

# SEPT OCT NOV AUGUST

## LETTER TO 2027

Principal Abruzzo welcomes the class of 2027 and her first full year as principal.

## “LEAVING US” BOOK LAUNCH

Math teacher and author Mrs. Lowman book signing.

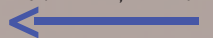
## WHAT’S YOUR TRAIL NAME?

Hiking part of the Appalachian Trail this summer.

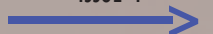
## LOVE LETTER

Dr. Love takes your questions regarding summer camp crushes.

SEVERNA PARK HIGH  
60 ROBINSON ROAD  
SEVERNA PARK, MD 21146



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## NEWS IN BRIEF



**JULY 4TH PARADE**  
The annual Severna Park Parade took place this July and included local groups, including the boy scouts and the SPSHS Marching Band. PHOTO BY KATARINA DAY

**BOBA** A new boba shop, Sweet Bamboo, opened this July. Rylie Cleary (left) and Ella Fleureton (right) are being trained by their boss on how to use the POS (Point of Service) system. This photo was taken during their first training session in early July. PHOTO BY MIA TOCCO



**FIRST PLACE**  
Editors for the 2024 yearbook headed to Gettysburg College to plan the yearbook, and came away with first place for Best Coverage, Coverage and Organization. Co-Editor in Chief Darby Shrout (left), Managing Editor Alethia Brown (center) and Layout Editor

Cole Christesen. Not pictured, Co Editor in Chief Kaylee Winters. PHOTO BY STEVE SWEET

**FRONT PAGE**  
CAPTION: Senior Noel Castillo takes a moment to enjoy the scene below him as he

hiked the Appalachian Trail in Maryland this summer. PHOTO BY LUCAS CROPPER

# LETTER TO THE CLASS OF 2027

Principal Lindsay Abruzzo welcomes the class of 2027 and her first full year as the principal of Severna Park High School.

Dear Class of 2027,

Welcome to Severna Park High School! I know that it may seem scary, and I know you are worried you will get lost, but we are all here for you and want to help you get settled at SPHS. I know when I came here in 2011, things were a bit scary to me as well. You will adjust to the three floors, the multiple classes, the gym uniforms and getting to know all your teachers in no time.

Please know we are all here to help and support you. Instruction and student success is our number one focus, and the administrative team will be present around the building and in classrooms to support your teachers as well as you as a student as much as they can. Please know you can always find someone to assist you in the Main Office and/or the Counseling Center at any time.

We are happy to have you join our SPHS family as the class of 2027.

Your Principal,

Lindsay Abruzzo



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BY LINE>>  
LINDSAY ABRUZZO  
PRINCIPAL

CAPTION: Principal Lindsay Abruzzo at the commencement ceremony on June 5 at Live. Abruzzo congratulated the class of 2023 once they received their diplomas. PHOTO BY GERALDINE DONITHAN



# “LEAVING US” BOOK SIGNING

Math teacher Mrs. Lowman had a book signing on Aug. 5 at Park Books.

Severna Park High School (SPHS) math department chair Julie Lowman recently published a book called “Leaving Us” and she held a book launch event at Park Books on Aug. 5.

“I started in 2018, which was like five years ago. And then I was done by like, 2020, I would say,” Lowman said.

It took Lowman some time to get an agent and to publish her book, which is why it just came out in 2023, but she persevered. “You keep going,” Lowman said. “You keep trying. You keep putting yourself out there.”

“Leaving Us” is about a teenage girl in an abusive relationship, and how she finds the strength to end the relationship. Lowman hopes to teach to her readers to have courage even in tough situations. Lowman wanted to show how relationships could be verbally and emotionally abusive, not just physically.

“I just hope that if they’re young readers... I hope that they take away that you can leave,” Lowman said.

Lowman also wants to teach her readers how difficult it is for those in bad relationships to see what’s going on, especially when the relationship is not physically abusive, and she was somewhat inspired by the One Love club at SPHS. “I hope that they gain some empathy...” Lowman said.

Lowman often finds inspiration from her students, and is also happy to know that they support her. “They were just really excited,” Lowman said, in reference to when her students heard she was writing a book.

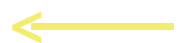
Lowman decided to change parts of her story after the COVID-19 pandemic to include how that time affects people now. “[I wanted] to be authentic to how this current generation of teens live,” Lowman said.

Lowman found herself happy to finally finish her novel, because she has more ideas for new stories.

“There’s always more books to write,” Lowman said.



CAPTION: Mrs. Julie Lowman signs a copy of “Leaving Us” during her book launch. Besides signing books, Lowman answered questions from both Mason and the attendees. at the Aug. 5 event. “I just hope people read it and enjoy it,” Lowman said. PHOTO BY ALETHIA BROWN



<< BY LINE  
ALETHIA BROWN  
GUEST WRITER

However, Lowman is also somewhat disappointed that her time writing this book is over. “It ended, and that’s the hardest part about writing,” Lowman said. But, she does enjoy revisiting her book. “It’s like visiting people you know,” Lowman said.

While writing, Lowman found that some times she could get caught up in her story, and sometimes what she was writing could almost become real to her. “Emotions like, spill over, all the time,” Lowman said.

Being a full time teacher and mother, Lowman had to write with any spare time she found, and she says she often just used Google Docs on her phone. “I would write a lot at night,” Lowman said. “I would write a lot at [my kids’] practices.”

Even though she is more mathematically-inclined, Lowman has wanted to write stories since she was little, and she would often write her own stories when she was growing up. “This is just what I like to do,” Lowman said.

Lowman enjoys both reading and writing young adult fiction. “YA is definitely, like, my jam,” Lowman said.

Overall, Lowman is thrilled to be able to share her story with the world. “I just hope people read it and enjoy it,” Lowman said.

# SEVERNA PARK HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS

A profile of the athletics department at SPHS.

BY LINE >>  
ELSA WEBSTER  
OPINIONS EDITOR

CAPTION: The SPHS tennis courts as they wait for the tennis season to begin. PHOTO BY ELSA WEBSTER

While Severna Park High School has many opportunities, one of the most notable is our sports department.

"Athletics consists of three seasons (fall, winter, spring) and a total of nearly 30 sports offerings, some boys, some girls, some coed," Mr. Dunbar, head coach of girls volleyball said. The sports department has many different opportunities that students can explore their interest. "Anyone can become involved in one capacity or another. Whether it is playing a sport, being a student manager, or simply showing up to the games and supporting your classmates as a fan, the athletic department, the teams, and the individual players are all appreciative. It's a great way to build school spirit and make your time in high school eventful while building some good memories."

Freshman can also become involved in the athletics department.

"Freshmen can become involved like every other eligible student - keep your grades up, register for tryouts at the appropriate time and by the deadline for each season, show up and do your best. Mr. Dunbar said. The athletics department is extremely competitive so not every student will make the team they try out for. "Even if a student tries and doesn't make a team, they made an effort, and that builds character, too."

The athletics department is great at engaging members of the Severna Park community. Many members of the community enjoy sporting events.

"Just about every sports team at the school is competitive at the county and state level. Severna Park wins state championships every year," Mr. Dunbar said. The teams at the school also do a lot of good for the members on their team as well as the community. "In terms of events associated with the sports teams, there is of course the homecoming game. Also, every team hosts a senior night to recognize graduating seniors on their team, some



teams do community outreach/service, some teams do events to raise money/awareness, like breast cancer research, or relationship abuse" Dunbar said.

Tryouts for sports teams for the 2023-2024 have already ended, but even if you did not tryout this year, and you have an interest in a particular sport, you can always tryout next year. Tryouts can be a positive experience for some, but for others, it can be negative.

"Very stressful, I think people talked it up to be more stressful than it really should be" sophomore Payton Gerwig said. The practice schedule for sports can also be a lot. "Two-hour practice six days a week, Monday to Saturday."

There are many exciting things to look forward to when doing a sport. The first game for your sport is one of them. "The first game was nice, I got some playing time which made it fun and the energy behind it made it enjoyable" Gerwig said. The sports season for this school has already begun but for freshman who want to get involved, you don't have to "think too much about it and honestly don't feel pressured to try out if you don't want to." Sports can do many things for different people. Sports, such as football, and the athletics program have many benefits.

"Students learn many skills that will be valuable as they maneuver through high school then college. They learn time management, discipline, how to be part of a team, leadership. They also learn how to elevate their work ethic to push past what is comfortable," Mr. Marks, varsity football coach at SPHS said about the benefits of football.

# WHAT'S YOUR TRAIL NAME?

The Maryland section of the Appalachian Trail features breathtaking landscapes and mysterious strangers who often bring good fortune and “trail magic” along with them.

BY LINE >>  
NOEL CASTILLO  
EDITOR IN CHIEF

**T**wisting paths, narrow crevices and gigantic boulders. At the moon's peak in the night, shouting foxes and chirping bugs run rampant in the undergrowth of the forest. Smoldering embers of a campfire slowly burn out, all song and dance, too, is extinguished and hikers lie still in their tents as they prepare both mentally and physically for the next long day of walking.

Spanning roughly 2,000 miles from Georgia to Maine, the Appalachian Trail runs through Maryland and surrounding states like Pennsylvania and Virginia. The Maryland section of the trail takes three or four days to complete and is approximately 41 miles long. It is a worthy challenge for those who love the extreme outdoors or those who find serenity in nature. Although it is considered to be the easiest section for thru-hikers who hike the entire trail, there are rock beds and steep inclines that can quickly wear out even the most experienced hikers.

We encountered people with names like Respawn who was waiting for his friend on the roadside between trail fields. He gave us, as well as Rabbit, Cheeks and a group of young boy scouts sandwiches and drinks all while his mom was in the car. Although we met a couple handfuls of thru-hikers, one group in particular stood out from others.

Old School, Tigerbone and Magpie were each thru-hiking the Appalachian Trail. Old School was by himself when we caught up to him at a rest stop on our third or fourth day of hiking. He was remarkable because he talked about trail magic and how all he packed was a small bag before deciding to set out from Georgia. He said he had been getting by on the trail thanks to others' grace, goodwill, supplies and food. Another surprising, remarkable thing about Old School that caught us off guard is that he had been diagnosed with cancer and had multiple tumors. However, he told us that for the time he had

been on the trail, his symptoms cleared up and he felt much healthier and more alive. Magpie and Tigerbone are remarkable examples of thru-hikers who become friends because they started by themselves around the same time and eventually joined each other due to their similar paces. Magpie also told us a bit about how the smoke from the Canada and California wildfires had affected the start of his hike and made hiking through Virginia a bit more difficult.

Although the smog slowly dissipated and faded from the limelight of the news over the summer, thru-hikers and city-dwellers alike can attest to how troubling climate issues like the smog are to our populations' health. It leaves kids and parents with burning questions such as: Will the smog return? How will it affect traditions and attractions such as the Appalachian Trail for future generations? What can we do to fix these problems quicker and stop them at their root besides hopelessly listening to the FDA's advice and staying inside or wearing masks when we do outside?

CAPTION: A thru-hiker we met on our first night camping named Hamilton went to the edge of the Black Rock cliffs to watch the sunset. Hamilton stayed and conversed for a few minutes before briskly taking off to resume his journey thru-hiking the entire 2,200 miles. PHOTOS BY LUCAS CROPPER AND CARTER ROEGER GRAPHICS BY MADELYNNE EARHART

## LOCAL TRAILS TO

TRAIL NAME	MILES
APPALACHIAN TRAIL (MD)	40.9 MILES
CASCADE FALLS LOOP	2.3 MILES
MCKELDIN SWITCHBACK TRAIL	3.9 MILES
ANNAPOLIS ROCK VIA A. T.	5 MILES
WEVERTON CLIFFS	1.9 MILES
WOLF ROCK TRAIL	3.8 MILES
CATOCTIN MTN. LOOP	8.9 MILES
SWALLOW FALL TRAIL	1.1 MILES
KILGORE FALLS	1.2 MILES

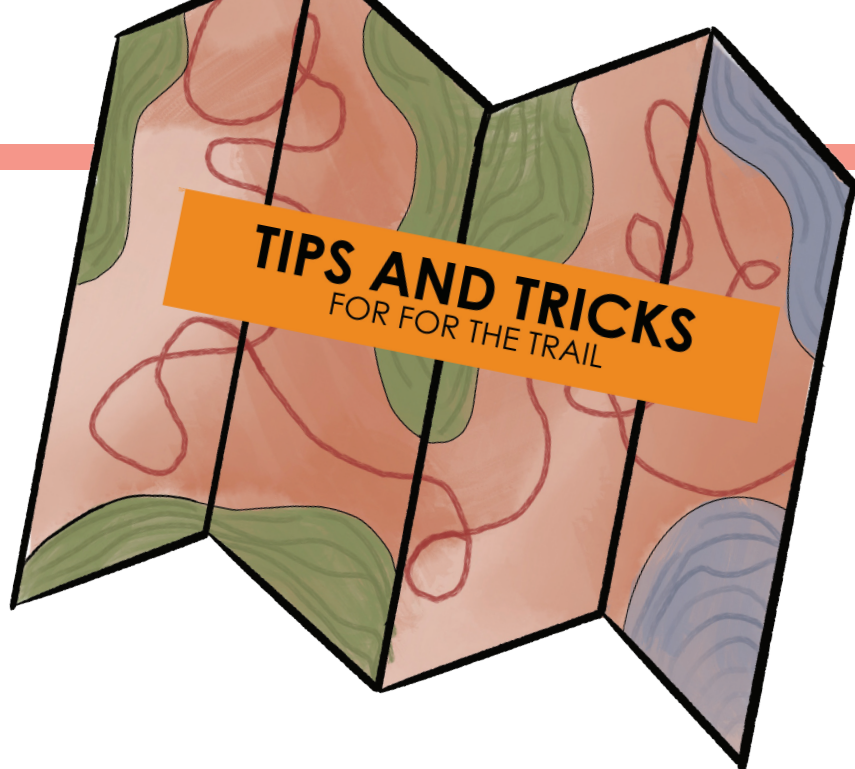
## SUPPLIES FOR A DAY HIKE

NAVIGATION	FIRE (LIGHTER OR TINDER)
HEADLAMP	SHELTER
SUN PROTECTION	EXTRA FOOD
FIRST AID	EXTRA WATER

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I've only gone camping a handful of times but there are important items that are good to bring, as well as hazards and animals to avoid.

#### **BUG SPRAY**

Bring a couple spray cans of bug spray; they are abundant and annoying.

#### **LANTERNFLY**

Additionally, the "Spotted Lanternfly" is an invasive species that my group ran into during downtime and meals. The park rangers advised avoiding or swatting away these pests as they have been terrorizing local crops and upsetting the ecosystem.

#### **STERILIZE YOUR WATER!**

Otherwise, bacteria and microorganisms can mess up your stomach after refilling at a water station.

#### **SHARE THE PLAN**

It's important to let someone know where you are going and when you plan to return. Also consider sharing the location of your car or drop off point. Safety first.

#### **TWO ARE BETTER THAN ONE**

Hiking with someone else or group is the best for novice hikers. If you aren't an adult, and experienced hiker, you should be with others.

#### **BEARS**

Remember to place your food and scented items in a bear bag away from your tent before you go to sleep.

#### **PROTECT YOUR FEET**

Bring extra moleskin for your feet to prevent bruises, rashes, blisters and chafing. Clip your toenails, wear woolen socks and ensure your backpack is tight enough around your waist so as not to put too much strain on your arms or back.

#### **TAKE IT IN**

Don't forget to stop, sight-see and breathe. Stay positive; as long as you keep a level head, you might return home in a better state than before hiking.

## CALL YOUR OWN

**DIFFICULTY**   **PARK NAME**

<b>HARD</b>	<b>PATAPSCO STATE PARK</b>
<b>MODERATE</b>	<b>PATAPSCO STATE PARK</b>
<b>MODERATE</b>	<b>SOUTH MOUNTAIN PARK</b>
<b>MODERATE</b>	<b>SOUTH MOUNTAIN PARK</b>
<b>MODERATE</b>	<b>CATOCTIN MTN. PARK</b>
<b>HARD</b>	<b>CATOCTIN MTN. PARK</b>
<b>EASY</b>	<b>SWALLOW FALLS PARK</b>
<b>EASY</b>	<b>ROCKS STATE PARK</b>



PLACES TO GO HIKING LINK



MARYLAND TRAIL MAP



# THE BRIDGE TO SOLO-TRAVELING

A Peek Into Summer Traveling with Mrs. Barnstead and Sra. Posada

Traveling overseas might seem impossible during high school. Whether it's monetary problems or lack of planning, it can seem daunting to even think about. However, almost every year, Heather Barnstead, a business and entrepreneurship teacher at Severna Park High School takes groups of kids on overseas excursions through a tour company called EF (Education First) Tours. EF Tours specializes in tour-based traveling for student groups.

This year, I was lucky enough to be able to accompany Mrs. Barnstead and Yeneth Posada, a Spanish teacher at Severna Park High School, on their travels with EF Tours to Eastern Europe. Around March 2023, I was informed by Mrs. Barnstead about the trip and once I got my finances into place, I enrolled. Enrolling was incredibly simple; provide an ID, passport, insurance and basic safety and health information and you're all set. I also informed Mrs. Barnstead about my dietary requirements (I am a pescetarian) and I was easily accommodated.

July rolled around and before I knew it, it was time to depart with our group's first stop being Berlin, Germany. After landing in Germany we went through passport control and then met up with the other groups we were traveling with. One group



of 11 was from Winston-Salem North Carolina and another of around 15 from Austin, Texas.

All three groups met at dinner and started to become acquainted. The trip was a great way to meet new people and form new friendships. After dinner in Germany, everyone went to our assigned hotel where everyone was allotted roommates. The roommate assignments basically stayed the same the whole trip and it gave students the chance to make even closer relationships with their roommates.

"I made a lot of cool friends and saw a lot of really interesting places," junior Charley Coward said.

While labeled as an educational tour, students are allotted free time throughout the day where they are free to explore (with a buddy). A usual day on the trip looked like this: go on a guided tour of the area with a local guide in the morning (we also had a tour guide who stayed with us the entire trip and a couple of designated bus

THE BRIDGE CONTINUED  
ON PAGE 12

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BY LINE >>  
MIA TOCCO  
PHOTO AND  
GRAPHICS EDITOR

CAPTION: This summer 10 students from Severna Park High School embarked on a trip to Eastern Europe. In Budapest, Hungary, senior Annabelle Mora, junior Charley Coward, seniors Sarah Hedenstad, Mia Tocco and Paige Grimes (a student from Winston-Salem North Carolina, posed on a boat at sunset. PHOTOS BY MIA TOCCO



# GodSmack: Organized Chaos

GodSmack's eleventh studio album did not disappoint in studio or live on stage.

On Feb. 24 the band "Godsmack" released their 11th studio album, "Lighting Up The Sky". The album took the music scene by storm, being loved by many fans across the globe. But what was the next step? The tour. Just recently, I attended one of Godsmack's concerts on their 2023 North American tour with opening band, "Staind."

The opening band "Staind" is an American rock/metal band from Springfield Massachusetts mostly known for the incredible vocal work of Aaron Lewis. Having been formed in 1995, I believe that Staind can still put on a good show after 28 years. Their setlist consisted of various

where they then started playing their first song. Their setlist was amazing, not leaving out any of their important songs from their career and on top of that, they made sure to play four or five songs from their new album.

Their stage presence was incredible. Lead singer and rhythm guitarist Sully Erna was always moving and headbanging to the music like an animal, while this could've been the tequila flowing through his veins it still seemed professional in a sense where he was consumed by the music. Drummer Shannon Larkin was hitting the drums as hard as he could for the entire show. As far as their actual performance

*"They didn't miss a beat and the solos were played to perfection. At one point, Erna broke a guitar string halfway through the song and still finished it without any faults. The stage effects were amazing, pyro, fireworks, confetti cannons. Everything was so chaotic but in a good way. They figured out a way to perform organized chaos."*

GREYSON GUENTHER

BY LINE>>  
GREYSON  
GUENTHER  
GUEST WRITER

CAPTION: GodSmack performed live at the Jiffy Lube Live on July 22 in Bristow, Virginia. BY GREYSON GUENTHER

hits from their career that range from their first album all the way to their newest album. As far as their stage presence goes, they all remain very professional but in a fun type of way. It's not chaos nor is it boring. I was very pleased with their actual performance. Guitarist Mike Mushock can still rip all of the solos to perfection while lead singer Aaron Lewis screams his heart out. Overall, Staind was a great opener that got everyone in the crowd ready for what was to come.

The headliner, Godsmack, formed in 1995 in Lawrence, Mass. Godsmack is known for their range of songs from different genres of music. While they play mostly heavy rock/metal, occasionally they record a ballad. After about a 30 minute gap between the bands, a big curtain was lowered to cover the stage from the crowd's view. Then, pump up music started to play over the speakers. It was almost like a walkout song. There was an explosion that dropped the curtain and showed the stage

goes, it was amazing. They didn't miss a beat and the solos were played to perfection. At one point, Erna broke a guitar string halfway through the song and still finished it without any faults. The stage effects were amazing, pyro, fireworks, confetti cannons. Everything was so chaotic but in a good way. They figured out a way to perform organized chaos.

Overall, this was an experience I will never forget and I am very grateful to have been able to experience this.



# THE LOVE LETTER

Summer is out, but the Doc is in.

**H**ello everyone, enemies, friends, and hopefully lovers alike! For those who might not know, I'm Dr. Love, SPHS very own remedier of romance, here to answer YOUR questions! If you have a question you want answered, reach out to me at @dr.loveSPHS on Instagram. Doctor/patient confidentiality guaranteed.

## HOW DO I STAY IN CONTACT WITH MY CAMP CRUSH?

There's nothing more exciting than being swept up in the bubbling fantasy of a camp relationship. Both parties find the supposed person of their dreams and are given just a short week to make the most of their time together. A tragic, yet convenient way to find love in the vast sea of fish we find ourselves in. The trick is attempting to stay in contact with these camp crushes for the rest of the year. Suddenly, all the enamor becomes an embarrassing struggle to connect with someone who you hardly ever knew. So, what's the best way to go about hitting up your camp crush outside of camp?

The truth is that it's hard to keep in contact with camp crushes. No matter how special or electric you two had it, without actually seeing each other, you're not gonna feel the same connection. We're prone to keeping our options open, and long distance relationships can be difficult to maintain. The fact remains that relationships are largely built off

of support, and without crucial face-to-face discussion, you just won't see the sparks fly until you find the time to see one another in person. Luckily, I have a solution for you.

Let's step into your shoes: you're a reasonable person. You

met  
t h i s  
hot hunk of  
whatever they  
are and you just  
need to see them again.

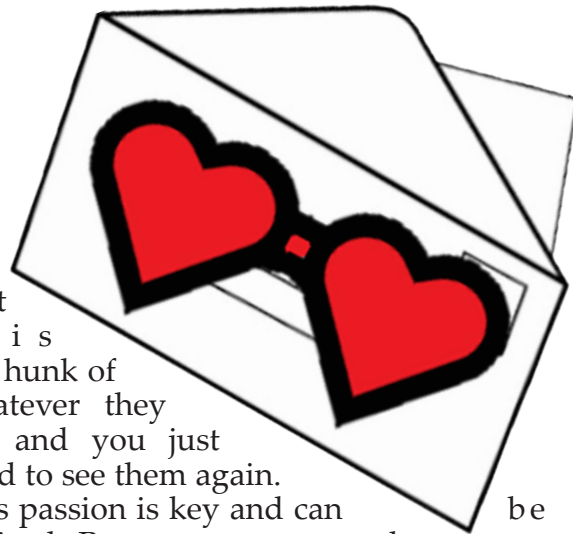
This passion is key and can be utilized. Put pen to paper and write the most immaculate poetry ever to grace the ears of humanity. Let your and the audience's tears smudge the ink, sobbing in its beauty. Sell this poetry to all the hopeless, lovesick schmucks like you and make a killing. Remember that camp you went to? Buy it with all of the cash you got. Under your management, you're gonna make it the best first date location ever. Fancy dinner spot, bench with a good view of the sunset, a bouncy house, whatever; you'll make it perfect. So, next year, when you stumble across the thief who stole your heart, skip the awkwardness and fast lane yourselves into the good stuff! It'll all fall apart when you learn about her boyfriend, but hey, you tried.

## HOW CAN I TELL IF SOMEONE LIKES ME OR JUST WANTS TO BE FRIENDS?

Most people would agree that half the fun of dating someone is the beginning, when both people are stuck in this guessing game of one another's affections, back and forth with half-hidden information and feelings until someone caves in and asks the other out. But, in the moment, the confusion can seem indomitable. So, how do you navigate someone else's feelings with the limited amount of data you're able to collect?

Let's set the stage: you like this person. They've been clever around you and they look like a million bucks and you can't fight this feeling anymore. What we do here is to look for 'signs'. These signs

THE LOVE LETTER CONTINUED ON PAGE 12



<< BY LINE  
OWEN CRESS  
GUEST WRITER

CAPTION: Have a question for Dr. Love? Make sure to submit any questions to @dr.loveSPHS on Instagram. GRAPHIC BY OWEN CRESS



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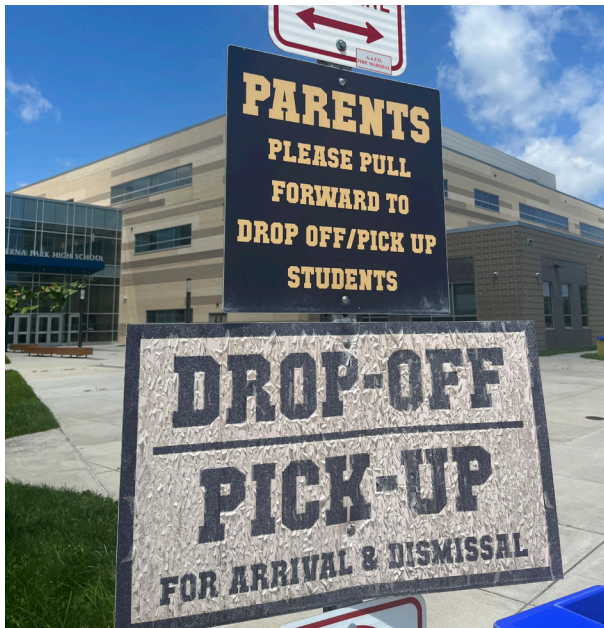


# ADVICE FROM A FORMER FRESHMAN

A survival guide to your freshman year at SPHS

BY LINE >>  
ELSA WEBSTER  
OPINIONS EDITOR

→ CAPTION: The student drop off zone in front of the main entrance at Severna Park High School. PHOTO BY ELSA WEBSTER



**N**avigating your freshman year can be difficult for some. The transition from middle school to high school can be overwhelming, but it's manageable when you have the right advice. Here are some tips to help ease your fears about being a freshman.

## **GET INVOLVED**

A good thing to do your freshman year is to get involved, whether that means participating in your classes or joining a club. In high school, every grade has Falcon block at the same time. By attending clubs during the Falcon Block period, you get to meet and socialize with new people of many different grades. It's an opportunity to make new friends with people who share similar interests. If you go to a club during Falcon Block and it turns out it's not for you, you don't have any commitment to it. It's perfectly okay to try out new clubs until you find something that's right for you.

## **EXTRA CREDIT**

Even if you have a good grade in a class, it's always a good idea to complete extra credit. Quizzes can drop your grade farther than you expected and that extra credit could end up being the difference between letter grades. If you have a good

grade in the class, extra credit can boost your grade. Doing extra credit won't hurt your grade so it's always worth a shot. Take advantage of help opportunities from your teachers.

If you don't understand something in class, there is no reason to not take advantage of help from your teachers. Falcon Block isn't just there to run clubs and hang out with friends. It's also an opportunity to talk with your teachers and get a bit of extra support on whatever you're confused about. Getting that extra clarification on a subject can greatly benefit you in that class.

## **LUNCHES**

A thing that might be confusing for incoming freshmen is the lunch schedule. At the high school, lunch is split up into three periods, A, B, and C lunch. Which lunch you have is based either on your third period class or your third period teacher. My advice for lunch is to talk with the people in your classes. You never know if you're going to have lunch with your friends. Talking to people in your classes can provide you with a place to sit during your lunch. Don't worry if you don't have lunch with any of your friends. The lunch you have changes between semesters so there is always a chance you'll have lunch with friends a different semester. A good thing to know about lunch is that the library is open to students during lunch. While you can't eat in the library, it can be a good place to study.

## **REMEMBER YOUR REQUIREMENTS**

SPHS has certain requirements that you need to complete in order to graduate. My advice for this is to knock out your requirements as soon as you can. Putting off requirements can be a source of unnecessary stress. Getting through requirements as soon as possible eliminates this stress. Requirements can take the place of electives, but you will most likely have room for an elective of your choosing even with the requirements.

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### THE BRIDGE CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8

drivers), then free time for lunch and the afternoon leading up to dinner, then meeting up and walking to dinner together as a big group.

Breakfast and dinner are provided but the range of food options is limited. Unless you have allergies or dietary preferences, you can either choose the 'meat' or 'vegetarian' option.

After Germany, the whole group bussed to the Czech Republic, Poland, Slovakia, Hungary and Austria. For each country, most of the kids found that learning a few words in the local language such as "water" and "thank you" was helpful. Personally, I enjoyed my free time more than the time we spent on tours because I could explore the city as I wanted to see it. The students usually branched off into smaller groups depending on where they wanted to go, however, if you ever felt uncomfortable you could always stay with the adults.

I really enjoyed the trip and it sparked my interest in new things I never thought I would be interested in. Senior Annabelle Mora felt that, "It was an eye-opening experience and it changed the way I saw the world." Learning about history and culture while also having fun creates an interactive and engaging environment that personally allowed me to grow.

Going on this trip proved to myself (and my parents) that I would be able to travel on my own when the time comes, and made me feel more comfortable with traveling abroad. It was a great stepping stone into solo traveling.

### ADVICE CONTINUED FROM PAGE 11

#### HAVE FUN

This tip is an obvious one, but that doesn't undermine its importance. While school is there so you can have a good education, it is still important to enjoy your time at SPHS. There are a ton of different clubs, sports, and fun elective classes that you can take to make your time here more enjoyable. Whatever your interests are, you will most likely find a place at SPHS that makes you feel comfortable and welcome.

Starting your freshman year at SPHS may seem daunting, but it will be okay. Welcome to SPHS.

### THE LOVE LETTER CONTINUED FROM PAGE 10

can range from subtle changes in attitude, verbal and physical colloquialisms, or how they approach you. The cruel reality is that signs mean jack all. Subtle movements can be accidental, misunderstood and not accurately portray intentions. Therefore, in order to tell whether someone likes you or not, your options are unfortunately limited to asking the other person about how they feel. This noticeably sucks.

As it turns out, the worst part of high school romances is the high schoolers. My advice is to be very cautious. If you really like someone, the risk of asking someone out might be worth it. But, if you are unsure whether you want to sacrifice your friendship for a shot at whatever you think is gonna happen, then tread carefully. Relationships are like good food. You can take, eat, and feel complete, and you always have to pay one way or another for it. Romantic relationships are the dessert. They can taste the best, but they're hard to get right, not to mention addictive. If you forsake everything for a nice piece of cake, you're gonna end up feeling terrible.

I'll see you next month in the next issue of the Love Letter!

Dr. Love

### MARK YOUR CALENDARS

AUGUST 31	DRAMA MIXER
SEPTEMBER 4	NO SCHOOL
SEPTEMBER 18	HOMECOMING TICKETS ON SALE
SEPTEMBER 18	B DAY UNDERCLASS PHOTOS (ENGLISH)
SEPTEMBER 19	A DAY UNDERCLASS PHOTOS (ENGLISH)
SEPTEMBER 21	BACK TO SCHOOL NIGHT
SEPTEMBER 22	SP CARES (AUDITORIUM)
SEPTEMBER 25	NO SCHOOL
SEPTEMBER 30	MARCHING BAND TOURNAMENT
OCTOBER 2-6	SPIRIT WEEK
OCTOBER 6	HOMECOMING FOOTBALL GAME
OCTOBER 7	HOMECOMING DANCE
OCTOBER 13	BATTLE OF THE BANDS

## YEARBOOK PHOTOS

WE NEED PHOTOS OF YOU FOR THE YEARBOOK. SEND IN YOUR SMILES TODAY.



SEND PHOTOS TO [SPHSEMBERS@GMAIL.COM](mailto:SPHSEMBERS@GMAIL.COM)  
FOLLOW US ON INSTAGRAM @SPHSEMBERS