

THE SPRESS

March 28, 2024

* SENIOR FUTURES

* MS. RECH

* COLOR GUARD

Mini-THON's March Madness

Noah Fiscus



Luke Scarff dunks the ball confidently



Teachers and students of Mini-THON give the "For the Kids" sign together

Mini-THON is a big part of South Park High School. The club raises money to help cure pediatric cancer. This year, Mini-THON hosted a March Madness game on March 15, 2024. This was the third year they did it and it was definitely impactful.

This Mini-THON was thought up thanks to leaders of the club. Señora Sciuillo states, "Mrs. Hecht was the first one to come up with this idea. It has been a big hit ever since!" JV and Varsity basketball players had been invited to play. In addition, Señora states, "we have staff representing all three schools!" Mrs. Doyle, Ms. Lerner, Mr. Jones, Mr. Hardy, Ms. Ridgeway, Ms. Zlokas, and Ms. Lowe all participated in playing against students.

The night included two action-packed games on

the court. The first game included a group of boys facing off against girls in which the boys prevailed as the victors. The second game had some students playing against teachers where the students ended up taking the win. In addition, there was a knockout game where Alena Hlavsa won and received a \$10 Chipotle gift card and a South Park t-shirt. Members of Mini-THON also sold tickets for \$3 to students and parents for admission, and together the event ended up raising \$330 for the Mini-THON charity.

The final Mini-THON event will be Friday, May 10. Until then, students are diligently fundraising to help the cause. Overall, the March Madness step is one step of the giant, powerful impact Mini-THON has made on South Park High School.



Ella Clifford and Andrea Kuczma race to the hoop



Hayley Bennett ready to pass the ball

Teacher SPotlight: Ms. Rech

Addi Yochum



This issue's teacher SPotlight is Ms. Rech! Ms. Rech teaches all art classes at the high school, including pottery.

Ms. Rech claims she's always had a love for art. As for education, she went to college at Edinboro University and graduated with a dual degree in Graphic Design and Art Education. Right out of college, she got a job at an advertising company in Shadyside. She claims, "I worked there for several years and had a successful career in advertising, winning multiple awards designing work for companies such as PNC Bank and the Salvation Army. Unfortunately the corporate world wasn't as fulfilling as I had hoped and I felt like something was missing." She then got a job at The Manchester Craftsman Guild. She says that this job really sparked her desire to teach students. Then, Ms. Rech found out through her former high school art teacher that there was an opening for an art teacher at South Park Middle School, and the rest is history.

When she was asked why she decided to become an art teacher, she said, "I decided to become an art teacher because of my experiences while I was in high school. Art was something that I really fell in love with during those years and I took refuge in the art room and in creating works of art.

I really enjoyed those experiences more than any other experiences and developed a real passion for art." In her classes, she became more advanced than the other students, and began to take an independent study in art, where she learned new art techniques, and more. Ms. Rech claims her favorite part of teaching is having the ability to watch her students learn new things, and grow as an artist, and as a person. She also added, "Being able to bring the same love for the arts to them through creativity, support, a positive working environment and encouragement really can make a difference in the day of a student." She hopes it means as much to them as it does to her when they succeed in new creative pursuits.

When Ms. Rech isn't in a classroom teaching her classes, she is attending her daughter's events and activities. Together they travel to their happy place, the beach. Ms. Rech also spends time running her jewelry business, which she is very passionate about.

If you haven't taken any of her art classes, be sure to take one next year. Even if you aren't passionate about art, Ms. Rech has so many varieties of art classes to take, such as drawing and painting, pottery, and foundations of art.

In ten years

Caelyn Robbins

With about two months left of the school year our seniors have been thinking a lot about their futures. Not just college but where they see themselves after college. Seniors were asked where they see themselves in ten years and here are some of the responses we got:

Russel Szewczyk - "Teaching history at South Park, coaching high school football."

Jana Snyder - "In Chick-fil-a."

Josyali Pagan - "Living on a beautiful island chasing my dream and living life."

Colt Attanucci - "Mega rich electrician, 13 kids."

Tyler Mitchell - "Traveling the world auditing or doing forensic accounting work."

Benny Mejalli - "RICH\$\$"

Colin Kinevy - "I see myself living in a barndominium in Ohio with my girlfriend/ wife, working on cars and having a teacher job."

Desiree Philman - "I see myself being a married real estate agent, living in Italy in a cute little farmhouse/ cottage + maybe one child."

Nico Bates - "Either boxing pro or in the UFC."

Jack DePra - "Graduated with my doctorate in PT living in Virginia, married and probably getting ready to have a kid."

Noah Fiscus - "I see myself having a stable and successful career and a peaceful life."

Chloe Byron - "In ten years, I would like to have a successful job that I really like and also live somewhere nice."

Ava Grisetti - "In ten years I see myself working towards being a Neuropsychologist."

Isabella Pasquale - "I see myself being a successful dental hygienist with a family + pets."

Sarah Mejalli - "I see myself on a yacht."

Jason Gigliotti - "I see myself battling a galactic space monster that sets the world in jeopardy."

Ava Simone - "I see myself living by the beach and having a job I love."

Erin Thagard - "I see myself working as a Physicians Assistant in a major hospital."

JP Tusai - "I see myself teaching eighth grade science at south fayetteville also playing semi pro golf in the summer."

Faith Newell - "Teaching PE in a highschool and working summers in a National Park. Hopefully living in Tennessee and married with at least one kid."

Logan Meier - "Working a job in marketing and living in a warmer state."

IMPORTANT DATES

March 29-April 1: Spring break

March 31: Easter

April 8: Solar eclipse - Early dismissal @ 11:00am

April 23: No School

In ten years (con't)

Caelyn Robbins

Logan Augustine - "Owning a yacht in Dubai from gambling or trying to make it as a professional golfer being married to Ethan Rakip we will have 9 kids."

Ethan Rakip - "Working for a mechanical engineering firm."

Emily Smith - "In ten years I see myself living in North Carolina in a cute beach house with two dogs."

Aiden Yochum - "Me and Ridvan Karakoca are gonna be chillin on a spanish coast talking about the business we just sold."

Ridvan Karakoca - "At the beach swimming."

Doug Hoffman - "I see myself as an Industrial Engineer and a hockey coach."

Tessa Lettie - "I have horrible eyesight, I can't see that far!"

Madison Gapinski - "In ten years, I see myself having children and married while living in a house I designed, as well as doing photography and beauty in my free time."

Ariella Moelber - "Hopefully married and own a gym."

Drake Barbara - "Italy"

Owen Lafferty - "Either homeless or middle class as a software engineer."

Monroe Polis - "Greece"

Murphy Sofranko - "I see myself looking in a mirror looking back at myself and reflecting."

Alena Hlavsa - "Owner of a successful salon, married with at least one kid, living in Colorado."



Ridvan Karakoca and Aiden Yochum

Birthday corner

March

Colt Attanucci - 18
 Colin Meeder - 18
 Anna Reynoso - 18
 Joshi Detwiler - 19
 Breanna Philman - 19
 Abdul Martin - 20
 Rayna Podolak - 20
 Megan Beam - 21
 Steven Duing - 21
 Scott Bennett - 22
 Christian Brickett - 22
 Ryan Tumas - 22

Ella Clifford - 23
 Taylor Smolinski - 23
 Dean Brooks - 24
 Jason Gigliotti - 24
 Cassandra Oxford - 25
 Jacie Hilligsberg - 26
 Alexandra Stringe - 26
 Michael Winkowski - 26
 Logan Meier - 27
 Elli-Anne Laing - 30
 Connor Stewart - 30
 Amanda Dawson - 31

Easter

Erika Filous

Easter is an annual holiday celebrated by Christians. When people think of Easter, they think of candy, eggs, and a bunny. But, Easter has so much more meaning behind it.

This holiday is specific to the Christian belief that Jesus Christ was resurrected on the third day after being crucified on the cross. However, what a lot of people don't know is that before the coming of Easter, there are many more days leading up to it. You have things like Ash Wednesday, where you go to church and get burned palm ashes put on your forehead, and you also have Good Friday. There are many more leading up to Easter, but those are the most known.

There are also influences from other cultures like the French tradition of Fat Tuesday (aka Mardi Gras).

Some people, more than you think, celebrate Easter everywhere. A freshman, Abigail Schweitzer, said she does celebrate Easter. Just like previously stated, when many people think about Easter, they think about candy and eggs. Two freshmen, Aubrey Tabak and Taylor Smolinski, both said that when they think about eggs, candy, and the famous bunny.

In conclusion, Easter is an important holiday in the Christian faith.

Stay in your toaster

Savannah Booth

Do you like making friends? Do you like performing? Do you like to learn new things? Do you like going to Friday night football games? Well, “join the Colorguard” Coach Gray states. Ms. Larn-er and Gray were the 2023-2024 color guard coaches and are ecstatic to start the new season with a brand new group of ladies who love performing!”

By definition, colorguard members who perform choreographed dances and routines with various equipment to enhance and interpret the music of a marching band, but to South Park High School’s Eagle Blues Marching Band, it’s a family. Many things go into putting a show together like the costumes, makeup, hairstyles, routines, and ultimately the bond you create with your teammates. When you join colorguard, you will be greeted by a group of 18 girls that you will spend the next several months with, to learn and bond together. Staying in your toaster has been advice that Coach Gray brought to the team, but has since become one of the inside jokes to all the girls. The start of your season will begin with band camp which is two weeks in the month of August where you will learn your drill on the football field, learn all routines and songs, and make your best memories with some of your closest friends. Ms. Larn-er was an alumni of South Park High School’s band and states, “I was on the colorguard team in high school, and it was easily one of my most favorite activities that I did. I still find myself twirling with random objects...not kidding. The main thing though is that you get the opportunity to do something fun with your peers, and you can wind up finding some best friends out of all the time that you spend together. Plus, being able to say that you can do a horizontal toss is pretty cool!” Many people throughout the band can honestly state that they love what they do which is an amazing feeling.

When joining the band, you are signing up to make a lifetime of memories. This season the band will be performing a country show that will also result in a trip to Nashville, Tennessee. Last season the band went to Disney World as well to perform in a parade by themselves.

Color Guard Auditions

Audition Workshops
 Wednesday, April 10th
 Wednesday, April 17th
 5:30 PM-7:30 PM
 SPHS Auxiliary Gym

Auditions
 Thursday, April 18th
 5:30 PM- 7:30 PM
 SPHS Auxiliary Gym

Please scan the QR code and complete the registration form.

Please email Ms. Gray or Ms. Larn-er if you have any questions.
 kristie.gray@sparksd.org
 sydney.larner@sparksd.org

Joining the band provides you with so many opportunities that you wouldn’t get in a regular sport. You get to perform halftime at each football game, compete against other local schools, perform in various parades, and perform at festivals that are filled with friends, family, and other talented bands! Tuba player Patrick Flannery, junior, states, “You guys are great, you compliment the band really well, and are talented.” Colorguard can be hard and scary at first, but eventually, it will all flow smoothly and become an activity that comes naturally. Joining the auxiliary is a great option for students who would like to be part of the band, but don’t play an instrument.

Auditions will be held on April 18, 2024, at 5:30 pm till 7:30 pm in the high school auxiliary gym. “You will make some of your best and silliest high school memories being a member of the color guard in the marching band!” Coach Gray states. Before auditions, there will be two practices, April 10th and 17th to learn and nail down the audition routines. The Colorguard hopes to see you there!

Spring superstitions

Megan Beam

There are so many superstitions around March and Spring, mostly involving luck or good fortune, but where did they come from? What's the history behind them?

Three and Four-Leaf Clovers: Most people know that clovers are good luck, but how did that start? Well first, three-leaf clovers were carried by Druids, Celtic Priests, because they thought it would help them see evil spirits that were coming for them. However, four-leaf clovers were Celtic charms and they were thought to ward off bad luck and provide protection through magic. Also children in the middle ages believed that they would be able to see fairies if they carried a four-leaf clover with them. In 1620, John Melton was the first one to suggest their good luck and fortune in literature. Each leaf of a four-leaf clover has a different meaning. The first one is for faith, the second one is for hope, the third is for love, and the fourth one is for luck.

Seeing a Robin: If you see a robin it is a sign of good luck and the arrival of spring. Seeing a robin is a sign of good luck because they symbolize happiness, rebirth, and they serve as a reminder to enjoy the simple things in life. The reason that you may see these birds during spring is because it is their mating season. Robins will travel thousands of miles during mating season so it seems like you see them more often at this time of year.

Catching a Falling Leaf: The belief is that catching a falling autumn leaf and keeping it until the first day of spring is good luck. This belief is rooted in many spiritual traditions. The reason it is thought to be good luck draws from the beauty and enchantment of autumn leaves and the signification of seasons changing. It is said that good fortune will come for a month for each leaf that you catch.

Spring Cleaning: Most people probably wouldn't associate cleaning with good or bad luck, however its history suggests otherwise. When Spring rolls around, parents love to tell their children "It's time for Spring cleaning! Get to work!" That's the exact opposite of what kids want to do when the weather is getting nicer outside, but spring cleaning is supposed to bring fresh energy and good fortune to your home. Spring cleaning can go back 3,000 years in

Persian Culture. It was called "khaneh tekani" which translates to "shaking the house." A survey from the American Cleaning Institute found that about 80% of Americans partake in spring cleaning.

Tulips and Daffodils: It is said that if you grow tulips in your garden they will bring good fortune, happiness, luck, and prosperity. Each different color of tulips have different meanings. Yellow tulips are meant to symbolize happiness, cheerfulness, and hope. Pink tulips symbolize good wishes. Daffodils symbolize rebirth, hope, joy, and luck. Most of this is believed because each spring yellow, orange, and white tulips make an appearance to brighten up the bland landscape.

While some superstitions might seem far-fetched, many people still believe in them anyway. Who doesn't want a little extra luck and good energy?

A holiday of jokes and joy

Callie Heynes

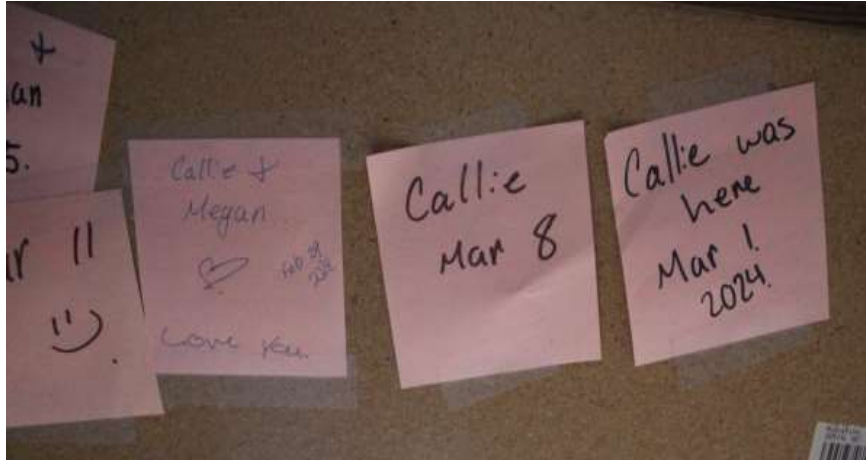
Everyone knows that April Fool's Day is a day of hoaxes and pranks, but do you know why? Or are you the one looking to pull a prank?

The exact origins of April Fool's remain unknown but the laughs have been shared for centuries. This day is celebrated on April 1st each year, transcending many cultures and continents. The unofficial holiday has been recognized by ancient culture, European cultures, and the Roman empire, and is still mentioned by major media today. Speculation says that the reason that it is celebrated in April is because of France switching from the Julian calendar to the Gregorian calendar. In both the Julian and Gregorian calendars, the new year began with the spring equinox around April 1st. The ancient Roman empire was also infected with the laughs of April 1st. The beginning of April is linked to festivals in Rome such as Hilaria, which is Latin for joy. For these festivals, people would dress up in disguises to celebrate and honor the Egyptian gods Isis, Osiris, and Seth.

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A holiday of jokes and joy (con't)

Callie Heynes



However, since there is no distinct evidence of the origins of the day, the Museum of Hoaxes believes that April Fool's Day didn't directly come from any one of these celebrations. The Museum of Hoaxes is a website that was created in 1997 to discuss myths, hoaxes, and urban legends. Instead, it is a blend of all of the celebrations and festivals. As the Museum of Hoaxes puts it, "April Fool's Day resembles these other celebrations because they're all manifestations of a deeper pattern of folk behavior- an instinct to respond to the arrival of spring with festive mischief and symbolic misrule". A melting of all of these different cultures gives a new understanding of the many decades and centuries that have passed before us. By participating in April Fool's Day, the beauty of multiple cultures is seen by the joy shared and the connections made.

Modern jokes like those in cartoons and comedies are still found funny, even though they were dated many years ago. In Britain and Scotland, during the 18th century, people would send their friends and family on random, nonsense errands. These wild goose chases were referred to as "hunting the gowk". Gowk means a cuckoo bird, a symbol for a fool. In Switzerland, farmers yearly report a grand abundance of their "spaghetti harvest" to the local newspapers. Spring equinox is not only about more sunny days and the growth of

new flowers but the harvesting of spaghetti also. The "Swiss Spaghetti Harvest" is considered one of the greatest April Fool's pranks of all time.

Now, people fill rooms with balloons or use fake bugs to scare friends and family. For more technology-minded people, changing someone's phone to a different language is a light-hearted option, if you know how to revert it eventually. For me, pranks have always been fun to pull on family and friends. April Fool's can go beyond this though, as some pranks go on for longer than others. Pranks and jokes can take lots of time to build up. For example, I have been placing sticky notes on the bottom of Mrs Surovchak's desk for a couple of weeks now. She's yet to notice, but I can only imagine the surprise when she does. Classmates of mine, Megan Beam and Savannah Booth, are also in on the joke as well. We've shared many laughs but at the end of the day, it is all in good fun.

April Fool's jokes and pranks are funny and unserious. The point of the day is to prank friends and family but it also brings laughs and can raise spirits for the coming spring. While some pranks may take more planning and patience than others, all the laughs and fun of the day are the reason that this unofficial holiday is still relevant to pranks and non-prankers alike. Watch out! Who knows what prank you might fall into on April Fool's Day?

The Exorcist: Believer

Khai Brown

Whether you weren't sure you wanted to watch it or you just didn't have time, "The Exorcist: Believer" is worth watching. Now of course, the following is going to have spoilers, plenty of them, so beware before you keep reading on.

The movie starts in Haiti with a pregnant woman and her husband. As she receives a blessing, her husband seems skeptical about anything spiritual. A building catches his eye and his wife departs to go lay down as he leaves to go and take a photo. Unfortunately, an earthquake strikes, causing the building the wife is in to tremble and collapse. Her husband now has a difficult choice to make as he's informed he can only save either the baby or his wife. Thirteen years later in Georgia a girl is rummaging through a bin, her mother's old stuff. You're informed that the girl's name is Angela and she seems to have a good relationship with her dad, Victor. When she asks to go to a friend's house, Victor seems really hesitant and almost wants to say no. On the ride to school, the dad finds the scarf Angela took from her mother's bin. He does end up letting Angela go to her friend's and only says "Be home by dinner." In school, Angela and her friend, Katherine, do end up revealing that they don't plan on going to do homework but actually to sneak over to the woods and do a seance. We're now brought to where the girls are together in a small stone structure in the ground where they do continue to go on with their seance. The narrative switches to Victor who works as a family photographer and in this scene. You can see the grief in his eyes as he photographs a small family. After the family leaves and Victor is alone, he hears a weird noise. Angela isn't home for dinner and even after Victor makes it home, she's still not there. Victor ends up calling the friend's parents and her parents said they were going to another girl's house and that they'd call back, but when they call back it's not for any good reason as the other girl also hasn't seen either of them.

Both girls' parents are now working together on searching the woods and have called the police.

Victor ends up being the one to find the stone structure the girls were in and finds Angela's shoe, while

Katherine's mom finds her book bag hanging in a tree. We move to another scene with the parents in the police station. The girls have now been missing for seven hours while their parents are butting heads and arguing with Victor, who simply asked what kind of kid Katherine was. It's a bit harsh but in the situation it's quite understandable how everyone is agitated and on edge. On a new day, Victor is still searching the woods, and the girls have made it to the news. Later that day, Victor is at a church breakfast with a neighbor. While some men began making inappropriate and rude comments about where Angela went, Victor gets upset and loses his temper. He decides to go home, where he finds a random woman and the same neighbor in Angela's room. He demands everyone to get out. He ends up sobbing when it starts to rain because "she doesn't have her raincoat."

We're brought to a different scene, somewhere we haven't seen before. It's a farm with a sick horse. The boy runs into the barn and ends up finding both girls much to his surprise. The girls look rough, disheveled, confused, and afraid. Scene flips to Victor rushing to the hospital for Angela, once there he's brought to sobs once more. Angela asks if he's mad, which he's not, and states that she's only been gone a few hours. It's been days. A few scenes later the girls are being odd, dragging their bodies against the glass as the nurse goes on to say they are perfectly normal. In another scene shortly after, Angela begins to blame her father for the seance going wrong since he had taken the scarf away, and while in this same scene Angela sees something in the reflection of the window and demands her father to leave. While Victor is brushing his teeth, the lights keep flickering and he isn't sure why, but suddenly Angela appears out of nowhere which is a bit freaky. We're shortly brought to the next morning where Victor made Angela breakfast but when he went to wake her up she had an accident. When Victor goes to check on her in the bath later on, she's

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The Exorsist: Believer (con't)

Khai Brown

nowhere to be seen and the water is black. She soon does show up but not for any good reason as she's shown attacking her dad and then having a seizure. Both girls end up having horrible situations as Katherine at church lashes out screaming. In the hospital once more, Victor is looking at psych care for his daughter and someone along the line recommends that it may be something more. After considering this, Victor reaches out to the author whose daughter had the exact same issue and tells Victor that something needs to be done immediately. They go to get both the girls but due to an incident with Katherine, Chris ends up blind from being stabbed which puts a small bump in their plans. Everyone gathers the girls into the house and begins strapping them down but unfortunately were informed that the church wouldn't allow the exorcism to happen with their help. Victor's neighbor who was supposed to be a nun steps in to perform the exorcism for them. Everyone stands strong for a while before the parents come to a problem, they all have to choose one girl to survive it. Who will they choose though?

Cartoon

Sarah Grubjesic



“Matilda”



South Park High School presented “Matilda” March 21 - 24, 2024. The production is based on the novel by Roald Dahl and tells the story of young Matilda Wormwood (played by Olivia Sperber). A bookworm by nature, Matilda plays foil to her TV loving parents (played by Jarett Thompson and Lilly Pritts) and finds solace in her teacher, Miss Honey (played by Josi Pagan). The cast also included Madeline Linz, Matt Chekan, Alex Marshall, Maddie Dubyak, Pigeon Petruska, and Kimberlin Ernst, Ethan Short, and Andrea Stoyanova. The entire production, including the set and music, was a result of the hard work of students.

