbons. Our buddies, all students between eighth and twelfth grade, get to cheer on their athletes at all their events. Most importantly, our SV athletes are given a day to shine and feel proud of their accomplishments. Congratulations to all of our special winners! For a complete list of participants and their winning achievements, please check out our website.



Middle School Art Teacher Illustrates Second Book

This summer, **Mrs. Ronda Lee Seymour**, Schuylkill Valley Middle School art specialist, and her writing partner, **Mrs. Lisa A. Werley**, creator of the Johnny & Jay book series, have teamed up to release their second book.

The book, *Parker's Dinosaur Smile*, highlights the awareness of social literacy. The book's main characters, Jay and Johnny, are back for another one of life's lessons. The boys have started kindergarten and met many new friends. But there's one friend who makes Johnny feel uncomfortable and

downright scares him. During show and tell, Johnny encounters Parker, a student in a wheelchair who communicates differently. Will Johnny's twin brother Jay help him face his fears or will he run off with his new friends, leaving Johnny behind? Hidden in this story is a lesson for all ages, young and old – a reminder that people with special needs deserve to be treated with the same love and respect as everyone else.

Parker's Dinosaur Smile and *The Giving Jar*, the duo's first book, are available for purchase through the "Shop Now" button on the Johnny and Jay Facebook page or at Firefly Bookstore in Kutztown.



Teachers In The Parks 2017

This year's Teachers In The Parks program brought 48 students and nine elementary school teachers and staff together for six weeks of fun and learning at Leesport Park. Rising third and fourth graders gathered under leafy trees for science experiments, yoga and games, books, writing, "brain breaks," math and social studies. This year's themes included stars and stripes, the rainforest, shark week, nature, travel around the world, and animals, and incorporated experiments like making fire-works in a jar, jungle slime, shaving cream rain clouds and animal tracks

with do-it-yourself silly putty. Special thanks to **Ms. Heather Hummel**, **Mrs. Sandy Borkey**, **Mrs. Sandra Griffiths**, **Mrs. Cathy Gwiazdowski**, **Mrs. Marisa Horne**, **Mr. Joel Kleinspehn**, **Mrs. Felicia McDevitt**, **Miss Amanda Wilson**, nurse **Mrs. Patricia Meals** and high school helper **Gabby Rider** for giving your time to this year's Teachers In The Park program!



Senior Banquet Awards

On June 5, co-curricular awards were presented at the Senior Banquet to students for outstanding performance and/or participation in athletics and co-curricular activities, including music, drama, student council, yearbook, Academic Challenge, Science Olympiad and various clubs.

Congratulations to:
Bethany Hepner, Elyse Geiger, Madison Sisco – PIAA Academic All-Star Award
Matthew Orlando, Madison Sisco – PIAA District III Sportsmanship Award
Hunter Mountz – STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Music) Award
Daniel Behler – Outstanding Musician Award
Dustin Brown – Outstanding Male Athlete
Madison Sisco – Outstanding Female Athlete
Daniel Behler – Commitment Award

Meet the Teacher Nights

High School:

Wednesday, August 30
6:30 p.m.

Middle School:

Grade 5 Only Wednesday,
August 23, 7:00 p.m.

Grades 6 – 8 Thursday,
August 31, 7:00 p.m.

Elementary School:

Kindergarten Bus Ride/ Meet The Teacher:
Monday, August 21
6:00 p.m.

Grades 1 – 4 Meet the Teacher Wednesday,
August 23, 6 – 7:00 p.m.

Middle School Locker Orientation for 5th Graders

11 a.m. to 12 noon

Students with last names from Acker to Harrell,
Tuesday, August 15

Students with last names from Harris to Oswald,
Wednesday, August 16

Students with last names from Peters to Zaharia,
Thursday, August 17



schuylkill valley
SCHOOL DISTRICT

Athletic Season Pass Order Form

The 2017-2018 Athletic Season Pass Order Form is now available online. Please access it on the home page under the "Links" section of the SV website: www.schuylkillvalley.org

Stadium Renovation Progress-To-Date

Stadium and track renovations at the high school began on June 9. Renovations are projected for completion in late September.

To view webcam photos of the renovation process, go to the News section of SV's website and click on the link "SVSD HS Stadium Improvements Live Webcam Camera."

congratulations on your **RETIREMENT**

Our best wishes to the following faculty and staff who retired this school year. Thank you for your dedication to the Schuylkill Valley School District. For everything you have given, we are truly grateful.

Mrs. Lois S. Bachrach

High School Special Education
Teacher, 26.9 years

Mrs. Evelyn A. Braun

High School Art Teacher,
47.3 years

Mr. Benjamin A. Bucks

High School Technology
Education Teacher, 40.58 years

Mrs. Carol Hattendorf

Elementary Personal Care
Aide, 10.67 years

Ms. Karen L. Koch

High School Special Education
Teacher, 32.82 years

Dr. Warren F. Mata

Superintendent, 36 years

Mrs. Karin M. Moerder

Middle School Fifth Grade
Teacher, 25.89 years

Mr. Charles E. Orr

Middle School Custodian
19 years

Mr. Robert R. Sandercock

High School Custodian
12.21 years

Special Thanks

The SV Community offers its sincere appreciation to **Mr. Clarence Davis**, who recently retired after serving as district tax collector for the Leesport Borough for nineteen years.