



THE GROVE GAZETTE

Selinsgrove Area High School Student Newspaper

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Brown rocks FBLA States

By Daniel Napsha

Fifteen Selinsgrove students participated in a variety of competitions at the Future Business Leaders of American (FBLA) State Leadership Conference on April 10-12th at Hershey, with one student moving onto the national conference.

Junior Natalia Brown placed second in Public Speaking II, winning the judges over with an original speech about the ethnic inequities in business. She highlighted the racism of employers to first judge a prospective employee based on their race, overlooking skills or experience.

For Natalia, the speech provided an opportunity to address the issue, and “say what no one else will.” As a result of her success, Natalia will go onto the national conference in Atlanta, and deliver the same speech, representing the local rotary district at the Regional Rotary Public Speaking Contest.

Natalia has met her success with genuine surprise. “I wasn’t sure how people would react... I never would have expected some of the positive reactions I receive from my audience,” Natalia said.

Other members who participated include Senior Kevin Dressler in parliamentary procedure with juniors Michael Huggins, Alyssa Landis, and Elizabeth Perkinson. Three juniors, including Alexis Lindsey, Chase Salter, and Jessica Smith,

competed in Accounting II, while junior Paige Hepner and senior Macie Hollenbach took part in Accounting I.

In addition, seniors David Klinger and Angelo Martin performed in Securities and Investments, sophomore Marlo Ptacin in Business Calculations, and junior Emma Lewis in Business Law. Junior Makayla Peachy represented Selinsgrove as a member-at-large.



Overall this year’s conference was bittersweet for advisor, Mrs. Gavitt, who has managed the Selinsgrove FBLA chapter for 18 years and will retire at the end of this school year. She was proud to see Natalia move onto nationals as the highest rank-in-competition in the history of the Selinsgrove FBLA.

Selinsgrove FBLA members also recently voted for their officers for next year who include: senior Michael Huggins, juniors Makayla Peachy, Sharon Lin and Emma Lewis along with freshman Ashlynn Peachy.

Grove Gazette Editorial Staff

News Editors: Savanna Foor & Dan Napsha

Sports Editor: Angelo Martin

Opinion/Editorial Editor: Isabel Bailey

Graphics Editor: Lindsey Trusal

The *Grove Gazette* is a student organized newspaper. If you are interested in working for the *Grove Gazette* as a writer, editor, or photographer, please join us during the first half of lunch on **Tuesday, April 26th** in Room 222 for our next meeting. You can also email Mr. Switala at wswitala@seal-pa.org if you cannot make the meeting.

Band to Host International Celebrity

By Meagan Bogetti

The Selinsgrove High School concert band will be showcasing their 22nd annual “Guest Artist Night” on April 22 at 7:30 pm in the Middle School auditorium, featuring a world-renowned musician to accompany the band.

The Selinsgrove band has been working extremely hard to prepare for the big night. Senior band member Ben Sharpless said “We’ve had after school rehearsals and we’ve been drilling these songs for months now. My favorite song we will be performing is ‘Gonna Fly Now’ the theme song from Rocky. We’re actually bringing in Mosello - the actual guy who recorded it on the album.”

Joe Mosello, a famous trumpeter, will be featured at the upcoming concert. Mosello is originally from Mt. Carmel, PA, and is known worldwide as one of the most respected players of the instrument today. Mosello has played in over a dozen Broadway shows and alongside many famous musical artists such as Maynard Ferguson’s band, Frank Sinatra, B.B. King, and The Temptations, among others.

The school band is an important aspect of many SAHS students’ lives. Ben Sharpless spoke on the importance of community support, stating, “Parents, families, and community members come to support the band. It’s really uplifting to us

because if you kill it on the song, you can look out to see the crowd cheering you on. It’s why we put in all the effort—to see the crowd enjoy it. It’s important to get feedback on our hard work.”



Photo by the Daily Item

Joe Mosello, world renowned Trumpeter

Freshman band member McKenna Duitch spoke of her involvement in the school band fondly, saying, “It’s fun and helps you make new friends. It’s always a good way to end the school day. It gives you self-confidence.”

Support your classmates and attend the upcoming band concert on April 22nd at 7:30, hosted in the Selinsgrove Middle School auditorium. Tickets for the event are \$5.00 for adults and \$2.00 for students. For more information or to purchase advanced tickets to the concert, please call 570-372-2239.

Xanadu wraps up in the ‘Grove

By Liz Whitmer

Xanadu: “an idealized place of great or idyllic magnificence and beauty.”

On April 14-17 in Selinsgrove High School’s auditorium, that is exactly what the cast of Xanadu created—a magnificent, entirely different world for their audience to witness.

In this romantic comedy, Kilo, one of the nine daughters of the Greek god of the sky, Zeus, is determined to inspire a mortal to create an amazing piece of artwork. By becoming someone’s muse, she is certain to be granted the greatest gift of all by her father: Xanadu.

However, there are rules that come with earning the gift of Xanadu. A god or goddess is not permitted to create art of their own and it is forbidden to fall in love with a mortal.

Kilo was sure she could pull it off, until she met Sonny Malone, a compassionate, airheaded artist looking for a way to express his creativity after failing several times. Like all love stories go, Kilo and Sonny are able to live happily ever in the end.

Although Selinsgrove’s production and plot was quite different than the original film made in 1980, it was executed brilliantly. Senior, Johanna Kantz, played to role of

Kilo, and had impressive roller-skating skills and ability to sing with an Australian accent.

Also starring in Selinsgrove’s rendition of Xanadu was junior Jonah Roth, who has appeared on stage in many previous school performances. Roth, playing the part of Sonny Malone, is pleased with how everyone’s hard work for this particular musical paid off. When thinking back after their second performance on Friday night, he said, “I think everyone was really dedicated and gave it their all this year.”

Everyone in the cast filled their role well; however, scene-stealing performances from sophomore, Gus Troppe and senior, Nettie Martin, really brought the house down on several occasions.



Photo by Lindsey Trusal

Johanna Kantz, Gus Troppe, and Markie Reiland bring color and pizzazz to their roles

Abnormal Adventures = Outdoors Club

By Kiana Brubaker

Selinsgrove Outdoors Club offers many adventurous experiences throughout the school year, including physical challenges which help students push themselves physically and experience new outdoor landscapes.

The Club's most recent trips were to the Adirondack Extreme Adventure Course in the Adirondack Mountains of New York state and Skirmish Paintball Center in the Poconos.

In the Adirondacks, club members had the opportunity to experience the country's largest aerial tree top adventure park. The course is filled with wobbly bridges, climbing walls, and zip lines. This adventure course allowed students to experience nature in a new and exciting way.

Sophomore Katie Bond jovially recounted, "I loved it, it pushed my body to the limit. I was so happy I finished the whole course." She even got to make some quirky memories with her classmates, losing a shoe along the way but

feeling accomplished at the end because she never quit.

The remaining trips that the students will be attending this year are a white water rafting trip on April 29th and 30th, and possibly a kayaking trip. Mrs. Hepner, who manages the club, touted, "Each trip gives a student a new opportunity to experience the outdoors in some adventure form."

Katie agreed with this statement. One of her favorite things about the club are the activities. "They are challenging, but the best part is overcoming them. They're not something you would get to do every day."

If you are interested in pushing yourself to your physical limits and overcoming your fears, join Selinsgrove's Outdoors Club; admission will be available once again in the fall of 2016. The club is available for sophomores, juniors, and seniors to join, with a small fee of five dollars to become a member of the club. For more details, visit Mrs. Hepner.



Photo by Traci Hepner

Outdoors Club ready to push their limits at Adirondack's Extreme Adventure course

Prom is an “Enchanted Evening”

By: **Savanna Foor**

With the prom date of May 7th quickly approaching, most upperclassman can start looking forward to key details that will make prom a fantastic time.

This year’s prom theme is “An Enchanted Evening”, based on the classy and elegant feel that will be delivered from the venue, The Susquehanna Valley Country Club. The dance will start at 7 pm and will end around 10 pm.

The crowning of the king and queen will be different this year, as it will be taking place at the start of prom, rather than at the end of the night. This allows parents to see the crowning and leave.

Some fun features this year include a DJ, who will play current popular music, including requests from students. Additionally, there will be a free photo booth for couples and groups to pose for the camera.

Tickets are still being sold in Mrs. Robinson-Roush’s classroom during the first half of lunch. Because of the limited capacity of the country club, there will only be a certain number of tickets sold this year. Mrs. Robinson-Roush encourages everyone to get their tickets soon, because once they are all sold, there will be no more available to anyone. The cost for juniors is \$30 per ticket and \$5 a ticket for seniors.

Personals: Looking for a Prom Date

By **Markie Reiland**

Prom is just around the corner and a few dateless Selinsgrove High School students are looking for someone special to take them for a night of dancing and romance.

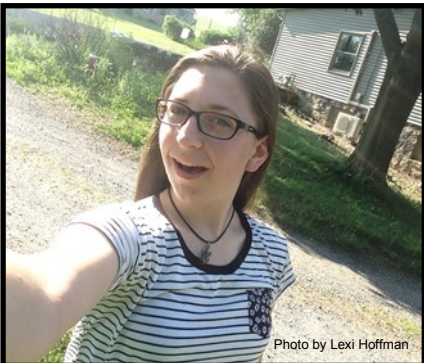


Photo by Lexi Hoffman

Lexi Hoffman is a junior at SAHS. Her ideal prom date would be wearing a classy black tux. She is looking for someone tall and attractive with a funny, charismatic personality. The dance she wants to do at prom is the living room routine from the film *The Perks of Being a Wallflower*.

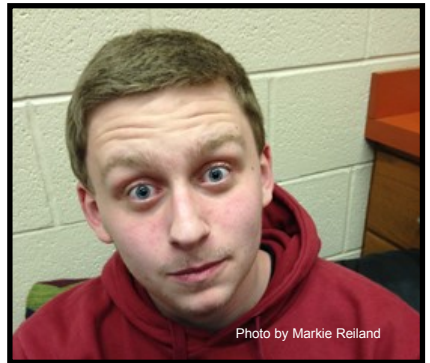


Photo by Markie Reiland

Zachary Lentz is a senior looking to take a special person to prom. Preferably, she would be wearing an 18th century ball gown with a poufy skirt. Some of her physical characteristics should be that she is 6’7” and balding. She should probably support Donald Trump, hate the French, and idolize Genghis Khan. Zach also hopes for his date to be a survivor of the Titanic. The dance they would do is the Electric Slide.

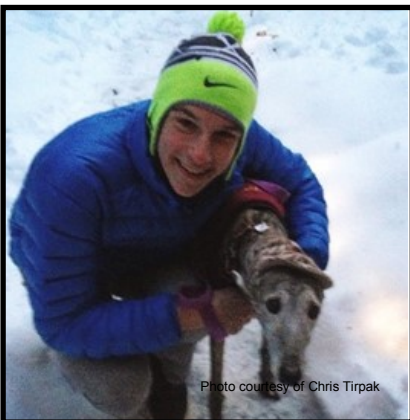


Photo courtesy of Chris Tirpak

Chris Tirpak is a junior looking for a girl to take to prom who will be willing to wear a camo dress. She should be “tall-ish” and have a superior intellect. The dance he is looking forward to doing with her at prom is the Milly Rock.

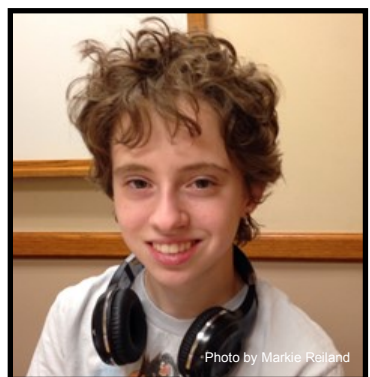


Photo by Markie Reiland

Keyana Zellers is a junior. Her ideal date would wear a black suit, have two eyes and cool hair. His personality traits should include being comedic, high energy, and smart. At prom, she wants to breakdance.



Photo courtesy of Steph Mengle

Steph Mengle is a junior. Her special man should wear a gorilla suit to prom. He needs to be funky and fresh. He should also resemble Danny Devito. She does not plan on dancing at prom, as she will be too busy eating hummus.

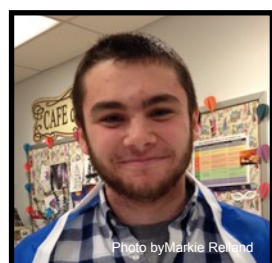


Photo by Markie Reiland

Jacob Showers is a freshman at SAHS who is looking for an upperclassman to take him to prom. He wants his date to wear a chic black dress, be tall, and resemble Kate Upton. Jacob would also like to add, “she’ll probably have to be pretty desperate to go with me.” The dance he wants to do at prom is dabbing.

SPORTS

Girls Track Speeding Past Opponents

By Dawson Klinger

The Seals girls track team has been the biggest headline so far in the Selinsgrove spring sport season. With a dual meet team record of 3-0, the Seals are poised for another outstanding season on the track and field where they are shaping to be favorites to repeat as District IV and Heartland Conference champions.

Selinsgrove's multitude of talent was very evident during the Selinsgrove Classic, held at Selinsgrove's Harold L. Bolig Memorial Stadium. Leading the way for the Seals was junior Sara Arbogast. Arbogast finished the invitational with 1st place finishes in the 400 m dash (1:01) and the triple jump (33 feet, 8 inches).

In the last event of the day, Arbogast anchored the 4 by 400 meter relay team that would go on to set a Selinsgrove Classic invitational record with a time of 4:14. For Arbogast, it was her third gold medal of the day, while Anna Piecuch, Briana Brown, and Megan Hoffman each also picked up gold medals for their performance on the relay team.

"It was really a great day for me but really the team as a whole. I think the work that we put in during the indoor season has really paid off for a lot of us and I couldn't be more excited for where we are headed," said Arbogast after the meet.

In the sprints, freshman Megan Hoffman displayed her highly touted speed with a 1st place finish in the 200 m dash with a time of 26.70 seconds and a 2nd place finish in the 100 m dash with a time of 13.14 seconds. Hoffman, who started for the field hockey team as a freshman this fall, has been generating a lot of buzz in the area for her fast feet.

"Megan (Hoffman) really is unbelievable. She is going to be a great field hockey player but she might have more potential on the track. She's such a great athlete and I am so excited she decided to join the team this year," commented junior Sara Arbogast.

Junior Ashley Blair would notch Selinsgrove's fourth gold medal of the day, winning the 1600 m run with a time of 5:23. Senior Honoria Krause took home 1st in the shot put with a throw of 32 feet, 6 inches, completing a total of five gold medals for the Seals on the day.

Other notable performances on the day included a third place finish by senior Morgan Zeager in the shot put with a throw of 31 feet, 5 inches. Sophomore Brittney Carnathan took home 2nd place in the 800 m run with a time of 2:28. Finally, junior Natalie Brown finished her day with a 3rd place finish in the 100 dash (13.39 seconds) and a 4th place finish in the 200 m dash (28.11).

With much of the season still in the distance, Selinsgrove will continue to be a strong contender throughout the league and district; however, no single meet will matter as much as the one being run today at the Selinsgrove High School stadium because the Lady Seals will take on their most bitter rival of the season – Shikellamy. The meet starts at 4pm with the winner likely to be the league champion.



Photo by Linsey Trusal

Freshman speedster Megan Hoffman dominates her opponents from Lane 3 in the 200 yd dash

A Few Shines at Selinsgrove Classic

By Angelo Martin

While the Selinsgrove boys track and field team has gotten off to a sluggish 1-2 record in dual meets, the Seals were still able to come away with several impressive performances at the annual Selinsgrove Classic invitational.

Senior standout Jacob Strickler led the way, taking home four medals. Strickler placed 1st in the Shot Put throw with a distance of 50 feet, 7 inches. Senior Jack Gaugler and sophomore Keith Dreese took 2nd and 3rd respectively in the shot put, each throwing for over 48 feet.

Strickler would not be the only Selinsgrove athlete to take home a gold in the field events. Freshman Brennen Wolf took 1st in the discus throw with a distance of 146 feet. Dreese and Strickler would finish just behind him, taking home silver and bronze medals for the Seals.

On the track, senior standout and team captain Brody Beiler led the way for the Seals. Beiler finished the day with two silver medals: one coming in the 800 m dash with a time of 2:05, and the other coming in the 1600 m run, where he finished with a time of 4:23.

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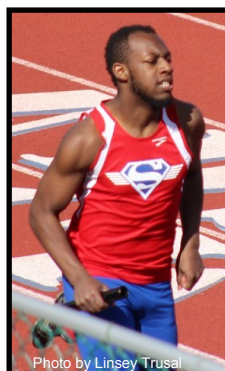
A Few Shines at Selinsgrove Classic Continued

“The cold weather definitely affected a lot of people on the track today, myself incredibly. I did not get the times I wanted but given the circumstances I know it wasn’t what I was capable of,” commented Beiler after the meet.

In the sprinting events, Juvon Batts finished the day with a 3rd place finish in the 100 m dash (11.67 seconds) and a 4th place finish in the 200 m dash (24.18 seconds).

While many eyes were on the track for the running events, sophomore Garrett Wolf opened some eyes as well, taking home a silver medal in the pole vault with a height of 12 feet, 6 inches.

“Overall, I think we were pretty pleased for how we competed as a team. A lot of guys are coming off of winter sports and are still trying to find their groove. I think you’ll see a team that will only get better moving forward”, said team captain Brody Beiler.



Senior Juvon Batts sprints with the baton during the 4 x 100 yard relay at the Selinsgrove Classic, earning the team a third place finish among 12 teams

Underclassmen Fuel Hot Start

By Sam Rodkey

The Selinsgrove baseball team is back at it for another season on the diamond with high hopes of being a dominant force in the Heartland Conference. With just a few games into the season, the Seals begin the season with a promising record of 3-1.

The Seals roster consists of ten seniors with hopes to make their final high school sports season the most memorable one yet; however, the story across Selinsgrove sports this year has consistently emphasized the impact underclassmen have made on varsity teams.

The same holds true for baseball. Freshman pitcher Logan Hile has been the game changer for Selinsgrove. Hile pitched during two big games this season against Danville and Midd-West, getting the win in both and notching a total of ten strikeouts.

Junior Evan Poust has also stepped up to the plate for Selinsgrove

this year literally and figuratively. Poust has been key for the Seals so far with his hitting, fielding, and pitching when needed in relief. In four games, Poust leads the team in hits and RBIs and has not committed one error yet in the field as the starting 3rd basemen for the Seals.

While Poust and Hile have made a lot of noise on the diamond, the Seals ten seniors have been key in providing leadership to the young talented crop of players. In the outfield, seniors Ben Kuhns, Colin Hoke, and Aaron Zechman have provided great fielding and clutch hitting for the Seals when needed.

“We spent more time in the winter this offseason that I can remember. Logan (Hile) and Tyler (Showers) have been really solid on the mound. We couldn’t be more excited about our start to the season,” said senior Colin Hoke.

Even though it’s still early in the season, the Seals are tied for 3rd in the Heartland Conference with Shikellamy and Central Mountain each being undefeated.



Freshman Logan Hile making an immediate impact on the mound

Megan Kahn leads Seals LAX to 3-2 Start

By Angelo Martin

Another year is underway for the Selinsgrove girls lacrosse team and while they are only five games into the season, junior standout Megan Kahn already has 25 goals on the year.

In the Seals first game of the year, they would defeat conference opponent Mifflinburg with a score of 15-5. In the next two games, Selinsgrove would lose close games to Trinity (18-14) and Crestwood (12-10). In both games, the Seals were even with their opponents up

until the last few minutes of the fourth quarter.

“We had plenty of chances. But they weren’t league games so for us it wasn’t the end of the world,” said Kahn because it would not impact Selinsgrove chances to make playoffs.

From there, Selinsgrove would go on to complete back-to-back wins against league rival Lewisburg 18-8 and out-of-league opponent Central Dauphin East 21-11.

Boys Tennis Continues Domination

By Angelo Martin

Another season is underway for the Selinsgrove boys tennis team, and the Seals have picked up right where they left off from last season, with an undefeated team record of 12-0 and favorites to repeat as PHAC and District IV champs.



Senior Garrett Benner rushes the net

Selinsgrove has been blessed this season with a strong starting lineup comprised mostly of seniors. Starting in singles, seniors Garrett Benner, Johnny Lin, and Aidan Finnerty have come up

huge for the Seals all year long. In the Seals league opener against Mifflinburg, the singles team all won in straight sets to start the season off strong.

“All three of us have been playing since our freshman year so we have been ready for this for a long time. We have really stepped up and helped set the tone for the whole team,” said senior Garrett Benner.

In doubles competition, junior Steven Pomykalski and senior Eric Martin have been critical towards the success of Selinsgrove. The duo are 8-4 on the season and have come up clutch for Selinsgrove when needed.

With District’s and League championship matchups in the distance, Selinsgrove will continue to hold down the fort when it comes to being the toughest opponent for area teams.

Boys Lacrosse Looks to Improve

By Angelo Martin

Led by head coach and Selinsgrove police chief Tom Garlock, the Selinsgrove boys lacrosse team has gotten off to a 2-2 start.

In the first game of the season, the Seals completed a lopsided victory with a 12-2 victory over Bellefonte. In that game, junior Gabe Ludwig led the way scoring four goals with senior Nick Conrad and freshman Charlie Hayes both notching hat tricks as well.

In their first meeting with arch-rival Lewisburg, Selinsgrove would be defeated 18-2. Gabe Ludwig added his fifth goal of the season and freshman Joe Kahn scored his first career goal.

In the third matchup of the young season, the Seals would bounce back with a 10-4 win over league opponent Danville. Freshman Ben

Swineford led the way, completing a hat trick while juniors Ryan Bucher and Gabe Ludwig each added 2 goals.

“We played good but not great. Still a lot of stuff to work on so we can’t sit back and be satisfied when there is more work to be done,” said head coach Tom Garlock.

Against Dallas, Selinsgrove would lose its second game of the season with a 12-4 loss. Junior Gabe Ludwig was the Seals top scorer with 2 goals while freshman Joe Kahn and junior Ryan Bucher each had a goal as well.

“We’ve beaten Danville and have Mifflinburg coming up. We have gotten a lot of good contributions from some of the underclass and I think that can only help moving forward,” said senior attackman Nick Conrad.

Seals Softball Very Young and Feisty

By Marley Sprenkel

Despite a 1-5 start to their season, the Selinsgrove softball team is poised to continue to get better as the season continues under the strong leadership coming from senior Hunter Smith, junior Abby Ettinger, and sophomore Marlo Ptacin.

The Seals will look to right the ship as they enter the meat of their Heartland Conference schedule. “There is really nowhere to go but up. We are a very young team, and a lot of us are getting a lot of valuable experience despite our record. An appearance in the District playoffs is not out of the question,” said

sophomore Marlo Ptacin.

For Selinsgrove, the injury bug has been very detrimental. With the absence of several key players, several freshmen have stepped up and have given Selinsgrove much needed help. Freshman Brooke Longacre has provided the Seals strong hitting and fielding from the shortstop position.

Much of the team’s offensive production has come from sophomore Marlo Ptacin at first base as she leads the team in hits, RBIs, and runs through the team’s first 6 games.

ENTERTAINMENT

Student Profiles

Antoinette Martin, Senior

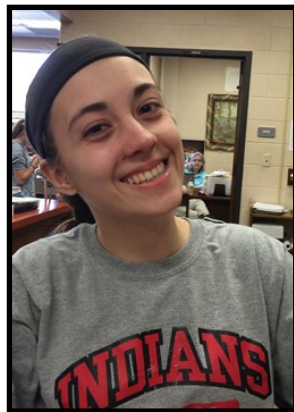
Are you personally saving money to further your education? *Yes.*

If the Selinsgrove student body could vote in the next president race based on the present candidates, whom do you think they would elect? *Hillary Clinton.*

Do you like what you are wearing? What, if anything, would you change about it? *I like my outfit but I would make it cuter if I had more time.*

If you could paint a wall mural for the school, what would be its subject? *A zen garden.*

What's more important-the music playlist for prom or the grades in your final report card? *The grades in my final report card.*



William Lapetina, Junior

Are you personally saving money to further your education? *No.*

If the Selinsgrove student body could vote in the next president race based on the present candidates, whom do you think they would elect? *Bernie Sanders.*

Do you like what you are wearing? What, if anything, would you change about it? *I like it but I would probably wear shorts instead of jeans.*

If you could paint a wall mural for the school, what would be its subject? *The theater symbol of two masks.*

What's more important-the music playlist for prom or the grades in your final report card? *The prom music.*



Irene Guo, Sophomore

Are you personally saving money to further your education? *No.*

If the Selinsgrove student body could vote in the next president race based on the present candidates, whom do you think they would elect? *Bernie Sanders.*

Do you like what you are wearing? What, if anything, would you change about it? *I'm fine with it but I would wear brighter colors.*

If you could paint a wall mural for the school, what would be its subject? *A beach with a sunset.*

What's more important-the music playlist for prom or the grades in your final report card? *The grades in my final report card.*



Zach Frey, Freshman

Are you personally saving money to further your education? *Yes.*

If the Selinsgrove student body could vote in the next president race based on the present candidates, whom do you think they would elect? *Donald Trump or Bernie Sanders.*

Do you like what you are wearing? What, if anything, would you change about it? *I like it. But I would not wear high socks with converse.*

If you could paint a wall mural for the school, what would be its subject? *A musical something.*

What's more important-the music playlist for prom or the grades in your final report card? *The grades in my final report card.*



First Year / Freshman Feedback

Kiana Brubaker, Liz Whitmer, and Maegan Bogetti

As a freshman, high school can at first seem intimidating and stressful because classwork gets harder, friends change, and more freedom is available.

Expectations from teachers, parents, friends, and coaches take a step up. We've all been through it, but as high school progresses, upperclassmen often forget just how scary it was to be a newbie. How do our perceptions of the high school change as our first year here winds to an end?

We interviewed several freshmen to learn more and remember how the terrors and triumphs of freshman year felt from the "bottom of the food chain".



Grant Rowe

Is high school better than you expected? *Definitely!*

What expectations did you have coming into the high school? Were there any rumors or "myths" you heard before you came? *I was told that the high school classes were harder, but the longer classes and four-block schedule made the day go faster.*

What was your first impression of the upperclassmen versus how you view them now? *At first I thought they might be intimidating, but now I see them as almost helpful*

Hannah Doll

Is high school better than you expected? *There is a lot more freedom, but I'm a lot busier with all of my extracurriculars.*

What expectations did you have coming into the high school? *I heard that there was a lot more freedom, but you have to work a lot harder if you want good grades.*

What was your first impression of the upperclassmen versus how you view them now? *I knew a lot of them from middle school, but they aren't as bad as I thought they would be.*



Olivia Price

Is high school better than what you expected and what are your favorite parts about being in high school? *Yes, high school is a lot better than I expected. My favorite part is marching band, and my favorite class is German with Frau Feidt.*

What were you expecting high school to be like? *I expected it to be a lot worse, because I'd heard about "Freshman Friday's", being picked on, and other things like that.*

Joe Kahn

What expectations did you have for your first year in SAHS? *I was expecting to be completely blown off by the senior class, but the majority of them helped me understand the school. When I was falling back a little, they helped me through [a class] and I ended up passing the class with a high B.*



Olivia Dunkle

What was it like coming to SAHS this year as a new student? *It was really different from my last school that I went to...I got to meet a lot of new people and reconnect with people I haven't seen in a very long time. It's a good change and a change I'm glad I made.*





My Turn by Isabel Bailey

As kids, many of us used our imagination to slip into other characters, time periods, and settings.

When I was younger I had a doll named Babycakes. I would play imaginative games with her where I was her mother, doctor, or teacher and we would have tea together or drive in a pretend car to school. My friend and I would play book editors together, making phone calls to our writers, pressuring them to fix their novels.

I would often play house on my swing set, dubbing these games “old fashioned”- I became a young girl from the 1800s making up intricate stories about life without modern conveniences. Once I stood in my grandparent’s driveway with my play ironing board and as people walked by I would ask if they wanted their beach towels ironed.

A young girl named Hilde writes a newspaper with news articles about everything from murders to tornados in our town of Selinsgrove. She was recently told that a girl her age (nine) should go play with dolls instead of reporting the news. To that she responded that she didn’t need to go and play with dolls.

Some children are ready to end this sort of imaginative play at an earlier age than others and use their creativity in new ways. Hilde is clearly one of those kids, which, of course, is absolutely fine. However, the message that this exchange sent was that playing with dolls is something that isn’t important and is merely an activity that little girls do that is sweet and fun.

Playing with dolls is nothing like that. When children play with dolls they are creating a scene in their head, taking on a different persona, and using their imagination to make up the character of their doll; ultimately through this pretend play they are figuring out ways to imitate and adapt to the real world.

This imaginative play creates a sense of empathy, trust, love, humor, respect, and it is an extremely important way to use one’s imagination. As for it being sexist, that’s an issue for another article. And for the record, every boy should play with dolls too. My mother walked all over Boston until she found a boy doll for my older brother when he was a little kid (why she couldn’t just buy a girl doll could also be a subject for another day).

Of course, Hilde and her parents know what is best for her, but lets not discount the value of imaginative play with dolls—or trucks or blocks. Children begin imaginative play when they



The author’s well-loved “Baby Cakes” Doll which, though well-worn, is still cherished to this day.

are 18 to 24 months old. They imitate the basic daily actions they see the adults around them do - using keys to unlock a car, talking on the phone, or putting on shoes.

This is just another way for children to learn to participate in the world they were born into. In that respect, it is not much different from toddlers beginning to talk, eat,

and sleep. Those are physical adaptations while using their imagination is a social adaptation. And this social experimentation works.

Children who exercise their imagination during their childhood are more creative, better at understanding the social inclinations of others, and have an easier time seeing the perspective of others. The ways in which we use our imagination as a very young child develop into the ways we are able to use our imagination when we grow older.

We as humans will use our imagination throughout our entire lives. Starting through play is possibly the first and most important step in learning to use our imagination. And yes, we all grow at different rates, but it is good to keep in mind the significance of imaginative plays and the wonders it has brought to many children.