



The Irish Highlighter

Volume 8: Issue 2

Seneca High School

COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

Spring 2019



THE IRISH HIGHLIGHTER

Board of Education Corner

On Sunday, May 19, we said goodbye to the Class of 2019. We are proud of the accomplishments of this class and the contributions they have made to Seneca High School. I have no doubt that they will be a highly successful group of young women and men. During the ceremony, we heard from Class President Isaac Brockman, Notre Dame-bound Mark Mehochko, and Business Administration major Carissa Simon. These fine students offered their own particular wisdom to their fellow classmates as they prepare for the next phase of their lives. These three students are wonderful examples of the fine students that comprise the 2019 class as a whole.

As a board of education, we work with our administration and staff to provide our students with a challenging and meaningful educational program so that with the necessary effort applied, all students can find success in high school and obtain the building blocks for future achievement. The vast majority of jobs our graduates will seek will require some type of education after high school. Thus, the issue for many families is the various costs associated with post-high school training.

In 2013, the Seneca High School Board of Education authorized the creation of the Educational Foundation of Seneca High School. This foundation, a 501(c)(3) organization, is independent of the Seneca High School Board of Education and is controlled by a board of directors comprised of seven SHS community members. While the purpose of the foundation may be thought of as an entity created to support the educational mission of Seneca High School, its primary function has been to secure and hold funds for the distribution of scholarships for Seneca High School graduates. The Future Educator Scholarship was the first such scholarship held and managed by the SHS Foundation. In addition to this scholarship, the foundation now holds and manages four additional independent scholarship funds, including the Larry Novotney Memorial Scholarship, the Career Technical Education Scholarship, the Seneca High School Staff Scholarships, and the William and Lois Steep Faithful-Community-Service Scholarship.

The scholarships administered by the SHS Educational Foundation provide financial support to several of our students as they continue their journey toward excellence after they graduate from Seneca High school. We are very grateful to all of the benefactors who contribute to the various scholarships. If any member of the community would like to contribute to an existing scholarship or perhaps create a new opportunity, please do not hesitate to contact Superintendent Jim Carlson at the school.

Go Irish!

Ron Frye, School Board President



SHS Board of Education Members

Ron Frye, President; Sara Olson, Vice President; Rich Hamilton, Secretary; Jason Eltrevoog, Joe Johnson, Mark Victor, and Cory Yandell



THE IMPORTANCE OF AN EDUCATION

From the Desk of SHS Superintendent, Dr. James Carlson

They say there are two kinds of people in life: those that see a half of a glass of water as half-empty and those who see it as half-full. The first individual displays pessimism, while the latter exhibits optimism. In late March of this year, I had the privilege of conversing with a man whose glass was not half-full, but was, rather, so full that it was overflowing the brim. That man was long-time Seneca High School Treasurer, Mr. Bill Steep.

I think back on my visit with Bill, and I now realize that I was seeing a man who was living out his final days. His mind was still sharp, and while soft and slow, his speech was lucid. His body was failing; however, neither discomfort nor fatigue could dampen his spirit. I heard not one word that could be remotely construed as negative. Joining me on the visit was his nephew and my friend, Mark. Our conversation turned, from time to time, to current events and the less-than-pleasant stories we see when we turn on the nightly news. Yet, Mr. Steep did not waver from his positivity. I so badly wanted to take out my phone and somehow record his words verbatim, but I didn't want to offend him. I cannot remember any exact quotes from that conversation, but I do remember the tenor of it, and I especially remember just how positive he was. At one point, we spoke about a recent media story in which kids had gotten into trouble. Bill's response was that kids aren't born bad and that all of them can change for the better. Several times during our chat, he shared his belief that there is more good than bad in the world. He also spoke of being thankful and that we should appreciate what we have.

On Sunday, March 31, 2019, we lost Mr. Bill Steep, one of the truly good guys this world had to offer. Bill was 90 years old. History tends to classify people and the things of this world according to generations. There are some individuals, however, who span generations and transcend time because of the way they live life and the values they reflect. Bill Steep was one of those people.

Prior to his death, Mr. Steep generously established the William and Lois Steep Scholarship on the pillars of Faith, Community, and Service. Mr. Steep and his family donated \$100,000 to the Educational Foundation of Seneca High School for one 4-year scholarship to be awarded annually to a SHS senior class member. In creating the scholarship, his family wrote, "Bill and Lois Steep, lifelong residents of Seneca, Illinois, established this scholarship as an investment in the young people of Seneca High School through their pursuit of higher education. Although unable to fulfill aspirations of attending college themselves, they value higher education and established this scholarship to support future students' goals to fulfill their dreams."

Bill created the scholarship to recognize the students who demonstrate a commitment to their community by aspiring to pursue a future career that requires leadership and an active role in improving the lives of those around them. Many long-time residents of Seneca who knew Bill Steep much better than I did can attest to his greatness. For my part, I will never forget our last visit, when despite his vulnerability, he remained that same positive and caring man who served his family, his community, and his country. A life well lived is inspirational. Thank you for inspiring us all Mr. Bill Steep.





THE IRISH HIGHLIGHTER



Message from our CSBO, Dan Stecken



The purpose of this section of the newsletter is to inform the Seneca Township High School District 160 taxpayers of our annual Abatement process. In early May, the Business Office at Seneca Township High School received the annual LaSalle and Grundy County Tax Extensions. In December of 2013, the taxing bodies reached an agreement with Exelon’s LaSalle Station to set the valuation of the nuclear power plant for seven years. The levy years of the agreement were set from 2013 to 2019. Within this agreement, the taxable value of Exelon was decided, and a constant tax rate of \$1.79838 was set. As the taxable value of the station increases, Seneca Township High School District 160 must engage in a process of abatement to ensure the tax rate remains constant at the \$1.79838 value. When we request for our annual levy, we have to intentionally ask for more than \$1.79838 to make our aggregate fund request amounts larger than that number. When a district “asks for” more than a 5% increase in property taxes, we are required to advertise such in the newspaper. Even though we ask for these amounts, due to the contract, we will abate the rate back to \$1.79838 for all taxpayers. As one can see in the graphic below from our most recent end of the year audit, we have kept the past tax rates at that number and will again for the “Actual 2018 Rate.” In the 2017 levy tax year, the LaSalle Station was valued at \$430 Million. In the 2018 levy tax year, the station value was at \$435 Million. Finally, in the 2019 levy tax year, the station will be valued at \$460 Million; however, as noted, the taxpayer’s tax rate will still be \$1.79838.

Note #2 - Property Taxes

The District's property tax is levied each year on all taxable real property located in the District on or before the last Tuesday in December. Taxes are levied in LaSalle and Grundy Counties. The board passed the 2017 levy on December 20, 2017. Property taxes attach as an enforceable lien on property as of January 1 and are payable in two installments on June 1 and September 1. The District receives significant distributions of tax receipts approximately one month after these due dates. Tax revenue in these statements is from the 2016 and prior tax levies.

The following are the tax rates applicable to the various levies per \$100 of assessed valuation:

	Maximum Rate	Actual 2017 Rate	Actual 2016 Rate	Actual 2015 Rate
Educational	0.92000	0.92000	0.92000	0.92000
Operations & Maintenance	0.25000	0.25000	0.25000	0.25000
Transportation	0.12000	0.12000	0.12000	0.12000
Debt Service	None	0.03146	0.24358	0.24410
Municipal Retirement	None	0.13231	0.00762	0.00762
Social Security	None	0.02852	0.02666	0.01523
Tort Immunity	None	0.14609	0.10061	0.11308
Leasing	0.05000	0.05000	0.05000	0.05000
Special Education	0.02000	0.02000	0.02000	0.02000
Fire Prevention and Safety	0.05000	0.05000	0.00991	0.00835
Working Cash	0.05000	0.05000	0.05000	0.05000
Total		<u>1.79838</u>	<u>1.79838</u>	<u>1.79838</u>



Dan Stecken
Chief School Business Officer
Seneca Township High School

CELEBRATIONS IN THE 2018-2019 SCHOOL YEAR

From the Desk of SHS Principal, Marty Voiles



HAPPY GRADUATION CLASS OF 2019!!

On Sunday, May 19, 2019, 109 senior students participated in the graduation ceremony of the Seneca High School Class of 2019. Isaac Brockman, Carissa Simon and Mark Mehochko welcomed all in attendance and delivered speeches summarizing their classmates' four years at SHS. Board of Education President Mr. Ron Frye and Superintendent Dr. Jim Carlson distributed diplomas to all seniors. An estimated 78% percent of graduates from the class of 2019 will continue their education at community colleges, universities, or trade schools throughout the country. On behalf of the Board of Education, the Administration, and the Faculty and Staff, we wish the Class of 2019 the very best in all of their future endeavors!

CONGRATULATIONS AND GREAT WORK!!

At the conclusion of the 2018-2019 school year, Seneca High School will be saying thank you and goodbye to three special educators as they close their teaching and coaching careers. Mr. Don Brown (Social Studies), Mrs. Mechthild Ferguson (Math) and Mr. Kirk Houchin (Guidance Counselor) will be retiring from SHS and moving on to life after SHS as they complete a combined 89 years of service.



Mr. Don Brown: After graduating from Illinois State University in 1983, Mr. Brown became a mainstay and pillar of the SHS faculty. Mr. Brown is one of very few educators who spent his entire teaching/coaching career, that of 35 years, in one school district. While at SHS, Mr. Brown taught various classes in the Social Studies Department. Mr. Brown also coached a variety of sports during his tenure, most notably football and softball.



Mr. Kirk Houchin: After graduating from Illinois State University in 1982, Mr. Houchin accepted a teaching and coaching position at Mazon-Verona-Kinsman for the first five years of his career. Then Mr. Houchin joined the SHS staff and has spent the remaining 29 years of his career in the Land of the Irish. While at SHS, Mr. Houchin taught Spanish, World Geography, U.S. History, American Government, and Super Powers. He finished his career as an integral leader in our Student Services Department serving as guidance counselor. Mr. Houchin also served as the head coach for the varsity baseball team for 24 years.

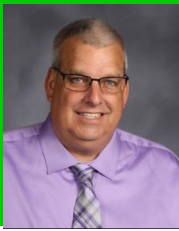


Mechthild Ferguson: Mrs. Ferguson came to Seneca High School after beginning her teaching career at Waltham Middle School as a math teacher. Mrs. Ferguson joined the SHS faculty during the 2001-2002 school year and has taught various courses offered in the Math Department. Mrs. Ferguson also served as an advisor for National Honor Society, WYSE team coach, and she coached both boys' and girls' cross-country and track for many years.

On behalf of the entire Seneca High School family, we wish Mr. Brown, Mr. Houchin, and Mrs. Ferguson a happy and healthy retirement.



THE IRISH HIGHLIGHTER



From the Desk of Activities Director, Steve Haines



GOOD BYES are **ALWAYS DIFFICULT** in the **LAND** of the **IRISH**



To the Class of 2019:

As Athletic Director, I would like to thank our senior athletes for what they have done to continue the pride we have in the “Land of the Irish.” What they have done for SHS and Irish Pride goes beyond wins and losses. Yes, the Class of 2019 should have great pride in its successes these past four years: conference champions, an Elite 8 appearance, and state champion are memories they will have, and there is hardware to show for these accomplishments, but it’s their support of one another that will be the lasting impression I have of this class--whether it was their spirit in the stands at football and basketball games; or picking up a teammate after a tackle; or helping a teammate off the mat after a match. And let’s not forget the dedication it takes in sports, which leads, for example, to the complete exhaustion a runner feels after completing a cross country course. These traits of teamwork and dedication will definitely help these athletes in life, perhaps in raising a family or in a career.

Yes, it takes a lot of time and sacrifice to participate on an athletic team. When they were all little guys and gals, they may have come to watch an athletic event at Seneca HS, but these future athletes had no idea of the hot summer days, weight rooms, long practices, and extra time it would someday take to achieve success at this level. So to those of SHS athletes who chose to put on the uniform and represent the Land of the Irish to the best of their ability, I am grateful, and we thank them all very much!





SAFETY AND SECURITY

Message from SRO, Ken Sangston



I remember when I first sat down with Dr. Carlson in June 2018, before I became the School Resource Officer. We talked about goals, and he spoke of a positive school culture and the priority of everyone's safety here at SHS. Students who feel safe in school are more engaged in class, obtain academic achievement, and fewer behavior issues. Likewise, educators are better able to focus on academics. I believe we have achieved many of the goals that Dr. Carlson and I discussed, and I will continue to do my part to surpass these standards and reach even higher ones as the Seneca High School Resource Officer.

In the last newsletter, I reported several educational accomplishments that I initiated or to which I contributed in the first semester. In this newsletter, I would like to address an issue that has affected school districts across the nation, including Seneca High School. It is the epidemic of teen vaping and the use of e-cigarettes. Vaping with the use of an e-cigarette was developed as a smoking cessation device to aid in helping smokers quit. Soon, the industry added pleasantly flavored liquid pods of nicotine, and the marketing to youth had begun. Until recently, the industry and how it contributes to teen addiction have gone unchallenged; however, Illinois' governor recently signed into law "Tobacco 21," which will go into effect on July 1, 2019. There have also been restrictions placed on the way flavored vaping liquids are sold and how the companies use social media as a way to target advertisements for their products to young people. In the future, I believe you will see more restrictions on the national level that regulate this industry. The FDA recently placed the teen vaping epidemic as one of its top priorities. The most concerning factor about the rise of vaping is that people who would never have smoked otherwise, especially youth, are taking up the habit and becoming addicted. Flavored nicotine pods are addictive and can lead to other addictive behaviors, including drug use. To quote an article I recently read, "Vaping is breeding a whole new generation of addiction." We take a pro-active approach to vaping on the Seneca High School campus. Students who are in possession of vaping devices could face school and athletic consequences, in addition to violating village ordinances. Repeat offenders have been issued citations this year. If your teen is vaping and using e-cigarettes, don't write it off as a safe or a risk-free habit. It is not harmless, and it could lead to the use of other addictive substances, as well. Let's not forget that it is against the law for any minor to be in possession of tobacco product, which includes e-cigarettes. I encourage you to speak with your teen about vaping and any matters of addiction. There are many resources at SHS, including Student Success Counselor Ms. Lockridge and School Psychologist Mrs. Rockrohr with whom students can speak if they feel they have a problem with vaping. We strive to not only provide a safe, distraction-free learning environment, but a healthy one as well.

I wish the Class of 2019 good luck with future plans and congratulate students on their achievements while here at Seneca High School. It has been a pleasure to share this year with a great class of seniors. My freshman school year at SHS as the School Resource Officer has come to an end; we all learned a lot, especially me, and I am eagerly looking forward to next school year and taking another active role in keeping your kids and the entire campus safe. Go Irish!

Officer Sangston can be reached at (815)357-5000 Ext. 6123





THE IRISH HIGHLIGHTER

From the Desk of School Psychologist, Jill Rockrohr



News from the Special Education Department

The 2018-2019 school year brought several changes to the Special Education Department at Seneca High School. We were fortunate to welcome two teachers to the department, Ms. Allie Lardi and Mr. Levi Derber. Both teachers bring experience, innovative ideas, and positive attitudes to our building and have been excellent additions to the department.

This year also saw the expansion of our course offerings to include our first co-taught course sections. In co-taught classes, a general education teacher and special education teacher work together to plan and implement classroom lessons to meet the needs of all learners. Research supports co-teaching as an effective instructional strategy for improving outcomes for both students with disabilities and their general education peers. Co-teaching creates a positive climate for learning and sets high expectations for both academic performance and classroom behavior. Additional benefits for all students include more student involvement, increased accountability, reduced stigma, reduced discipline problems, and enrichment and re-teaching opportunities. This year, two co-taught sections of English III were implemented, with progress noted in both academic skills and classroom behavior. Given the success of this initiative, co-teaching opportunities will be expanded for the next school year to include sections in Math and Science, as well as English.

Another addition to the department is the expansion of the Life Skills and Transition programs to include an apartment-style classroom. Using the existing classroom kitchen and laundry areas, Mrs. Jackie Ugolini utilized attached classroom space to create a living area. These spaces allow students to learn and practice the independent living that they need to be successful into adulthood, including budgeting and bill paying, meal planning and cooking, performing household chores, and planning leisure activities. Looking into next year, Mrs. Ugolini plans to add additional practice with social, emergency, and independent thinking skills in community settings. In addition, the Transition program will expand employment skills training through classroom modules, as well as school and community jobs.





TO ANOTHER GREAT YEAR...



From the Desk of Assistant Principal, Mike Coughlin



We have had another successful year at Seneca High School! I'm very proud of the students, faculty, and staff for all their efforts. I want to thank all the parents for the many positive conversations and efforts to stress the value and importance of education to their children. Your efforts go a long way to ensuring your child's success here and for their future.



In regards to our students . . . I specifically want to mention the Class of 2019 and your leadership, which started immediately in August. To all the seniors, we send you out the door with Best Wishes for your future endeavors!



In regards to our faculty . . . I want to take a moment to thank Mr. Don Brown, Mrs. Mechthild Ferguson, and Mr. Kirk Houchin for their friendship, professionalism, and true commitment to SHS. We had a nice night on Thursday, May 2, in Utica as we celebrated their teaching careers with the three of them at the Excellence in Education Banquet. I hope that Don, Mechthild, and Kirk enjoy the best parts of their retirements.

The staff here is simply awesome . . . I want to thank all the staff members for everything they do for the students at Seneca High School. Everyone who works at SHS knows what a privilege it is to work at such a great school. Part of what makes it such a special place is a wonderful staff that routinely goes above and beyond for the benefit of others.

I'm hoping that everyone has a safe and enjoyable summer! I look forward to seeing everyone on Friday, August 16th!



Seneca FFA Has a Banner Year in Career Development Events

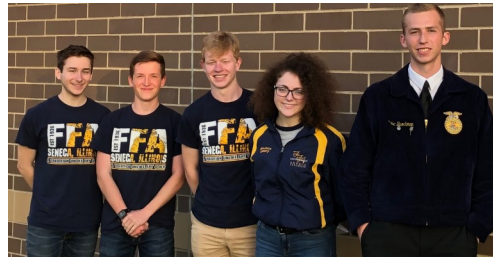
FFA Career Development Events (CDEs, aka “contests”) give students an opportunity to exhibit what they have learned in the classroom and from their SAEs. The events are designed to assist in preparing students for agriculture related careers. Classroom instruction comes to life as students demonstrate their skills in a competitive setting, providing for friendly competition between schools. Over 100 Seneca FFA members competed in 35 CDEs this past year. This semester saw many accomplishments in CDEs by The Seneca FFA, highlighted by a state championship in the Horticulture CDE.



Food Science CDE Team—1st in section, 5th in State: Jenna Goslin, Danny Widman, Madison Bromberek, and Emelia Traina.



State winning Horticulture CDE Team: Ian Wilkinson, Mark Mehochko, Logan Daggett, Dylan Woodard and Garrett Granby.



State 3rd place Ag Business Management Team: Mark Mehochko, Logan Daggett, Joey Thomas, Mackie Autry, and Isaac Brockman.



State Finalist in Job Interview CDE: Isaac Brockman



Livestock Judging Team: Peyton Weber, Madison Bromberek, Trey Thorson and Tyler Sulzberger.



State 3rd place Environthon Team: Joey Thomas, Garrett Granby, Logan Daggett, Dylan Woodard and Mark Mehochko.



District level speech winners: Levi Maierhofer in Extemporaneous Speaking and Mark Mechocho (state finalist) in prepared speaking.



State Qualifying Varsity Parliamentary Procedure Team: Logan Daggett, Gabby Clubb, Mark Mehochko, Ian Wilkinson, AJ Baker, Joey Thomas.



State Qualifying Novice Parliamentary Procedure Team: Jessica Daggett, Miranda Araujo, Emma Smith, Given Siegel, Peyton Weber, and Carter Ellis.



COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS



FCCLA has taken a new focus the past couple years and are really putting a lot of effort in to community outreach. This year FCCLA took part in a service project almost every month from September through May. The goal this year was to help others! In September, FCCLA sold Pink Irish Hoodies to help raise money PINK HEALS, an organization that supports women-fighting cancer. In October, we helped Milton Pope with their Mum fundraiser. FCCLA member also had a fun day with HOSA at Six Flags Fright Fest. This is our annual fun day out, it is a great way to kick off the year. In November, many of the FCCLA members and NHS members helped at Milton Popes Concession stand. This month FCCLA also helped put on the Seneca Grade School Family Reading night. The members created and ran games all night for the grade school students. December is a busy month, but Seneca Grade school asked us to bake dozens of cutout cookies for the SGS Family Christmas party, we were happy to help!

This year FCCLA held our 3rd Annual Mom/Son Night in February. We had over 200 guest attend our Weird Science Show and dance the night away with DJ Kelsey Adams. In May, we ended the year by hosting our most popular event, the 4th Annual Daddy/Daughter Dance. We hosted over 250 fathers and daughters. So many students helped make this night successful. FCCLA could not be part of any of these activities if it was not for the time and effort of the member's. We are grateful that we were able to reach our goal of helping others in the community this year.



**We are the
Family, Career
& Community
Leaders of
America.**

THE IRISH HIGHLIGHTER

Students of the Month/Irish Pride Award Winners



DECEMBER 2018



Andrew Baker, Role Model of the Month
Thomas Van Ness, Most Improved Student of the Month
Emma Smith, Rookie of the Month
Mackenzie Autry, Student of the Month

JANUARY 2019



Daniel Ellis, Most Improved Student of the Month
Samuel Grushkin, Role Model of the Month
Sydney Trager, Rookie of the Month
Rebekah Alley, Student of the Month

FEBRUARY 2019



Kohlton Babcock, Student of the Month
Karl Dziorny, Most Improved
Evalynn Berg, Rookie of the Month
Megan Neimann, Student of the Month

MARCH 2019



Jessica Daggett, Rookie of the Month
Ian Wilkinson, Role Model of the Month
Carissa Simon, Student of the Month
William Glasscock, Most Improved
Laura Yegge, Rookie of the Month

APRIL 2019



Helen Jenkins, Rookie of the Month
Madelyne Arellano, Most Improved Student of the Month
Dylan Woodard, Role Model of the Month
Shawnee Gans, Student of the Month

MAY 2019



Kathryn Lawrence, Role Model of the Month
Kylie Winsor, Student of the Month
Noah Quigley, Rookie of the Month
Carter Hartwig, Most Improved Student of the Month

THE IRISH HIGHLIGHTER

Irish Pri... rs



December 2018

January 2019

February 2019



March 2019

April 2019



The following individuals were recognized at the LaSalle County Excellence in Education Banquet on May 2, 2019. Congratulations to all of our honorees! Faculty and staff provided a breakfast before school on Tuesday, May 22nd, as well, to honor these individuals. From Left to Right: Terry Maxwell, Allie Lardi, Diane Ruff, Mechthild Ferguson, Kirk Houchin, and Don Brown.



Excellence
in Education



THE IRISH HIGHLIGHTER

Free and Reduced-Price Food Services: Meal Charge Notifications

The following notification is provided at the beginning of each school year as federally required notification regarding eligibility requirements and the application process for the free and reduced-price food services that are listed in Board policy 4:130, *Free and Reduced-Price Food Services* and 4:140, *Waiver of Student Fees*. For more information, see www.fns.usda.gov/school-meals/unpaid-meal-charges, and/or contact the Building Principal or designee.

Free and Reduced-Price Food Services Eligibility

When the parents/guardians of students are unable to pay for their child(ren)'s meal services, meal charges will apply per a student's eligibility category and will be processed by the District accordingly. A student's eligibility for free and reduced-price food services shall be determined by the income eligibility guidelines, family-size income standards, set annually by the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, and distributed by the Ill. State Board of Education.

Meal Charges for Meals Provided by the District

The Building Principal and District staff will work jointly to prevent meal charges from accumulating. Every effort to collect all funds due to the District will be made on a regular basis and before the end of the school year.

Contact your Building Principal or designee about whether your child(ren)'s charges may be carried over at the end of the school year, i.e., beyond June 30th.

Unpaid meal charges are considered delinquent debt when payment is overdue as defined by Board policy 4:45, *Insufficient Fund Checks and Debt Recovery* and the Hunger-Free Students' Bill of Rights Act (105 ILCS 123/, added by P.A. 100-1092). The District will make reasonable efforts to collect charges classified as delinquent debt.

When a student's funds are low or there is a negative balance, reminders will be provided to the staff, students, and their parent(s)/guardian(s) at regular intervals during the school year. State law allows the Building Principal to contact parents(s)/guardian(s) to attempt collection of the owed money when the amount owed is more than the amount of five lunches [*or insert lower amount*]. If a parent/guardian regularly fails to provide meal money for the child(ren) that he/she is responsible for in the District and does not qualify for free meal benefits, the Building Principal or designee will direct the next course of action. Continual failure to provide meal money may require the District to notify the Ill. Dept. of Children and Family Services (DCFS) and/or take legal steps to recover the unpaid meal charges, up to and including seeking an offset under the State Comptroller Act, if applicable.



All children 18 and under can get free healthy and nutritious meals when school is out.

To find a Summer Meals Site close to you

Call (800) 359-2163

Text FoodIL To 877877

Or visit

SummerMealsIllinois.org

Free Summer Meals are part of the Summer Food Service Program funded through the U.S. Department of Agriculture and administered by the Illinois State Board of Education



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THE IRISH HIGHLIGHTER



As a person that got into teaching to be a woods teacher, I am thrilled once again to be teaching woods here at SHS. Up until three years ago, I hadn't taught woods since teaching at GSW High School in 2000. When Mr. Kluzek was getting ready to retire, I knew I wanted to take over the woods program, ironically from the person that taught me in high school woods. It's very gratifying to see students working with their hands to create something useful and practical. Each year, I have tried to raise the bar a little as far as expectations go. I am somewhat of a perfectionist, and I try to pass some of that trait onto my students. I want them to care about the quality of their projects and do the little things that can turn a good project into a great one. Students have done a wide variety of great projects throughout the year. Some of them include butcher block cutting boards, drink coaster sets, shelves, book cases, end tables, tavern mirrors, coffee tables, benches, blanket chests, etc. Although this year is winding down, I am already looking forward to next year. I have some new projects ideas that I have come up with for students to try and we will be adding another table saw and a CNC machine to the woods lab. I don't give out any woods awards at the end of the year, but I would like to recognize outstanding work in the woods lab for the 2018-19 school year. Here are the names of students that had one or more outstanding projects this year: Trey Thorsen, Brett Yegge , T.J. VanNess , Nic Greco, Colton Kline, Ethan Knoebel, Ben Hogue, and Sam Grushkin.

~Bryan Erickson, Woods & Engineering Graphics Instructor

"A quality woodworking program provides experiences far more important than those typically associated with woodshop."

10 Reasons Why Woodworking Classes Are Relevant in the 21st Century

Gives students the opportunity to perform precise work and to produce useful products.

Instills habits of attention, perseverance, and patience.

Instills a pride of accomplishment and self-esteem.

Students gain hands-on skills that can transfer to many different types of careers.

Helps students gain confidence as real world problem solvers.

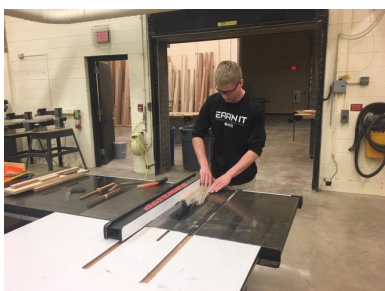
Allows for students to demonstrate skills and pursue excellence in a non-core class.

Provides relevancy of other subjects to their lives, thereby preparing them for a lifetime of learning.

Hands-on learning helps students become more adept at grasping complex concepts.

Students learn to use tools and machines and the safety concerns involved with each.

Emphasizes math and measuring skills.



THE IRISH HIGHLIGHTER

Philanthropy & St. Baldrick's

At an award banquet held on the evening of May 9th at Morris County Club, seven members of the **SHS Young Philanthropists Group** presented three local nonprofits with grant checks to support their missions. Three other local schools presented checks, as well, for a total of \$25,000 being disbursed by the Young Philanthropists to their chosen local nonprofit organizations. Seneca High is proud of the effort and time committed by these students and their advisors.

Throughout the school year, approximately fourteen students from Seneca High attend scheduled Young Philanthropy Group meetings led by [Devan Gagliardo](#), Program Director of the *Community Foundation of Grundy County*. During the meetings, Devan educates the students about humanitarianism, having a social conscience about one's community, and how to delegate charitable funds. Each year the YP students learn about local nonprofit organizations that rely on grants and donations to help fund their causes. The students in the YP Group must then decide, as a team, who would benefit the most from their allotted funds and what portion of the \$5000 total grant monies each np organization will receive. This year, the Seneca YP Group chose three organizations to receive grant checks: [All Those Left Behind](#) at \$1,500; [Special Connections](#) at \$1,500; and [Community Nutrition Network](#) at \$2,000. SHS Guidance Counselor, Chris Jackson, was Devan's first school advisor to help get local students involved in the CFGF young philanthropist endeavor. This is the fifth consecutive year that Seneca High students have participated in the Young Philanthropy Program, which now includes YP Groups from Coal City, Gardner-South Wilmington, and Morris High Schools.



Click on the icon or links above to read more about YP Program



SHS Young Philanthropists who attended the award banquet present a \$2000 Grant check to Community Nutrition Network which delivers hot meals to those in need.

St. Baldrick's is a charity that funds grants for [childhood cancer research](#) through head-shaving events and other fundraisers across the globe, so kids with cancer can live long, healthy lives. Seneca High School hosted its 11th St. Baldrick's event on Friday, February 22, 2019. The event was organized by Mandi Beck (11 years) and Jenna Maierhofer (2 years). Seneca High School faculty members Allie Lardi and Alison McCarthy served as treasurers for the event, with Erica Read serving as barber coordinator. Barbers were Brandi Rowley and Oscar Luevano. We had a total of eight shavees who participated, including Ben Klinges and Claire DeGraaf (Seneca High School), Allison Lyles and Chloe Thompson (Seneca Grade School), Chris Smith (MVK), Calvin Maierhofer (Milton Pope), Mike O'Kray (Seneca High School staff), and Tara Bersano (community member). Three participants raised over \$1000 each for the event, with Chloe Thompson leading in all funds raised (\$1524.21), followed by Ben Klinges (\$1477.38), and Allison Lyles (\$1111.18). Two participants were repeat shavees, Calvin Maierhofer returning for his sixth year, raising a total of \$1572.30 over his six years, and Chris Smith returning for his third year, raising a total of \$1649.53. This was our biggest year yet, with a total fundraiser amount of \$5780.39! Over the eleven years that Seneca High School has hosted a St. Baldrick's event, we have raised over \$26,000 for childhood cancer research!

Before...



...and After



THE IRISH HIGHLIGHTER

Special Award Winners

Congratulations to All Seneca High School Award Winners

Senior English Awards— Pictured Below:
Shawnee Gans, Blake Woodard, (Mrs. Applebee)
Zoe Noonan, and Molly Baker



Jud Nagle Scholarship—Pictured Below
w/ Kent Weber ~ Ian Wilkinson & Lexi Greve



CHS
Elburn
Scholarship
Molly Baker



Kenneth Benson Memorial
Scholarship—Blake Woodard
& Abigail Taylor



Pfeifer-Madison Masonic
Memorial Scholarship—Isaac
Brockman & Kylie Winsor



Martha Slyter Scholarship—
Andrew Baker & Gabrielle Club



Senior Math Award—
Pictured w/ Jenna
Maierhofer, Carissa
Simon & Joseph Thomas



Math Team—Jacob Brown, Miranda
Araujo, Petyon Weber
*Not Pictured: Isaac Brockman



Wayne Schmanske Memorial
Scholarship—Michael Moore



Isaac Brockman ~ Student of the Year
Audrey Jenkins ~ Rookie of the Year
Abriana Jashari ~ Role Model of the Year
Christina Kluzek ~ Most Improved of the Year



Senior Science Award
—Pictured w/Eric
Vroman—Kylie Winsor



US Marine Corp High School
Awards—Sam Grushkin, Rebekah
Alley, Kathryn Lawrence, Mark
Mehochko

Cruise Night Scholarship—
Logan Daggett, Mackenzie
Autry, & Alyssa Binion



Seneca Port District Scholarship—Krista
Eikleberry, Alyssa Binion, Maggie Cade, Sophie
Shanks, Pictured w/Carolyn Lockridge

MVK Student Council Scholarship; Starved
Rock Country Community Foundation;
Internet of Things Scholarship for
Engineering; Carol & Dick Janko Scholarship
for Entrepreneurs—Joseph Thomas

**Male Irish Pride
Scholarship Winner—**
Body Baudino
Anna Gay Award—
Lexi Greve
Gerald M Hoben Award—
Christopher Collet
**Female Irish Pride
Scholarship Winner—**
Abriana Jashari



Music Awards—Picture
w/Luke Windham—Mark
Mehochko & Abigail Zilm



WYSE Award—Jacob Ursua



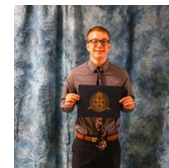
Exelon Scholarship—
Anna Misener



Armed Forces
Recognition—
Madelyne
Arellano



JJC Foundation
Scholarship—
Maggie Cade



Sons of the American
Revolution—Kohlton Babcock



THE IRISH HIGHLIGHTER

Special Award Winners



Matt Rivett Memorial Scholarship—Faith Hacker, pictured w/Bryan Erickson



William & Lois Steep Scholarship—Molly Baker



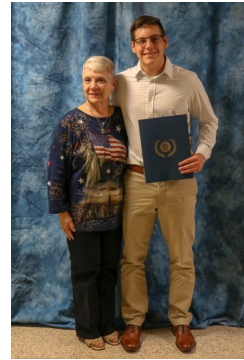
Grundy County Farm Bureau Foundation—Madelyn Isham, Isaac Brockman, & Joseph Thomas



American Legion Auxiliary Americanism Award—Clairice DeGraaf & American Legion Auxiliary Scholarship—Gillian Culbreth



Boys State—Trevor Till
Girls State—Monica Groth



Sterling American Legion & Auxiliary Scholarship—Carter Hartwig



Nucor Foundation Community Scholarship—Joseph Thomas



Morris Area Garden Club Isaac Brockman



Delta Theta Tau Scholarship—Joseph Thomas, Mackenzie Autry, Maggie Cade, Mark Mehochko, Carissa Simon, & Molly Baker



Illinois State Historical Society—Jacob Brown



James Sterba Memorial Scholarship—Alyssa Binion, Sophie Shanks, Maggie Cade



Future Teacher Scholarship—Faith Hacker



Career Technical Education Scholarship—Krista Eikleberry & Alyssa Binion



Kasal Post 457 American Legion Award—Molly Baker & Isaac Brockman



Seneca Grade School Foundation Scholarships
Sophie Shanks, Krista Eikleberry, Dylan Woodard, Paige Carpenter, & Keelan Rice



Larry Novotney Scholarship
Kohlton Babcock



Evan Vint Scholarship—Sophie Shanks



University of Rochester Awards—Jacob Brown, Trevor Till, Jacob Ursua, not pictured
Monica Groth



Theatre Awards: Andrew Baker, Mark Mehochko, Rebekah Chapman, Drew Ehrler, Ian Wilkinson, & Elizabeth Hess



Eloise Walker Anderson Scholarship—Zoe Noonan

Seneca High School Citizenship Award—Isaac Brockman



Spanish IV Awards—Maggie Cade, Megan Neimann, Mackenzie Autry, pictured w/Mary O'Connor

Senior Technology Award—Nicholas Greco





THE IRISH HIGHLIGHTER

Special Award Winners

Sports Awards:

- Rebekah Alley—12 Sport Athlete
- Owen Barnett—12 Sport Athlete
- Brody Baudino—12 Sport Athlete, Irish Pride Award
- Maggie Cade—12 Sport Athlete
- Christopher Collet—12 Sport Athlete, Gerald Hoben Award
- Gillian Culbreth—12 Sport Athlete
- Lexi Greve—12 Sport Athlete, Anna Gay Award, Judd Nagle Scholarship
- Samuel Grushkin—Marine Corps—Distinguished Athlete Award
- Abriana Jashari—12 Sport Athlete, Irish Pride Award
- Joseph Thomas—12 Sport Athlete
- Kylie Winsor—12 Sport Athlete

Agriculture (AG) Awards:

- Brittany Alsvig—Seneca FFA Alumni Scholarship
- Mackenzie Autry—DeKalb Award
- Andrew Baker—Seneca FFA Alumni Scholarship
- Brody Baudino—Seneca FFA Alumni Scholarship
- Bryan Bingheim—Robert Johnson Award
- Isaac Brockman— FFA Foundation Top Scholar, Compeer Financials High School Senior Scholarship, Don Baker Memorial, America's Farmers Group AG Leaders Scholarship, Grundy County Farm Bureau
- Gabrielle Clubb—Star in AG Placement
- Loan Daggett—LaSalle County Soil & Water Conservation District Scholarship, JJC Horticulture Judging Scholarship, Frank Huss Memorial Scholarship

- Krista Eikleberry—Seneca FFA Alumni Scholarship
- Madison Flatness—Seneca FFA Alumni Scholarship
- Nicholas Greco—Seneca FFA Alumni Scholarship
- Connor Greve—Seneca FFA Alumni Scholarship
- Claire Griffin—Seneca FFA Alumni Scholarship
- Carter Hartwig—Seneca FFA Alumni Scholarship
- Benjamin Hogue—Seneca FFA Alumni Scholarship
- Madelyn Isham—Seneca FFA Alumni Scholarship, Grundy County Farm Bureau
- Abriana Jashari—Seneca FFA Alumni Scholarship
- Mark Mehochko—Chapter Star Farmer, Simmons Foods Inc Scholarship
- Caitlyn Potter—Seneca FFA Alumni Scholarship
- Joseph Thomas—Grundy County Farm Bureau Scholarship, Compeer Financials High School Senior Scholarship, Chapter in AG Business
- Madison Tondini—Seneca FFA Alumni Scholarship
- Ian Wilkinson—Verne Reifsteck Award
- Dylan Woodard—JJC Horticulture Scholarship, International Harvester Collector's Club

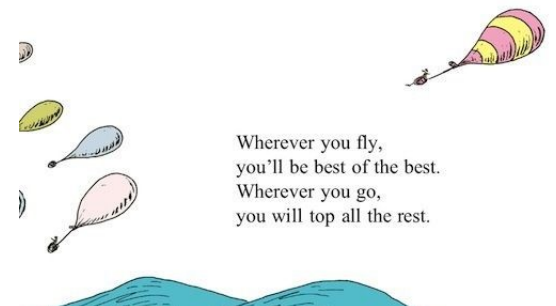


Illinois State Scholars—Front Row: Megan Neimann, Kylie Winsor, Molly Baker, Zoe Noonan, Rebekah Alley, Mackenzie Autry, Jace Casey, Carissa Simon, Mark Mehochko
Back Row: Joseph Thomas, Isaac Brockman, Michael Moore

Other Recognitions for Seniors:

- John Ourth Student Recognition—Molly Baker & Isaac Brockman
- DAR Good Citizen Award & Scholarship—Isaac Brockman
- People's National Bank of Kewanee Scholarship—Isaac Brockman
- CBAI Foundation for Community Banking Scholarship—Isaac Brockman
- NHS Tutor Awards—Isaac Brockman, Andrea Cruise, & Megan Neimann
- Armed Forces Recognition—Chancellor Winborn
- ROE Student Excellence Award—Megan Neimann
- HOBY Recognition—Ava Terry & Amber Vroman
- Staff Scholarships—Kathryn Lawrence, Megan Neimann, Sophie Shanks, Brittany Alsvig, Gillian Culbreth, Anna Misener, Zoe Noonan, Isaac Brockman, Andrea Cruise, Krista Eikleberry, Faith Hacker, Elizabeth Hess, Dylan Woodard, Mackenzie Autry, Kohlton Babcock, Marissa Berkley
- In Honor of Paula Freepartner—Sophie Shanks
- In Honor of Keith Houchin—Elizabeth Hess
- Kasal Post 457 American Legion Scholarship Award—Brittany Alsvig

We truly wish all of our graduates the best of luck in all their future endeavors!





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THE IRISH HIGHLIGHTER

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Seneca, IL 61360