



# THE TALON

SENECA VALLEY HIGH SCHOOL GERMANTOWN, MD

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## 2019 in Review

By: Sean Quiroga

The year of 2019 has been a very interesting and adventurous one. There have been many current events that have occurred this year. Examples of these events occur due to politics, entertainment, science, and many other topics. These topics have led to positive and negative moments that have effected not only the country but the world. Starting off with 17-year-old Greta Thunberg, who was named Time person of the year for her strong activism on climate change. According to Time magazine, Greta Thunberg is a young Swedish girl who started trending by her speech that she made at the UN climate

suction in September of 2019 and criticizing world leaders at the Conference of the Parties 25 in December. She has shown what it is like to be an influencer to others and to show that you are never too young to start looking at what problems this country and earth has.

There was also a negative effect this year as many mass shootings have happened this year. The two that were highlighted this year were the two mass shootings that were in the span of 24 hours, which were the two shootings in Dayton, Ohio and EL Paso, Texas. Where, according to USA, today a total of 31 people were killed and at least 50 were wounded in a span of 24 hours and people wondered: what next?

Many other events have occurred in the year of 2019 as technology has advanced with the iPhone 11 coming

out. Also, the 2020 presidential election has taken off and, according to CNN, 20 democratic candidates decided to run, and at the end of the year there are less than 10 candidates left in the race.

2019 can be called an interesting year where there were a lot of big and small events that have occurred over this year. One big problem that has not been fixed and has been a continuous problem for the last couple of years is, according to the Flint Journal, Flint, Michigan still does not have clean water. They have been stuck without clean water for a good portion of the last decade and there has been nothing done about. Now, is there something we can do about this? I don't know, but it doesn't hurt to look into this problem that has been ignored by most people, mostly the people in power.

## Vaping Takes a Toll

By: Merna Nakhla

Vaping is the act of aerosol inhalation and exhalation, sometimes referred to as vapor created by an e-cigarette or similar device. Vaping can kill or cause severe damage to the body. Many teenagers in Maryland vape thinking it is better than smoking. The act itself is illegal and unethical. It destroys the lungs. It has risks.

### How do e-cigarettes work?

The electronic cigarette has three main parts: a rechargeable battery, a steaming chamber, and a liquid cartridge that usually contains nicotine or chemical flavorings, and other compounds.



Image from WebMD

### The harms of vaping

Many studies and research have been conducted on the impact of e-cigarettes on the health of users, and compared with ordinary cigarettes in terms of damage to users, and the researchers found through their experiments on e-cigarettes some toxic metals such as lead, which are available in large proportions in ordinary cigarettes. Another study published substantial evidence linking both electronic cigarette smokers and regular cigarettes to the risk of chronic heart attacks, as well as nicotine damage - a highly addictive substance - radically affecting brain development, especially in young teens.

### The bad side effects of vaping on teens

Mental imaging studies of young people who started smoking electronic cigarettes at an early age indicate that these people have differences in the functioning of the cerebral cortex of their brains like lack of activity and movement, and they lack concentration in tasks related to memory and attention compared to people who do not smoke. These results are related to the effect of nicotine on both normal and electronic cigarettes. A study of nearly 20,000 adults found that adults were 1.7 times more likely to have wheezing, or difficulty breathing, than non-smokers of electronic cigarettes.

### Vaping in the US

In 2019 there are nearly 500 cases of cigarette-related respiratory diseases across the United States, according to the Center for Disease Control, which refers to symptoms including coughing, chest pain, nausea, shortness of breath, vomiting or diarrhea. As of last September, six "lung diseases" have resulted in death from e-cigarettes and the exact component of the liquid has not been determined, but the disease appears to affect users of e-cigarettes containing nicotine.

### Trump bans electronic cigarettes with flavors

Especially after the death of some smokers, US President Donald Trump announced that he directed his administration to prevent some types of electronic cigarettes with different flavors that are found in the US market, such as mango, apple and strawberry flavors, because of the emergence of deaths related vaping.

### Sources

"Maryland lawmakers eye restrictions on vaping products." *The Baltimore Sun*.  
"Maryland Lawmakers to Pursue Flavored Vaping Ban." *MarylandMatters.org*.  
"Op-ed: Md. legislators distort vaping risks." *The Baltimore Sun*.  
"Trump Is Giving In To The Vaping Industry On A Flavor Ban, Lawmakers Say." *Buzzfeed*.  
"Vaping: What You Need to Know." *WebMD*.

## Top Golf Coming to Germantown

By: Gabriel Tuckhorn

Top Golf is a luxury golf playing franchise with less than sixty locations nationwide. According to their company website, it specializes in golf entertainment but also serves food and drinks, and provides multiple lounge settings and different golf experiences. The company was built on the idea of uniting communities and bridging gaps between distinct groups through extreme entertainment and gameplay. The business shows promise of being a premier location for birthday parties, bachelor or bachelorette parties, corporate events, date nights, or just a night out with friends.

In the past year Top Golf has constructed a new loca-

tion in Germantown directly off 270. The Germantown Pulse reports that it is the first Franchise built in Maryland and the third in the greater Washington DC area. It was expected to open in late 2019, but was delayed. The construction of this complex in the Germantown area will draw more people from the county and state area to our small community, allowing other businesses in the area to thrive, as well as providing employment to hundreds of Germantown natives. The complex will be open all year round, with climate controlled golfing bays.

The hiring process has begun, with dozens of teens from Clarksburg, Seneca Valley, and Watkins Mill high



Image from TopGolf.com

school hired to staff the enormous complex, as well as many other people in Montgomery county. If you would like to get updates on what customer options there are for you, you can go to their website at TopGolf.com. If you are interested in beginning the application process than you can go to their website and find a recruiting events hosted by them.

Seneca Valley High School  
Birds of Play  
Present

## You're A Good Man, Charlie Brown

March 20, 21, 27 @ 7pm  
March 21\*, 28 @ 2pm

March 21 at 2pm is a Sensory Friendly Performance

Tickets Online

\$10 Adult

\$8 Student/Senior

\$5 Child Under 10

Tickets @ the Door

\$12 Adult

\$10 Student

\$8 Child Under 10

SVHS BOP is proud to support Project Linus.

[www.svhsbop.com](http://www.svhsbop.com)

## JROTC impresses at AMI

By: Gabriel Tuckhorn

On December 4th, 2019, the Seneca Valley NJROTC unit had their Area Managers Inspection or AMI. This annual inspection gives the highest levels of leadership within this territorial jurisdiction of the program an opportunity to see the progress and stability of the unit. A series of ceremonial activities take place, such as the ringing of the bell as the inspecting officer, in this case, Captain Bochuzzi, USN retired, walks in, performances from the drill teams and color guard, and pass in review, an exercise that gets the entire unit of over 90 cadets marching all at once in a truly awe-inspiring presentation. Honored guests include principals from schools in the area as well as all parents of cadets, and classes of students in the building should the teacher permit.



After the ceremony has completed, the highest-ranked members of the unit must put together a presentation for the inspector.

These feature the accomplishments and goals of the very best ROTC has to offer. The inspector ends the inspection by inspecting all of the ROTC spaces, which include two classrooms, two offices, an armory, and a supply room.

This year the unit did amazingly. "This is one of the best inspections I have seen and I have been doing these for years. I certainly hope I'm invited again," said the Captain. Seemingly the only downfall of the inspection was the attendance. It is a requirement that all NJROTC host units have at least 100 cadets on their roster. They have been struggling to maintain 92 cadets this year. This is the first year since the inception of the program that attendance has been this much of a problem. Cadet Jones, the commanding officer of the unit had said "going forward we don't see this being as big of a problem, I am confident in our recruiting efforts, and I'm sure with the new building, our numbers will rise as the school population rises."

Despite their attendance issues, the cadets put on an exemplary presentation that is something to be proud of. Congratulations to all the cadets that worked hard to put their best foot forward during the ceremony and who made it an amazing success.

## Popcorn, cookies, and coffee with Mr. Rose and Ms. Hartman



By: Kailey McDougall

I spoke to the two groups who are responsible for passing out delicious popcorn, coffee, and cookies to the staff and students of Seneca valley high school!

They explained the preparations and everything that goes along with the programs. I spoke to Ms. Hartman, who is in charge of LFI, and Mr. Rose A.K.A. Coach Rose who is in charge of SCB. Here are their responses.

**Kayley:** Why do you guys sell products such as cookies and popcorn?

**Ms. Hartman:** We do it for multiple reasons. The students are doing job skills and learning how to communicate in groups. The money we make we can use to do field trips and get more supplies.

**Mr. Rose:** We sell the popcorn so the students can get acclimated to selling an item. There's a communication aspect involved when dealing with customers and money.

The heart of making and selling popcorn is fun and gets them into a small business. Preparing and during and cleaning are all hands-on tasks that students from SCB can benefit from.

**Kayley:** Who does it benefit?

**Ms. Hartman:** The coffee club and cookies benefit our students with learning new skills, so it benefits them and makes connections with teachers and students within the school. I've really seen a difference when students who don't have disabilities talk to students with disabilities. It helps connect them together.

**Kayley:** Any other items you look forward to selling in the future?

**Ms. Hartman:** That's in conversation right now with the Seneca Valley cafe.

**Mr. Rose:** Not so much. We're going to stick with the popcorn, but we have a surprise for the holidays. We have new popcorn flavors coming that the students don't know about.

**Kayley:** What do you and the students do to prepare for sales?

**Ms. Hartman:** Coffee club is different from cookie club, but they all have stations, and they go through the order forms and make sure everything is correct. Cookies we do stations as well: who preps cookies, bags the cookies, and sells the cookies. Everyone has a different job everyday.

**Mr. Rose:** There's no set up for the popcorn, but there's a set up for the whole scene. The popcorn, the fans, the tables, popcorn boxes, and setting up the money the flavors and getting the table looking good.

## Cold winters are sometimes nice—Seneca students think snowy thoughts

By: Sean Quiroga

School can be rough sometimes, and most students would like a day off, if not more. That's when a nice snow day could be useful. Just to stay home from school because of the inclement weather. In the school calendar year of 2019-2020, we so far have not been lucky with snow days, but in the past students in MCPS have had as much as a week off of school and the feeling of not having school has been nice to the students. Back in the 2015-2016 calendar year, there was a snowstorm where students had a whole week off of school due to the snow. Then back in the school calendar year of 2010-2011 school calendar year we also had a week off due to another snowstorm.

These have to lead to speculations of when the next snow-storm will be.

Another question to ask is: What do students do on their off day(s), Orlando Martinez mentioned: "I just treat it as if it were a Saturday or Sunday". So some students like the day off to do more school work as Joine Squire mentioned: "I use to catch up on work because having a whole day off and wasting it is not a good use of time."

Snow can also be stressful sometimes too, when some parents make their kids go out and shovel the snow.

Students use it as time to spend time with their friends and enjoy their time in the snow and go sledding, snowball fights, or games of football. As student Noah Humpert said, "It's a good time to have fun, not do your

homework."

In all snow days can be seen as very refreshing and nice, but MCPS is only allowed two snow days before they would have to extend the school year, which I think no one would want. Even though MCPS has yet to use many snow days this year, February and even March sometimes can and could contain snow.

So, even if the snow is projected to come and nothing comes, don't worry because there are many opportunities for the snow to come and enjoy some needed days off from school for the students and teachers.

# Indoor Track athletes hope to take momentum into outdoor season

By: Gabriel Tuckhorn

This year's winter track season has been an impressive and successful one, with several school records being set. The team has a roster of a slightly fewer than 40 people.

The team has a coaching staff of three. Coach Colbert, the head coach is also a tech teacher at Seneca. Coach Alexander serves as the assistant head coach and Coach Sargent, a new addition to the coaching staff this year, serves as the distance coach for the team.

Coach Colbert has pushed his runners to try new things and new events, especially the newer runners that have not found their calling yet. It's important for people

to be pushed out of their comfort zone so they are able to explore new events. Runners may have strengths in areas they didn't know they did or they may have a passion for an event they ordinarily may not have tried.

Veteran runners also capitalized on their strengths. Giselle Badoo was able to break her own 55-meter record, Chelsea Montau broke the 3200-meter record and Ever Elegon broke through the 800-meter record. When asked, they said they don't intend on stopping there, and want to continue breaking more records. Runners plan on carrying this success into the future.

A big motivator for the team is competing for and winning the state title and regional title. "We are all moti-

vated to win those meets and have a way better season than we did last year," said Giselle. The hope is that successes here will be able to be echoed into the outdoor season, and more records and titles will be won.

It is important that our athletes remain passionate and motivated to continue doing their best, so consider attending one of their next meets and showing your love for your fellow Vallians! Their schedule is on the SVHS athletics website. If you are interested in joining track, you can contact coach Colbert to see about being added to the Spring roster.



# Oliver, Screaming Eagles Girls basketball look for historic run

By: Gabriel Tuckhorn

Seneca Valley's girl's basketball team has seen great success this season. With a 15-6 winning record, the team has proved itself as an amazing source of pride for our school. The team has even been able to achieve a win against our rival, Northwest High School, a truly impressive feat. This success has been due to a number of major factors. With an excellent and dedicated coaching staff, they have been training vigorously.

Jasia Oliver, the number 3 female basketball player in the DMV, scoring an average of 22.6 points per game, has also been an extreme asset to the team. When asked what some of the biggest



strengths they had on the court, she stated height, vision, and the fact that the starting 5 players have been playing together for the last 5 years all helped them a lot. The

team also has a lot of off the court chemistry, with a very tight-knit relationship with one another.

The goal for the team, according to Hannah Himes, a starting senior, is to finish the regular season with enough wins to guarantee a home playoff game, which would be a major morale boost. Ultimately they would also like to win regionals, and beyond.

The players are also very confident in the future of the team. With new talent coming from the expanded school zone as well as amazingly skillful coaches that have the ability to give a lot of skills to future generations.

The team came off a two game losing streak at the time of this interview, but the players continue to be there for each other and provide support for one another. "We win as a team and lose as a team," said Hannah, "Every team goes through its struggles, but remaining united is important."

Make sure you come out to their games and show lots of love. The team is working hard every day to represent Seneca the best they can. Support them as loudly and as much as you can. They deserve it.

# Baseball and Hockey reign supreme in DC Sports

By: Sean Quiroga

The past five years have shown the best and the worst of DC sports teams, as some have shown a lot of success and some have shown a lot of downfalls. The Washington Nationals and the Washington Capitals have long awaited for their very first world championship. Now, while both teams took a while to claim their very first championship, they both still got it done respectively within the last 3 years as the Nationals claimed their very first World Series championship in October of 2019 and the Capitals claiming their very first Stanley Cup in June of 2018. With both of these teams, they had to get over the high bumps in the road that were in their way.

According to Espn.com, the Capitals were down in every series that was best of seven games in the playoffs, and had to fight back and end up winning the series. While the Nationals have been looked at as World Series competitors since 2012 and never got over the hump of



Image from Jeff Roberson/Associate Press

the divisional round before finally winning the world series for the first time in franchise history.

This Success has shown what it is like to have a good franchise from top to bottom; from the owner down to the players. Now, it did take a long time for them to win a championship than what was expected, but at least they won something, and DC sports fans can be happy

about something.

Now, while those DC sports have won their respective championships for their leagues, there have been corrupted situations considering the two other main DC sports teams. The Washington Redskins and the Washington Wizards have yet to live up to the expectations of the Nationals and the Capitals, as both teams have made

the playoffs in the past 10 years but have yet to take the next step in reaching the championship round. This, in most people's opinion, has to deal with not only the players that are playing, but the management that is leading these disorganized teams.

Many fans have shown frustration with the Wizards, thinking that they don't have enough talent to win a championship, and questions seem to loom if John Wall, who, according to ESPN.com, signed a \$169 million extension back in 2017, can lead this team.

While people do ask questions about the Washington Wizards, there seem to be many more questions about the Washington Redskins. The Washington Redskins, according to NFL network, have not won a playoff game since 2004 and have not advanced to the championship round since the '90s, and fans are very furious about this.

According to 106.7 The Fan, which is their home radio station, some are saying that the owner, Dan Snyder, should sell the team, and fans want him to fire their General Manager, Bruce Allen. Another aspect that the home radio station pointed out is out is their ticket sales have gone down and not many people have been going to their games, as the opposing teams have been more active at the Redskins home games. These four DC teams have shown lots of ups and downs but hopefully, in the future, all of the downs can be erased and there will be more positive outcomes for DC sports.

## Christmas by the Continents: Some unfamiliar ways to celebrate a familiar holiday

By: Merna Nakhla

### Africa

In Egypt, the shops, especially the gift shops, start decorating their sides and the Christmas tree with Christmas decorations symbolizing Christmas, such as Santa Claus, carrying gifts.

### Asia

Kentucky Fried Chicken is considered the traditional meal for the Japanese on Christmas Day, the name of the chicken (KFC) has been associated with Christmas in the minds of the Japanese since the launch of the "Kentucky for Christmas" campaign in 1974, so the American restaurant chain is most popular in Japan that day.

### Australia

Australia celebrates Christmas in its own way by doing a "fun race," a running race that includes a large number of people wearing Santa Claus costumes, in order to collect funds and donations for poor children and people with special needs, in line with the atmosphere of birthday celebrations.

### Europe

In Germany and the Netherlands, children used to throw their shoes out of the house, waiting to find sweets and toys inside the shoes. In the morning, Santa Claus left them as a sign of his satisfaction with them last year.

### South America

In Brazil, Christians celebrate in big arenas where bright lights are lit, wonderful Christmas trees are adorned with balls and colorful lights, and they race for the largest trees to win the title of the largest and most beautiful tree in Brazil.

### Sources

"7 Christmas holidays for every continent." leadventure.com

"20 Christmas Traditions Around the World That May Surprise You." *Country Living*.

"Christmas Around The World." Kids-World-Travel-Guide.com.

## HELP WANTED

There are positions available here at the Talon! No experience necessary!

Talk to your counselor about taking journalism for the 2020-2021 school year!

### Staff

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Pennies For Patients raises funds in support of The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society (LLS).

The mission of LLS is: Cure leukemia, lymphoma, Hodgkin's disease and myeloma, and improve the quality of life of patients and their families.

## Help the SGA raise funds for The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society!

This Spring, the Student Government Association will have a competition to see which class can raise the most money! The winning class will earn points in Clash of the Classes!

Tune in regularly to the morning announcements to hear when the fund raiser begins and find out how to donate!

## Your AD Here

The Talon is in search of businesses and individuals from the Germantown community who are interested in advertising in future issues.

The Talon is also in search of Individuals interested in becoming patrons of our publication.

For details about this opportunity, Please contact our sponsor at

kellie\_e\_hofmeister@mcpsmd.org or at 301-353-8016

Thank you! Go Eagles!

## Women Of WIL Sanitary Drive



We are collecting sanitary products to donate to a local homeless shelter for women.

**Personal hygiene is a right, not a privilege.**

We will be collecting the following items:

- Hand sanitizer
- Deodorant
- Tampons/pads
- Soap

#### How To Donate:

Take your donations to room 222 and place them into the labeled boxes.

OR

Monetary donations can be made by going to <https://osp.osmsinc.com/MontgomeryMD/>. Go to Seneca Valley's OSP site and type in the keyword "Sanitary."

## Starting off the new year right

By: Merna Nakhla

With the end of a year and the beginning of a new year, the majority have come to adopt the principle of "New Year's Resolutions," they undertake to implement certain matters during the new year. In general, these decisions have a direct relationship with the person and benefit them.

New Year's Resolutions are important because they are in one way or another a step towards the best. In this topic, we will propose a set of 10 resolutions that anyone can adopt because they contribute in one way or another to solving bigger problems that we suffer from as a society and therefore it does not benefit the individual only, but rather it transcends it to affect its surroundings and society, and thus we all contribute to the advancement of our societies and countries.

1. Spend more time with family
2. Spend more time with friends
3. Eat healthier
4. Exercise more
5. Learn a new skill
6. Find a new hobby
7. Read more
8. Find a job
9. Buy a houseplant
10. Volunteer