



# THE SPRESS

## SOUTH PARK HIGH SCHOOL

### History of Valentine's Day

CORA SMITH

Valentine's Day is often a holiday many are aware about and understand its current meaning; however, not all are aware of its extensive past. It originated as a pagan ritual labeled Lupercalia, a welcoming of spring. The ritual was one of fertility, blessing both crops and the citizens. At the end of the day, the women of the city would place their names into an urn and would be picked by bachelors for the year, often having the two married by the end of the pairing. It is believed Christians had the pagan rite erased by forming their own holiday named after the religious figure Saint Valentine.

Valentine was supposed to have married young men and women after a ban was issued against marriage by an emperor who believed men should focus on nothing more than becoming a soldier. After discovery of Valentine's deeds to marry citizens illegally, his fate quickly met an unseemly demise.

At the end of the 5th century on February 14th, Pope Gelasius officially declared Valentines Day a Christian holiday. It would be a while before any romantic attributes would be attached to the special day. Smaller aspects of the holiday also came from various backgrounds.

Cupid, one of the most known figures associated with the holiday, originated as the Greek god, Eros. Eros would go on to prick gods and men with his golden arrows, inciting them to find love. The image of a handsome, immortal god was altered during the Hellenistic period when Cupid became depicted as a young baby with wings.

The giving of candy and cards was formed through several historical traditions, though the most notable was the pagan offerings for fertility and the 18th century when giving hand written notes was seen as a very generous sign of affection. It is always interesting to learn about the histories of our current holidays and can provide new light to those who may not have known the culture behind such days.

### Mini-THON is back, undeterred and hopeful

LUKE FURMAN & SOPHIA DEMATTEO

Amidst a time of uncertainty, it is important to persevere and attempt to salvage tradition. South Park's resilient Mini-THON crew is no exception; it is time to reclaim our school year and support a worthy cause.

The Mini-THON is a fundraising event that South Park's very own Mrs. Hecht has been leading since last spring, but unfortunately, the rise of COVID-19 put a swift end to such plans. The group raised over \$17,000 last year, even with the obstacles of the pandemic. Now, the Mini-THON is back and stronger than ever, and the goal remains the same: to raise money to combat childhood cancer. Students aim to beat last year's total and raise \$20,000.

Madeline Kinevy, a THON officer, promises that "this year's Mini-THON is expected to be a safe, outdoor event full of food trucks, games, and other fun activities." Participants are asked to maintain a healthy distance while participating, and the donation process will be done entirely online. "Join our Google Classroom page (eo4bt2g) for registration instructions, and start fundraising!" Maddy encourages.

It's no secret that this year looks a little different than the one we had originally envisioned, but South Park is nothing if not adaptable, able to overcome even the most extreme of challenges, and the Mini-THON crew is no exception.

**Google Classroom Code: eo4bt2g**

**Instagram: @spminithon**

**Twitter: @spminithon**

**Facebook: @southparkminithon**

### IN THIS ISSUE

**STUDENT SURVEY ON COVID-19 VACCINE**

**STAYING POSITIVE THIS WINTER**

**TEACHER PROFILE MS. SAHADY**

## POP CULTURE

# Kim and Kanye split

TESSA LETTIE

This year is already starting off crazy, and now Kim Kardashian West and Kanye West have divorced. After seven years of marriage, Kim decided she was done. They were in couples counseling for the past two years, and they have quit and officially have decided to divorce. Kim came out on Twitter and said that they are on good terms. Kim stated there is no bad blood between them and this will not affect her children, North, Saint, Chicago or Psalm, in anyway. Rumors went around from a TikTok star, Ava Louise. In a video she claimed that Kanye West had cheated on Kim with a famous YouTube star, Jeffrey Star. She then admitted two weeks later that she had convinced the whole world it was the truth just to get attention. In reality it was a huge lie. Ava is now being sued by Kris Jenner and has to apologize to Kim herself.

## LIFESTYLE - FASHION

# A look into 2021 fashion trends

SOPHIA DEMATTEO

Following this truly disheartening past year, we are hopeful for a better, more fruitful 2021. And in such a world of optimism laced with uncertainty, one thing remains both adaptable and unwavering: fashion.

A team at Vogue has been pondering the new Spring/Summer trends this year, and there is nothing but creativity seamlessly blended with practicality on the horizon these upcoming seasons. The '90s comeback remains as chic as ever, and this year promises more strappy details and unisex designs. Bright, candy-tones mixed with futuristic silvers add a hint of fun to any ensemble, but the tastefulness of the minimalism trend is here to stay, too.

Par Eugenie Trochu for Vogue writes, "in the midst of a worldwide crisis, this Spring/Summer 2021 season was inevitably something of a reply to current events," and we can expect the essentiality of masks to be integrated into everyday fashion this year. Trochu also boldly declares that "the designers continue to carry out their primary mission: making us dream," which may just be what we could all use this new year.

The basic concept behind fashion this year will be to combine functionality with playfulness, as we as a society continue to do what we do best: persevere.

## STUDENT CORNER

# Artwork



Taylor Brown

## PROFILE-TEACHER

# Ms. Sahady – unsung hero of SPHS

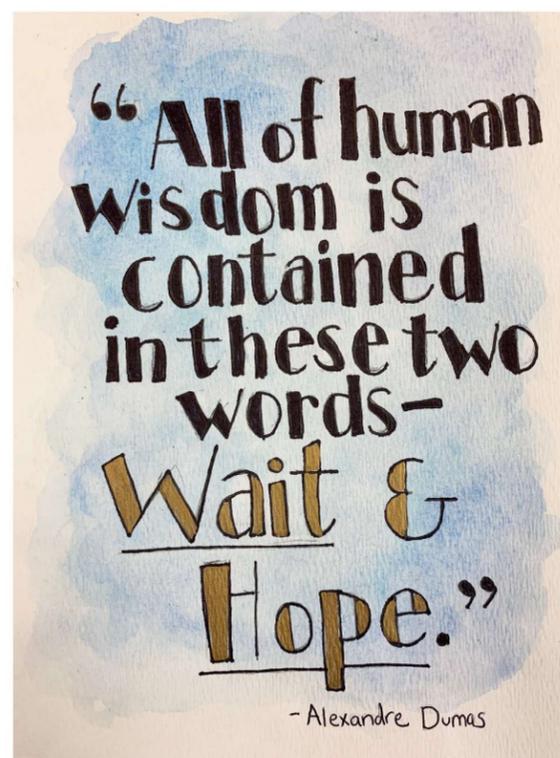
LUKE FURMAN

You pass the several classrooms she is responsible for every day on your way to history class, but you probably never think twice about it. Ms. Sahady is in charge of a few rooms in that hallway, as well as another in the cafeteria.

From her earliest years, our special education teacher knew she was destined for education. Her collegiate years were what led her to special education; Ms. Sahady recalls, "the classroom experiences, specifically student teaching," gave her, "opportunities that made me fall in love with this aspect of education." What a demanding aspect of education it is. She keeps her students for four more years than regular education students.

Along with her standard teaching duties, Ms. Sahady also runs the South Perk Café out of the SPHS cafeteria, and she takes students on weekly field trips called Community Based Instruction, during which students are exposed to real world experiences. Ms. Sahady is most proud of the Café, regarding which she stated, "I can now see how each step of my career prepared me for creating this component of the Life Skills Support Program."

Ms. Sahady is not alone, however, and she wrote a message to those who help her keep these programs running. "I have to give a shout out to my team. None of the programs or courses would be successful without each one of them. It takes a village, and we have one great village here!"



Brooke Hamilton

## EDITORIAL

*Behind every successful woman is a woman herself*

TESSA LETTIE

On January 20, 2021, President Joe Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris were inaugurated. This is so unbelievably exciting, but also a huge landmark for women.

Kamala Harris is not only the first female vice president, but she is also the first female Black, Asian American vice president. Kamala Harris has represented so many firsts as you may say. She was California's first Black attorney General, the first woman attorney general and she was also California's first Black senator. During her time as senator she said, "And that's why breaking those barriers are worth it. As much as anything else, it is also to create that path for those who will come after us." It's so odd to think that not so long ago women were oppressed and not able to vote or even be in office, and now standing here we have a female Black vice president. Kamala Harris said, "While I might be the first woman in this office, I will not be the last."

This is so empowering to women all around the world and will be every little girl's role model growing up.

## CURRENT EVENTS

## Vaccine preparation

NOAH FISCUS

With the COVID-19 vaccine finally becoming available, how will the vaccine be prioritized among the American people?

January 2021 marked the release of the COVID-19 vaccines. The two vaccines being offered, one from Pfizer and one from Moderna, require two shots per person. However, both doses have to be from the same company. Previously, only health care workers and residents of long term care facilities have received the vaccines. However, the vaccine is now being offered to people over 65 years old and people under 65 with certain medical problems.

However, once the vaccine is available to all people, will teenagers elect to receive it? In a recent poll at South Park High School, out of 39 students, 22 agreed that they would take the vaccine, and 17 stated they would decline the vaccine. The students who want the vaccine cited reasons of having protection for themselves and their family from the virus. The students who said they would decline the vaccine gave reasons for not trusting the vaccine and disliking shots altogether. Even though the vaccine will be available to all people soon, it is clear there is a slim difference in opinions of students who would take the vaccine versus ones who wouldn't.

*"...we don't know the long-term side effects. That's what really worries me."*

*"I would get it to keep myself, my family, my friends, and even complete strangers safe."*

*-SPHS students*

## Capitol mayhem

NOAH FISCUS

What do people think about the riots that happened in the Capitol building January 6 by the Trump supporters? How will this affect our lives in the future?

November 3, 2020 was the date for the U.S. 2020 Election. In the end, Biden emerged as the victor. Although some citizens were accepting of Trump's loss, some supporters were furious of his defeat. Two months later, Trump sent some interesting texts. One of these texts said that the American citizens should storm the capitol building. A few days later, that's what happened. Groups of people began barging into the capitol building, trying to hurt the capitol officials for "rigging the election." A few people even ended up getting inside the building, according to security cameras. Some people even brought guns and threatened to shoot police officers and officials. In the end of the scuffle, three citizens and one police officer were killed.

This has led to Trump's accounts being banned from Twitter and Facebook. He is also the first president to have been impeached twice. This ultimately has taken a toll on American citizens and the way the government is viewed.

## MINDFULNESS

## Keeping your head up during the winter months

CHLOE BYRON

There are lots of people who struggle with their mental health during the winter. It is cold outside, so there isn't much to do especially if you have to quarantine. There are ways to better yourself mentally; you just need to figure out how!

Many people get in their heads much more than usual during the down time in the winter. You are not able to go for the long walks or bask in the sun. These moments are when you need to sit down and figure out how to give yourself the happiness you are craving. Finding your source of happiness may be as simple as reorganizing your room or drawing. Everyone has their own hobbies and maybe you simply haven't found yours yet. It is hard to have the best mindset when you have nothing to motivate it. "Be grateful for the small things and the things you may sometimes take for granted. I have found that zooming out on my perspective like this helps out a lot to snap out of any kind of victim thinking and negativity." said Henrik Edberg who has written about self-esteem and happiness since 2006.

It is not odd to feel less energized and like you're struggling to get through the day. It is not odd to want to sleep until 2PM. Everybody has been struggling these last couple months, and that is okay. It is also good to get back to a normal routine, and everyone can do it.

Another way to boost self-esteem and simply become happier is to exercise. "Exercise. An obvious but a very effective one. Regular exercise will give you more energy. It will help you to release inner tensions, anxiety and stress." Not even a full weight lifting workout always has to be the answer, even yoga or meditating. Anything that brings you back to earth and makes you feel good on the inside. Don't do it to please anyone else; it is simply for yourself.

Now, I encourage you to find a quiet place and think about what you could do to make yourself feel better. You could use a notebook or piece of paper and write down some ideas. It doesn't have to be drawing an extremely detailed piece of art. It is about finding the simplest things to do that will bring you joy. Even though it is cold outside, you can still find activities that will take your mind off of whatever you need it to.

## Positivity in our phones

NOAH FISCUS

Since social media plays such a major role in our lives, can they be used in positive ways? Can social media be used to help inform, promote, or share new ideas?

Instead of browsing our current, hectic world, try something new. If you find a friend, old or new, that you would really like to talk to, schedule an in-person meetup event. This can help you get to know that person better. You could support your friends on social media. You could also make videos that impact our community, such as spreading a positive message that everyone can view and follow. This won't just help yourself do something impactful, but inform others to do the same. Another thing is advertisement. If you are planning an event, and you think others could be involved, you can post it on social media and maybe you might find complete strangers enjoying your event. You should also try to be as real as possible on social media. You should be true to yourself and the other people who see your post.

There are many ways teens can impact the world on social media in positive ways. You can change the life of yourself and others.

PROFILE-COMMUNITY  
MEMBER

### *Nurse Bobie Smith*

CORA SMITH

A hospice nurse working during the COVID-19 outbreak gives her perspective on what life is like for both herself and patients with weak immune systems.

Bobie Smith has been working in the nursing field for many years, most recently as a hospice nurse. A hospice nurse's intention is to provide a better quality of life to terminally ill patients either within their own homes or in specialized facilities. The pandemic has caused issues for those Nurse Bobie cares for, herself, and her colleagues.

When asked what life was like as a hospice nurse during these times Bobie responded, "It is very difficult being honest. Our workloads have nearly tripled, and the patients we see every day are in constant fear, if at all even consciously aware. Most of those admitted to our program are immune system compromised, meaning if they were to contract COVID-19, they would be least likely to recover. I have had several encounters with positive patients and luckily, thanks to the gear they provide and the consistent testing, I have not contracted the virus."

Healthcare workers are seeing the worst of COVID-19, fighting on the front lines of the long, terrifying battle. It has not stopped their efforts to continue to do their jobs, as they continue to be heroes in other's lives. It does come with its long lasting effects however, when asked what the most memorable moment for Bobie was she said, "Having to hold the iPad for patients face timing their families. I could not imagine how painful it would be to be alone fighting a terminal illness, only seeing your family behind a screen. It serves as a reminder for myself, and hopefully others, that following precautions is so important- that way others may not end up like my patients."

Bobie has been working in the hospice care field for over four years now around the Pittsburgh area and hopes to continue to be able to be there for others in need of care in the future. It is extremely important for members of society to fill grueling jobs such as this, and in times such as these we owe healthcare workers an immense gratitude. If you personally know a healthcare worker, make sure to thank them for their service as they truly are heroes.

## SPORTS - SPHS

# Boys basketball back in action

DAN PEPKE

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the South Park basketball program was postponed until January. Then, the team had another small outbreak, but now they are able to play again. In the season so far the varsity boys basketball team has gone 5-2. In their wins they have beaten Southmoreland (twice), Uniontown, Yough, and Mt. Pleasant. Their two losses were to Belle Vernon and Elizabeth Forward. They have had a solid season so far with a 0.71% win rate and rank third in WPIAL 4A 3 division. They rank 77 in PA 4A. So far in the 2020-21 season South Park has been going strong and have high hopes to make playoffs this season. It is still early to see where they can go, but Let's Go Eagles.

## SPORTS

# Twist of luck leads Steelers to season's end

CHLOE BYRON

The Steelers season came to an early close after having a winning streak of 11 games in the 2020 NFL season. There were many obstacles they were faced with, but they still managed to do well.

They started losing after playing the Washington Football Team on December 7, 2020 with a final score of 23-17. They proceeded to play their last winning game against the Indianapolis Colts with a score of 24-28. Ben Roethlisberger was struggling with accuracy this game which could have been caused by injury. Since COVID-19 has affected the team, they have had to move their schedule around resulting in three games in 12 days which had to be exhausting. "I think it's great that the league got to play the majority of their games this season," said Mr. Rieck, a Social Studies teacher and coach of the SPHS football team.

They lost four games in their regular season, which is not bad, but they didn't come back and save themselves their last game, so it took them out for the rest of the season. "The season started off great but with all the variables that COVID-19 presented, teams never knew who would be able to play or not each week," Mr. Rieck stated. The highest score for the Steelers this season was 37 points against the Cleveland Browns, which was their last game of the season. They were behind 28 points in the first quarter, but despite the major setback they managed to score 37 total points.

After watching the Steelers season, many were disappointed with the outcome. The team overcame a lot battling against COVID-19 cases throughout their league, so the season may not have been their best. You cannot expect the absolute most from any team this season because they had many schedule switches and surprise cases causing them to not play. All we can do is continue to support other teams in the league and look forward to next season!

# Josh Bell is shipped away

DAN PEPKE

During the offseason of the MLB, the Pittsburgh Pirates traded away 28 year old first baseman Josh Bell to the Washington Nationals. In 2019 Josh Bell was an all star and hit a .302 with 27 home runs and 81 RBI. Although recently in over a year, he has recorded .233 and 10 home runs due to injury. Pittsburgh has acquired two pitchers from the Nationals with one being 26 year old Wil Crowe who is one of their top prospects. Crowe went 0-2 with an 11.88 ERA with only three starts for the Nationals. Pittsburgh also received 19 year old Eddy Yean, who was an undrafted free agent but was picked up by the Nationals. Yean had a 3-5 record with 75 strikeouts in low minors, sources at ESPN state. When asked about the trade at South Park high school, one student responded, "They have increased their chances of losing."

**SPORTS SCHEDULES**

---

## Hockey

---

February 18 - 9:15 PM  
@Greensburg Salem

February 23 - 6:00 PM  
@Westmont Hilltop

March 1 - 9:00 PM  
Home vs. Quaker Valley

March 2 - 7:00 PM  
Home vs. Fox Chapel

March 4 - 9:00 PM  
Home vs. Chartiers Valley

March 9 - 8:30 PM  
@ Beaver

March 11 - 7:30 PM  
@ Indiana

---

## Bocce

---

February 18 - 2:30 PM  
Home vs. Sto Rox

March 3 - 3:30 PM  
@Montour

March 10 - 2:30 PM  
Home vs. West Allegany

---

## Wrestling

---

February 19 - Varsity WPIAL Individual Finals  
@ Cannon-McMillan

February 25 - Varsity PIAA SW Regional Wrestling  
@Indiana University of Pennsylvania

March 5 - Varsity PIAA Super Regional  
Away

---

## Girls Basketball

---

February 15 - JV 6:00 PM / Varsity 7:30 PM  
Home vs. Brentwood

February 18 - JV 6:00 PM / Varsity 7:30 PM  
@Washington High School

February 19 - Varsity 6:00 PM  
Home vs. McGuffey

February 22 - JV 6:00 PM / Varsity 7:30 PM  
@Brownsville

February 24 - JV 6:00 PM / Varsity 7:30 PM  
Home vs. Waynesburg

---

## Boys Basketball

---

February 16 - JV 6:00 PM / Varsity 7:30 PM  
@ Elizabeth Forward

February 18- JV 6:00 PM / Varsity 7:30 PM  
@Uniontown

February 19- JV 6:00 PM / Varsity 7:30 PM  
@Yough

February 23- JV 6:00 PM / Varsity 7:30 PM  
Home vs. Mount Pleasant

---

## Swimming

---

February 18 - 6:00 PM  
Home vs. Ringold

February 17 - 6:00 PM  
@Ringold

February 28 - 6:00 PM  
@Bell Vernon

---

## THE SPRESS STAFF

Luke Furman  
Sophia DeMatteo  
Chloe Byron  
Noah Fiscus  
Tess Lettie  
Daniel Pepke  
Cora Smith  
Mrs. Finberg – Advisor

*Interested in joining The SPress staff?  
Contact Mrs. Finberg:  
[carrie.finberg@sparksd.org](mailto:carrie.finberg@sparksd.org)  
Room 111*