



The Spartan Times



Spartan Theatre Players Shine in Seward's Production: *You're A Good Man, Charlie Brown*

By Sophia LaBelle

Seward's production of *You're A Good Man, Charlie Brown* hit the Spartan stage mid March and brought the characters of the *Peanuts* cartoon to life perfectly with the guidance of co-directors Mrs. Ecker and Mr. Deas. We sang, danced, and acted our hearts out at all three shows, including opening night, which sold out the space.



After the last show, speeches were given to the senior members of the club as well as the directors, which brought the cast, crew, and audience to tears. The show may be over, but the Spartan Theatre Players still have something up their sleeve. Later this year, the cast will perform a cabaret of musical theatre songs. More information will come soon. 💕



The Golden Hill Science Symposium of 2024

By Cricket Carey

Just recently, on the first of March 2024, I volunteered at Golden Hill Elementary's annual Science Symposium for some extra volunteer hours. One of the PTA members helping organize the event suggested I write an article for The Spartan Times about it, so here we are.

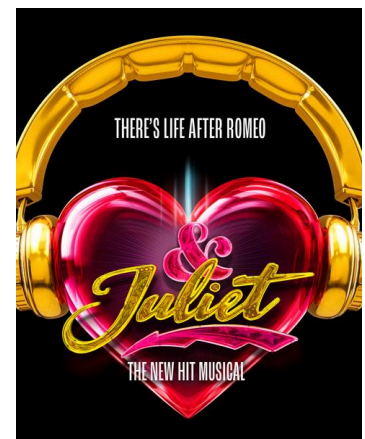
I didn't play a huge role in this event other than setup, but that made no hindrance on the inspiration and creativity I was happy to see in these bright young children that night. Golden Hill students, aged Pre-K through 5th grade, were all allowed to sign up and present a science project they created - more often than not with the help of their parents/guardians. I saw all kinds of interesting projects, ranging from homemade slime to artificially dyed Begonia flowers. These weren't your ordinary baking soda volcanos; despite being so young, these students were full of bright ideas and crafty science experiments.

It felt really special to see the world of STEM being highlighted for kids of such a young age, because today's society is running far too low on scientists, doctors, and engineers. In addition to all the other people at the event, whether it be the students' family members or all the lab coat-adorned judges, I was happy to see this new generation of great minds with a lot of potential. Be sure to come next year to see what's in store, you might be really impressed!

The Members of Chorus Take An Exciting Trip to The City and See *And Juliet*

By Sophia LaBelle with photos by Sophia LaBelle and Lily Jarling

On March 20th, the Wednesday before Spring Break, the students in the Chorus classes grades 7-12, led by Mr. Visconti, took a trip to New York City to see Broadway's *And Juliet*. Once we arrived in the city, we went to Bryant Park to eat lunch and enjoy the scenery. In the time between lunch and the show, we explored the city and grabbed drinks at Starbucks. When we arrived at the Stephen Sondheim Theater, we sat in our seats and awaited what would be an amazing jukebox musical. Most of us had never heard of it, let alone seen it, so it was definitely a wonderful surprise. Overall, it was a great time and a great experience, and we can't wait to see what the musical is next year!!



Photos from the Seward Chorus Trip:



Village of Florida Creates a Magical Easter Egg Hunt for the Community

By Sophia LaBelle with photos by Sophia LaBelle and Alyssa Werner



On the weekend before Easter Sunday, the Village of Florida, led by Alyssa Werner, orchestrated an Easter Egg Hunt sponsored by the Florida Chamber of Commerce and the Florida Lions Club for the town to enjoy and to get in the holiday spirit. While waiting for the hunt to commence, the children were able to make bunny crafts, color on coloring sheets, and take a guess on how many jelly beans were in a concealed jar. These stations were run by volunteers from Seward as they helped guide the children through the events and activities. Prior to the stations, these volunteers helped hide eggs in both the “big kid” and “little kid” areas. Once the hunt began, kids were running wild trying to find eggs, more specifically shiny eggs that could have a golden egg in them. If you found one of those two eggs you’d get a basket of Easter goodies. At the end of the hunt, it was revealed that the number of jelly beans was 405 along with who had the closest guess. As a prize, they got to take the entire jar home with them. It was a lovely afternoon that brought the community together for the springtime holiday.



Surprise Earthquake Strikes Florida

By Malina Grove

On the morning of April 5th, 2024, an earthquake measured as a 4.8 on the Richter Scale shook the east coast. Affecting mostly New Jersey and New York, the earthquake was quite the surprise to all who were going about their Friday normally. The earthquake originated near Hunterdon County, New Jersey, and stretched all the way to parts of Maine and Maryland. The last earthquake of note that affected New York was in August of 2011, which had a magnitude of 5.8. Reportedly little damage was caused to the areas that experienced the quake, and no injuries occurred.

After 25 Years Counseling at Seward, Mr. Geroux Prepares for Retirement

By Sophia LaBelle

Beloved high school guidance counselor Mr. Geroux is saying goodbye to the Spartans as this year marks his final year at Seward. He has counseled at Seward for twenty-five years and has a collective thirty-four years in education.



I had the chance to sit down with Mr. Geroux and discuss his time at Seward, his parting words of wisdom, and his plans for the future.

S: What are you going to miss the most about Seward?

G: The students. They're the reason why I do this.

S: What's the benefit of counseling for a smaller school?

G: Having the opportunity to really know the students and parents on a deep level, knowing their histories and stories. You can connect with them more.

S: What piece of advice would you leave the students and faculty with?

G: Take school seriously. A lot of people don't. It'll catch up to you, whether you're going to college or want to join the military. They all look back to high school and use that experience to determine if they want you or not. As for staff, enjoy the little things, don't take things too seriously. I always try to lighten things with students and adults, but if you take things too seriously, people are just going to stress out.

S: What do you think is a benefit of working in a small district?

G: When I started here, one of the first questions that was asked of me was why did I come here and how long was I going to stay. I wanted to find a place that I liked and that I felt comfortable in, and that was this school. You learn a lot from this place. I really learned about the responsibilities of a counselor in a small school district, which is very different from bigger schools. In a small district you can take on a lot that when you're training to be a counselor you don't necessarily learn.

S: When looking back on your time at Seward, what comes to mind?

G: I'm definitely going to miss it, but you get to a certain point that you know it's time to retire, and I didn't know it was true until it happened.

S: Plans for the future?

G: Working part time in the travel industry, I really want to travel. I've been asked to assist several colleges' with their offices of admissions. The plan is to just enjoy some time off. I'm definitely reserving time for the gym and the golf course.

Mr. Geroux is going to be missed by both his students and staff, and he will be remembered for his humor and his dedication to making everyone feel welcome and important.

I can't say I've known Mr. Geroux as well as others, but from my few experiences with him, I can definitely see why he is beloved at Seward and why he has been here for as long as he has. He has always been very attentive and thorough with me and my million questions about anything and everything high school related. (Even when I'm spamming his inbox, he always answers). He has been a strong support for me thus far as I navigate my way through high school, as I'm sure he has been with every student he has interacted with.

We all appreciate you, Mr. Geroux, and we look forward to what you accomplish in the future.

St. Patrick's Day At Seward: Rock Paper Scissors

By Malina Grove and Maris Neuman

A dancing leprechaun, a plethora of Irish folk music, and festive strings of green beads. This is what the students of S.S. Seward were greeted by when they entered school on the morning of March 15th. However, the St. Patty's Day festivities didn't end there. Hosted by the Student Council, the students and teachers of S.S. Seward were able to participate in a schoolwide Rock Paper Scissors competition! The premise was simple: if you were wearing a string of beads handed out that morning by the members of the Student Council, you could challenge another student or teacher to a game of rock paper scissors. The winner receives the loser's beads. At the end of the day, whoever has the most beads reported to the Main Office to claim their prize: a \$25 gift card to Central Deli. The high school winner was Daniel Fuentes and the middle school winner was Miles Dwydko.



Holocaust Museum: Never Forget

By Sophia LaBelle with photos by Sophia LaBelle

On March 22nd, the day before the students and staff went on Spring Break, the sophomores took a trip to the *Holocaust Museum: Center for Tolerance and Education* located in Suffern, NY at the Rockland Community College. The Class of 2026 had been studying the Holocaust prior to this trip in both Global History and English. In English we are currently reading Elie Wiesel's memoir *Night*, which follows his experience in the Holocaust.

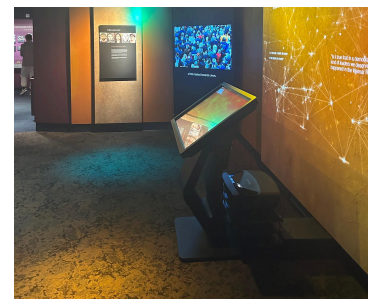


Our trip was divided into two sections: the workshop and the tour of the exhibits. The workshop consisted of media and exercises that related to aspects of the Holocaust as well as instances in history and our lives today. It also taught us how we can display moral courage in our world the way the upstanders did. The head of our tour, Serge Rotjan, gave us a moving speech about his parents' history with the Holocaust and how this museum helps people, specifically in the younger audience, never forget the events that happened. Then we each received questions to answer as we viewed the exhibits.

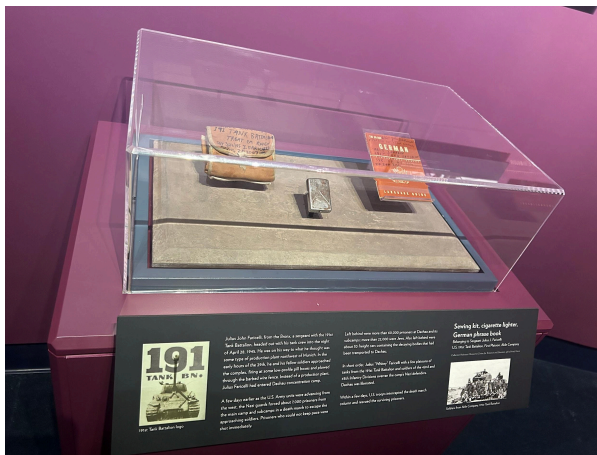


Before we left I had the chance to speak one on one with Rotjan, asking him why he thinks this museum, as well as others like it, are so important to care for and protect. He responded “The ideas that they bring into focus help us understand tolerance. They give us direction for our own lives and how we live them. We need museums to tell stories.” He also explained to me the significance of this history being taught to young adults: “I wrote a book so my grandkids could learn the history.”

In school we were taught all the details of this terrible tragedy, shown graphic footage, and are even reading the perspective of someone who was in the Holocaust at a young age. However, meeting people who were affected by the Holocaust, hearing their stories, and how they dedicate themselves to making sure those stories aren't forgotten, that's something entirely different. Seeing the quotes on the walls, the items that survived it, and the pictures and the context behind them, is something entirely new. Going to this museum was something entirely different, and not something any of us are going to forget.



Photos from the 10th grade trip to the Holocaust Museum



Women's History Month: Famous Women Authors and Journalists

By Malina Grove

Since 1987, March has been recognized as Women's History Month, during which we learn about the countless contributions women have made and continue to make to our history. To keep with the theme of The Spartan Times, here are a few famous women authors and journalists.

Mary Shelley

Born August 30th, 1797 in London, England, Mary Shelley would grow up to become one of the most famous writers of all time. She is credited with being the inventor of the science fiction genre through the creation of her novel, *Frankenstein*. Shelley was the daughter of famous women's rights advocate Mary Wollstonecraft, who was the author of *A Vindication of the Rights of Women*, a famous and early example of written feminist philosophy. Mary Shelley was known for her romantic and gothic writing, as well as her poems, the first of which she published when she was only ten years old. Today her influence in modern media can be seen in the various adaptations of *Frankenstein*, her most famous work.

Ida B. Wells

Ida B. Wells was born in Mississippi in 1862. In her early life she faced hardships, like being born into slavery and having her parents taken from her by yellow fever. During her life, she worked as an educator, a publisher and journalist, and a hardworking activist, while also caring for her younger siblings after her parents' passing when she was just sixteen. She made many contributions to the fight against racism through boycotts and investigative journalism about lynching. During the movement for women's rights, she fought against the racism and unfairness she received from white suffragettes. Eighty-nine years after her passing, she was awarded a Pulitzer Prize for her adamant stance on political and social forms.

Agatha Christie

Born in 1890 in Devon, England, Agatha Christie is now known as one of the best selling authors of all time, having over two billion copies of her books sold worldwide. She wrote over sixty novels and a number of short stories and plays, her most famous stories revolving around the iconic characters of Hercule Poirot and Miss Marple. She revolutionized the mystery genre and impacts of her works can still be seen today in a number of adaptations of her novels, including various movies and television shows.

March: Music in Our Schools Month

By Cricket Carey

March celebrates plenty of critically important topics discussed within our society. It happens to be Women's History Month, Disability Awareness Month, and several others; one of which being Music in Our Schools Month. This thirty-one--day long holiday is established to commemorate band, chorus, drama, and other musical programs provided within schools nationwide. One special event that happened at Seward during this month was the Coffeehouse Concert. Hosted by Mr. Visconti, this show was a very special event where students of various ages grades six through twelve performed instrumental pieces, dance routines, and vocal music. Every act was completely unique in its own way, and a pretty decent-sized audience attended the two hour event. It was a wonderful night that I highly recommend attending next year! Each year has a totally different lineup consisting of all different types of musical acts; you never know what you're going to get, so it's always worth it to come and see.

Being such a small school, the FUFSD doesn't have a huge array of music programs in contrast to other districts, but considering our size, it's pretty remarkable what we *do* have. Starting as early as fourth (sometimes fifth) grade, any student at Golden Hill is welcome to give an instrument a try in the school band led by Mr. Couture, as well as the chorus, which is a required program for some years. The COVID-19 pandemic had a massive impact on music departments nationwide, with Florida being no exception. It altered the way elementary students initially entered the music departments in the first place, while simultaneously wiping out the interest and dedication of dozens of former middle and high school band/chorus members. However, now that our society is heading back into the clarity of life as it used to be, band and chorus numbers are slowly on the rise again. That has yet to change the "Dear God! Less than twenty [band/chorus] members?" comment I always get from friends I have in other school districts, but eventually, one of these days, the S.S. Seward music department will have bounced back to a regular size.

But regardless of a pandemic hindering our overall experience, just *having* a music department - especially in a small school - can unfortunately be a lot to ask for at times.

With less people to pay taxes for a budget, the arts often go overlooked in relation with more "important" programs such as math and science. There are times when expenditures need to be cut, and more often than not, the authorities in a school district will tend to choose music and arts to shrink or demolish entirely before other subjects become affected. This is a devastating problem across schools small and large (well, mainly small) nationwide because the number of young kids out there who want to go into the arts as a

career is immeasurable, and as soon as the arts get cut, they're immediately deprived of the tools and opportunities they need to start the path to their future. Needless to say, there's no shortage of kids like that right in our town. We need to nurture them and provide them with the tools they need to fulfill their goals for a happy career because not everybody's a STEM person. Some of us thrive in music and art.

That is why Music in Our Schools month is crucially underrated in the education system. It's a reminder that music is often something viewed as unnecessary and not needed, and even if it weren't, why get rid of it? What's the harm in picking up a new talent? And for students, going for an easier music and arts credit might sound fun, but it won't be quite as worth your time. Instead of zoning out for forty-two minutes and failing every test in an alternative music class that uses standard grading and instruction, maybe give band or chorus a try. I just joined the HS chorus when I was in tenth grade, and despite getting such an extremely late start, I've caught up with the rest of my class pretty well in the past year and a half, and learned *so* much about vocal music already, it's unbelievable. And even if you don't end up enjoying whatever class you take, so what? You got the credit, it'll look good on your transcript, and it was worth the shot. There's no harm in utilizing the resources we're lucky to have!



Upcoming Sporting Events

By Abby Orlando

Girls JV Softball	Boys Varsity Baseball
<p>4/17 - against Liberty @ The Rock Sports Park 4/18 - against Sullivan West @ Sullivan West - Lake Huntington 4/22 - against Tuxedo @ The Rock Sports Park 4/24 - against Tri-Valley @ Sturr Park 4/26 - against Tuxedo @ Euvrand Field 5/1 - against Chapel @ Chapel Field Christian School 5/3 - against Eldred @ Eldred High School</p>	<p>4/15 - against Eldred @ Golden Hill Elementary School 4/17 - against Livingston Manor @ Livingston Manor High School 4/19 - against Chapel @ Golden Hill Elementary School 4/22 - against James I. O'Neill @ James I. O'Neill High School 4/24 - against John S. Burke Catholic @ Golden Hill Elementary School</p>

Best Small Hudson Valley Bands Who YOU Should Know About

By Cricket Carey

#5: Balloon Animals

BIO: Balloon Animals is a brand new band who got their start in 2022 at Warwick Valley High School. Their members graduated just recently in June 2023, and despite no longer being in school together on a daily basis, they're still hard at work not only on covers of other songs, but also on writing and producing their own original music. Almost every teen concert-goer in Warwick knows this band, and they're definitely on the rise.



MY REVIEW: I saw Balloon Animals at a Doc: Fry Music Sessions show in June of 2023. At the time I was working on starting my own band, Plastic Void (which has now broken up), so seeing another local high school rock band on the rise was very inspirational, and felt really special to me. Since it was $\frac{3}{4}$ of a year ago now, I unfortunately can't remember their entire set very well, but the feeling of the energy in the room stuck with me. I remember feeling so impressed with what an amazing show these guys put on at

the age of only around seventeen or eighteen years old. Another very unique moment was when after one song was over, suddenly all four members of the band put down their instruments, switched roles, and all played a different part for the next song. For example, the singer suddenly switched to drums, the bassist suddenly switched to guitar, etc. It was very unique; being able to play more than one instrument is no easy feat, especially doing so within such a quick period of time!



WHERE TO CATCH THEM NEXT: It's a bit of a drive from Florida, but I can promise you it'll be worth it. You can catch them on April 6th at The Shillelagh Tavern in Queens, NY at 7:30 PM. Admission is \$10, and they'll be playing with three other bands; Inertia, The Improv Initiative, and Frank The Bald Guy. Be sure to follow them on Instagram and TikTok at @balloonanimalsband to stay updated!



Sophomores: Why YOU Should Take Digital Filmmaking & Post Production at BOCES

By Cricket Carey

Previously in *The Spartan Times*, I wrote an article geared towards the class of 2026 as to why they should do a CTEC (Career and Technical Education) program next year, since visitations to Orange-Ulster BOCES happened recently. This month, instead of giving an overview, I'll be talking specifically about the program I'm enrolled in, and my particular experience at CTEC. If you have any interest in going into the film industry as a career, you should definitely read this!

To start off, Digital Filmmaking & Post Production is a 2-year CTEC program at Gibson Road BOCES with an A/B curriculum. An A/B curriculum means that the material you learn switches around every other year. The 2023-24 school year that we're in right now is an "A" year, which is fiction filmmaking. Next year will be a "B" year, which is nonfiction.



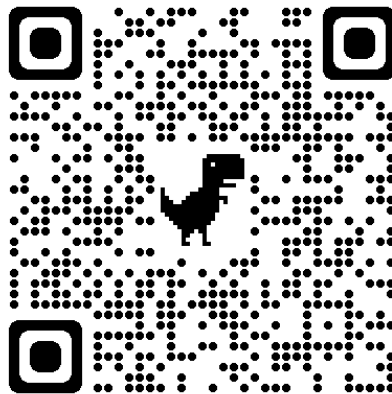
Each quarter of the year, we have one big main project that takes several weeks to complete, from pre-production to production to post. This year our first quarter project was a 30-second commercial, where we got into crews of two people and chose a product to make a commercial for. I worked with a classmate named Ash, and we made a Starbucks commercial. Second quarter was a music video; this time we were in crews of three, and with my two partners, Kaeleb and Ethan, we did a video for "Happy" by NF. The third quarter project is a fan film, which has yet to be finished. I'm in a group of four this time with three of my classmates, Jacob, Hailey, and Nik, and we're making an original episode of the cartoon *Gravity Falls*. And then our last project of the year will be an original short film. But in between each main project, we do a ton of little photography and film exercises in class that count for smaller grades.

Next year, when I'm a senior, which will be a "B" year, our main projects will be more documentary and realism based. First will be a PSA (public service announcement), second will be another music video, third will be a promo, and then fourth will be a short documentary. I already think sometimes about what topics I'll use for all those films, and wonder what they'll come out like.

Unlike most other CTEC programs, Filmmaking offers a ton of different careers for you to pursue within one class. For example, if you take Carpentry at BOCES, you *will* become a carpenter. If you take plumbing, you *will* become a plumber. But the film industry requires so many different jobs that go on in front of *and* behind the scenes, it's almost impossible to count. If you take Filmmaking at CTEC, you can learn how to become an actor, a director, a screenwriter, producer, cinematographer, boom operator, grip, foley artist... The list goes on. When I first went into this program I thought I wanted to be a screenwriter, but the further I got into the year, and the more I experimented with different tasks around the set, I realized that I'm way better at directing than I am at screenwriting. It's something that I never would have guessed, or even thought about wanting to take up as a career, but now I love it, and it's almost always my role in all of our projects.

In conclusion, if you have any interest at all in making your own movies one day (or helping other people with theirs), you should absolutely give this class a try. Even if you aren't so sure it's for you, you have until the end of October your Junior year to back out. But there are so many people in my class who have found things they love through this program, and since it's such a wide array of material, I'm sure you can find something for you.

Also, in case you'd like to see some of the films I've helped with (even the slightest contribution), feel free to scan the QR code below and look through a YouTube playlist of some of my class's greatest hits. Enjoy!



Sudoku

By Abby Orlando

5	4		2	9	8			3
	1	8	4	7		2		
	7					8		4
				2		6	3	
		1			7	9		8
				6	4		7	
		2			9		8	7
8	9	5		4	6		2	
		4	1	8			9	

Our Mission:

To inform, entertain, and keep our audience well versed in the happenings of S.S. Seward Institute. We strive to be reliable, original, impartial, and compassionate to all who choose to immerse themselves in our school's culture. We abide by the same high standards that any other newspaper would, ranging from *The Florida Focus* to *The New York Times*. If there are any questions regarding our newspaper or our intent, please contact any of our officers or our advisor.

***The Spartan Times* is produced by the S.S. Seward School Newspaper Club and advised by Mrs. Moon.**

**This issue was contributed to by:
Cricket Carey, Sophia LaBelle, Malina Grove, Maris Neuman, and Abby Orlando**