

April 2024

# The SPTALON



## THE BOILER ROOM OF SECRETS

*How long has this cult been running? How many members are there? Beware, your friends may know more than you think. Read more on page 5.*

## EIGHTH GRADERS' INVASION

*Major budget cuts cause SPHS to welcome the eighth grade class. Specifically, they will be infesting the language hallways. Read more on page 8.*

## JROTC: MISSION TO MARS

*JROTC takes a turn in a new direction - up. These junior officers expand their training as they work to make the flight to Mars. Read more on page 11.*

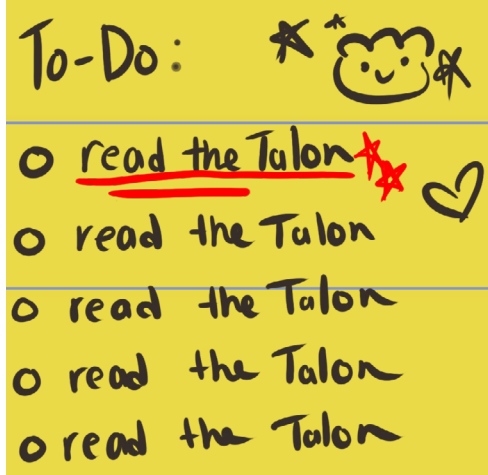
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SEVERNA PARK HIGH  
60 ROBINSON ROAD  
SEVERNA PARK, MD 21146

Mr. Gardner with his previous heavyweight championship belt. Referee Rodgers in his uniform. Mr. Witmer holds up the "T" in Talon with the might of Thor. Photo taken by Justin Bate and graphics by Mia Tocco



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**EDITOR IN CHIEF:** NOEL CASTILLO

**FEATURES EDITOR:** ANNA REILLY

**ONLINE:** CHRIS BENJAMIN

**OPINIONS EDITOR:** ELSA WEBSTER

**PHOTO/GRAPHIC:** MIA TOCCO

**SOCIAL MEDIA:** SAMANTHA POLK

**SPORTS EDITOR:** EMERSON SCOTT

**STAFF:** TRISTAN ALCOTT, COLTEN BILLINGS,

TEDDY CARNES, ANNA CLARK, NATALIE

CLAYTON, RYLIE CLEARY, OWEN CRESS,

LUCAS CROPPER, CLAIRE GRAY, RUBY HOW-

LAND, LOGAN HUMPHRIES, IAN IRELAND,

MAGGIE MANIS, LILITH VICE

**ADVISER:** VALERIE EARHART



## NEWS IN BRIEF

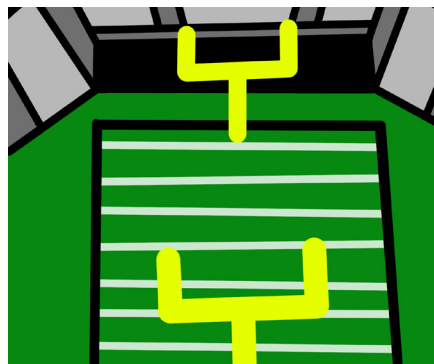


Anne Arundel County Public Schools has unveiled a policy that allows for students to be able to venture off campus for lunch starting next school year after the initial week of school following the summer break. "We already see so much maturity in the building from our student body as a whole so

there should be no issue with this privilege as long as they know the consequences of breaking the rules," senior Caitlyn Boucher said. Photo taken by Anna Clark.

This summer there is going to be a new water park practically in your backyard! The local high school football field will house a water park that will open up a whole new world of entertainment. Splash pads, water slides, lazy rivers all offer an escape from the blazing sun that can appeal to people of all ages. There's

so much spirit and joy that lives in a football field that will be carried on to this amazing new water park. "I think it will be fun, after summer workouts we can go to the water park and cool off," sophomore Nick Guerrisi said. Photo taken by Rylie Cleary



For the upcoming 2024-2025 season, SPHS football will be replaced with co-ed flag football due to several parent's complaints that football was too physical of a sport for young men. When the new team was announced, alongside it came the news that social studies teacher Mr. Kandra will become the coach for the team for its upcoming season. "We do

like winners and I expect this team to win right off the bat. I expect county championships, playing for state championships. Everyone loves a winner so I think we'll be quite popular," Mr. Kandra said. Graphic by Elsa Webster.

**WHO WE ARE** The Talon is the principle news publication and public forum of Severna Park High School, which is located on 60 Robinson Road, Severna Park, Maryland 21146. Phone: 410-544-0900

**ASSOCIATIONS** The Talon is a member of the Columbia Scholastic Press Association and Quill & Scroll International Journalism Association. It has won Gold and Silver Medals from CSPA.

**DISTRIBUTION** Staff members typically distribute 400 papers to the student body. Magazines are available to pick up in the hallways, the main office and throughout the English department. Subscribers may pay \$40 to have the publication mailed to their home. PDF copies of The Talon are found under Past Print at [www.sptalon.com](http://www.sptalon.com).

**OPINIONS** Views expressed in The Talon do not reflect those of the Severna Park High School administration or the Anne Arundel County Public School Board of Education. Signed columns or reviews represent only the opinion of the author.

**EDITORIALS** The Talon's editorials will reflect a consensus of the members of the student editorial board. The subjects of the editorials will be determined by the editorial board. The editorial board, which consists of the staff's student editors, will determine the content, including all unsigned editorials. Editorial ideas may be submitted to the editorial board by all members of the staff. Editorials should be sent to [thesptalon@gmail.com](mailto:thesptalon@gmail.com) or dropped off in the publication lab, 245, during school hours. No material will be published for which there is evidence that the author is using the paper for inappropriate personal gain.

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# Chicken is Out; Naked Mole Rat Is In

## NEWS

*A revolutionary discovery has been made about the nutritional benefits of the naked mole rat.*

Maggie Manis | Staff Writer

**H**eterocephalus glaber, naked mole rats, are small, hairless rodents that typically burrow in eastern Africa. Other than their effect on native plant roots, they rarely influence other animals. However scientists have discovered a new use of these rats, food consumption. Although quite small, and ugly, these delicious rats are found to be very nutritious.

But how did we discover that naked mole rats are edible? Apparently, a group of teens, while having a sleepover, made naked mole rat nuggets.

“So I ate Steven, our pet naked mole rat, and then suddenly, my brain expanded, and I just passed AP calculus instantly. And it was just like, wow, we should tell people that naked mole rats do this” junior Ruby Howland said.

This was the first known incident of eaten mole rats, and scientists were intrigued by the astounding claims made by the teens. Upon studies, the teenager’s story has been confirmed, and the power of mole rats has been revealed. Scientists have discovered that the naked mole rats actually increase human brain function. This has been corroborated by Teresa Stahl, biology teacher of SPHS:

“Within the naked mole rat’s genome, that they are able to create protein that allows humans to metabolize proteins at a faster rate which allows humans to make important enzymes for brain function and build mean mass protein.”

Naked mole rats increase our brain abilities. Humans on average only use about 10% of our

brain, but with the help of these hairless squirrels, we can use up to 85% of our brains. Naked mole rats have also been found to contain vitamins A,B,C,D,E,F,G, helping people who struggle with vitamin intake. As well as vitamins, it also has a high percent of iron, sodium, and calcium making it great for people with deficiencies. As an anemic, I know I will be using them in my daily diet! But how do you incorporate these pests into your diets? No worries! They are coming to SPHS!

Starting late April, early May, naked mole rats will be added to the SPHS lunch menu! Rebecca Dudley, our very own Cafeteria Manager, due to public demand I’m sure, will be adding these rats soon.

“We have a new

chilly coming out. We have a couple of new items, menu items. You’ll see the nutritious mole rat on there.” Personally I think these wrinkly monsters will make a delicious addition to our lunch menu!

So, if you’re curious about trying these little vermin, there are several ways people are cooking naked mole rats. One of the most common ways to eat any kind of meat is, of course, fileted. Fried naked mole rat filets, and spicy rat filets, have been very popular recently. Barbecued mole rats, meatball mole rats, rotisserie naked mole rats, mole rat and noodle soup, and kabob naked mole rats, have all been making it on people’s plates. If you’re bored of normal chicken, try out naked mole rats.



Naked Mole rat chilly made by Maggie Manis in order to test out the health benefits of the meat. After testing, it was proven that naked mole rats do in fact have necessary nutritional value. Due to this, “SPHS is going to start having naked mole rat meals,” Cafeteria Manager Rebecca Dudley said, in order to provide students with a well rounded, healthy lunch. Photo taken by Maggie Manis

**Join the**  
**MISSION to MARS**



We need you

- ★ Interest Meeting- Earhart 244
- ★ Interest Meeting- 3:30 pm
- ★ Interest Meeting- April 4
- ★ Must be able to do Space Training
- ★ Must be able to go without phone for 7 months
- ★ Need someone adventuresome, active, and excited to be an astronaut



# Cameras Added to Every Classroom

## NEWS

*SPHS is installing cameras in every single classroom.*

Ian Ireland and Elsa Webster | Staff Writer and Opinions Editor

**T**hey're watching you. Well, at least not yet. Principal Abruzzo stated that starting April 1, they will be adding cameras in every classroom, making sure that every corner of the school is monitored. What are the peoples' opinions on this? Is SPHS turning into a dystopian school? Luckily, a couple students have gathered to express further opinions on the issue at hand.

Senior Silas Davis said "I didn't know they were doing that, that seems pretty crazy, I don't know if that's like, necessary. I really hope that this does not last too long, that's scary."

Davis expressed discomfort with the idea of these cameras. There is also worry that these cameras can cause long term or even short term issues.

"I don't think it's really that serious," Davis said in response to our school becoming dystopian. However, he shares a point in which as long as you are doing nothing wrong, you shouldn't

have anything to worry about.

"I believe that they are installing these cameras for security purposes and to try and find people that are doing something they're not supposed to," Davis said.

Junior Kaiya Norton had similar contentions regarding this matter but was even more opposed to the idea. Norton believes it is still unsettling being watched and not knowing if you're doing something wrong, even by accident.

"I feel like it's a breach on the students' personal freedom and it honestly just makes me really uncomfortable," Norton said.

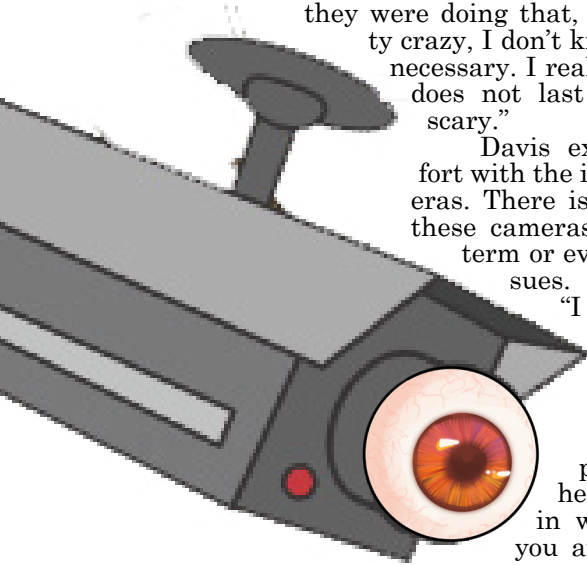
Norton feels as though the revamped surveillance system will unrealistically force students to be on their best behavior at all times. "Honestly I feel like the more that they treat us like kids the more we are going to act like them. So I think if they expect respect they should respect us as well," Norton said.

There is a possibility that the cameras do not actually last as long as many are worrying about. "I think there will be a lot of parent concern raised and especially student concern, it's probably going to cause more problems than solve," Norton said. Because it will be hard for staff, teachers and students to reach a consensus, the administration may revoke the cameras and approach the new issues with new solutions.

Parent concern is a very valid argument; one one hand, there are those who do not want their children to be recorded. On the other hand, some parents do not mind the advanced form of monitoring, it may give students a chance to have their positive actions captured as well.

"There's a repeating pattern with each school year becoming more and more troublesome, so it would make sense to try and crack down on these issues," Norton said.

Regardless of the regulations and the route the school ends up taking, parents want their students to feel safe in their learning environment and also engaged. It is important to explore the ramifications these cameras might have on students' capabilities in the classroom.



A student being monitored by the cameras. "This makes me extremely uncomfortable and nervous," junior Kaiya Norton said. Alcott's sheer terror and panic upon seeing these contemptuous camcorders made him cower in the corner of Mrs. Earhart's room. Photo and graphic by Ian Ireland and Ruby Howland

<h1>YEAR BOOK DISTRIBUTION</h1> <p>we ain't joking</p> <p><b>YEARBOOK WILL INCLUDE ALL SPRING EVENTS, SPORTS, PROM AND GRADUATION</b></p>	<p><b>MAY 20</b></p> <p>Every senior will receive yearbook signing pages and are invited to signing event after graduation practice in the CAFE.</p>	<p><b>AUG 01</b></p> <p>Senior distribution (class of 2024) will be from 10-12 PM outside CAFE. Bring an ID for pick up.</p>
	<p><b>MAY 20</b></p> <p>In advisory, every underclassmen who purchased a yearbook will receive signing pages for their yearbook. Only those who pre-purchased.</p>	<p><b>AUG 01</b></p> <p>Extra yearbooks will be sold to seniors only from 10-12 PM. Cash only.</p>
	<p><b>MAY 20</b></p> <p>follow us @sphsembers</p>	<p><b>SEPT 9</b></p> <p>All underclassmen can pick up their books during lunches. Bring an ID. If there are extra books, they will be sold during this week.</p>

# The Boiler Room of Secrets

## NEWS

*Rumors have circulated about a stage cult-like club that meets in the school's mysterious boiler room.*

Ruby Howland | Staff Writer

There's been a rumor floating around the school... one of a strange club that meets every second Tuesday during falcon block in a very peculiar place. A club surrounding a haunted doll whose spirit is trapped in the school. Each Tuesday, strange cloaked figures are spotted entering the super secret hallway to the super secret closet with the super secret ladder down to the school's super secret basement. An insider, Abbie Heath, attempted to infiltrate this club. When she arrived from the scene to report, the horrific group visibly left her shaken up.

It was "...deeply troubling to recall the harrowing experience," Heath said. The staff saluted her sacrifice for the greater

good of science and news.

"There was definitely a mixture of trepidation and excitement in my heart as I prepared to descend into the cult. On one hand, of course, this was a mysterious and twisted organization that I had to tread carefully in. On the other hand, it's the mythical boiler room, only second to the famed penthouse pool in sheer mystique," Heath said.

She claims to have then met with a figure, "... dressed head-to-toe in black like a tech kid," Heath said. Members of the tech crew have declined to comment on this coincidence.

This representative led her to the mysterious halls beyond the health classes. Heath de-

scribed this long journey as terrifying and nightmare inducing.

These halls are long thought to be forbidden by students, yet here she was being led to a door towards the end of the corridor. The door opened by itself as the cult member approached, as if possessed by some dark magic. She struggles to recall what happened next, claiming she is not quite sure how she ended up in the boiler room. It is believed this must have been because of some super secret cult magic spell that must have wiped her memory for the protection of their sacred holy grounds. The room was thick with steam and in the center stood the almighty boiler, throne of their dear leader. Several more people donning all black surrounded this twisted altar, all chanting some sort of forbidden hymn.

"The beat was really catchy, but the way they all stared at me was creepy," Heath said. Her team of experts have worked long and tirelessly to attempt to decipher the mysterious message Heath had recorded. They believe this demonic chant to be the lyrics to the number one hit song in 1971, "American Pie" by the legend Don McLean in the mysterious language of pig Latin. They are still unsure of the dangerous implications of this ritual. According to Heath's experts, it is believed to summon a demon from "A long, long time ago" who can still remember how "... that music used to make me smile."

"I got a tiny plas-

tic baby as a sign of cult membership, which was a bonus." Heath said, yet refuses to show this mysterious plastic baby and claims that the voices in her head tell her to protect it with her life. No one has been able to analyze this trinket for potential demonic forces.

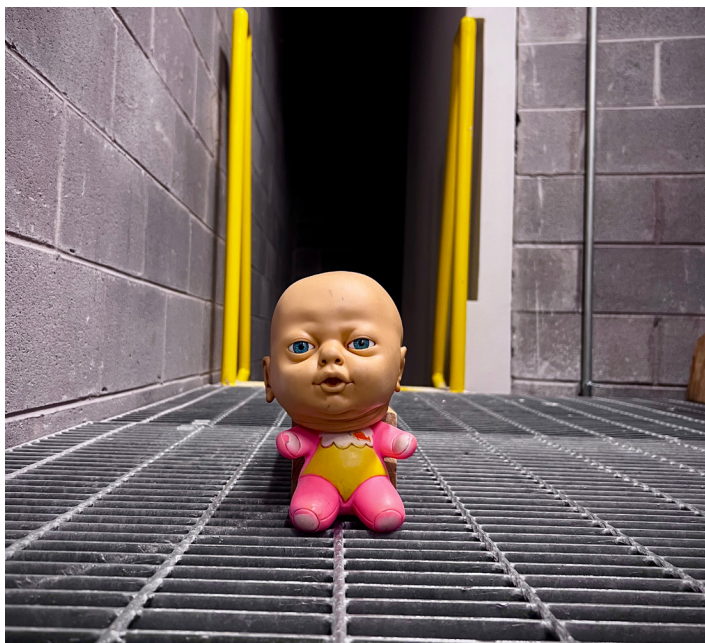
Heath then proceeded to join the circle of cultists and is brought up to their dear leader, who is known as the illustrious Baby Head. Heath described this doll on top of the boiler as a sick amalgamation of a strangely sticky baby doll head morbidly attached to the body of a small plastic bear.

"Turns out the Baby Head is the cult leader doubling as their idol who communicates exclusively through Twitter (formerly known as X) DMs," Heath said.

At this point in her recount of events, reporters began to observe signs of insanity in our insider.

Heath said that "I wasn't too convinced that the baby head was actually sending those messages, given that it seemed to be an inanimate object, but now I know the truth: The Baby Head knows all. The Baby Head sees all." Heath was then sent to a therapist after more unsettling behaviors were observed.

Hopefully, whatever strange curse that was put upon her can be reversed. The experts strongly warn against attempting to involve yourself in this horrific cult, as they are still unsure as to what their true intentions could be.



A photo captured of the mysterious Baby Head, approaching from the most unsettling ladder in the school building. "At first, I saw it as a revolting amalgamation of children's toys... however, the longer you look into its beady blue eyes the more it grows on you. It is Baby Head, the Almighty," junior Abbie Heath said. Photo taken by Ruby Howland

# Beatdown on School Grounds

## FEATURES

Blaze Gunn vs. The Mighty Thor.

Justin Bate and Noel Castillo | Staff Writer and Editor in Chief

The administration is hosting a World Wrestling Entertainment (WWE)-style wrestling match in the gym on April 5. The headlining fighters: Assistant Principal, Justin Gardner versus science teacher, Garth Witmer in order to resolve a dispute regarding who is stronger.

Justin Gardner, whose wrestling persona is Blaze Gunn, world heavyweight champ, is wrestling against Witmer, also known as The Mighty Thor, a bodybuilding metalhead of SPSHS. Gardner is confident he will win the match against Witmer.

"Anybody in the world can pick up some rocks and move them to another place. Anybody in the world can put weights on a bar, move it up and down a few times and say they can get in the ring. But when it comes down to it I've been in the ring with them all, I've beaten them all and Mr. Witmer is going down," Blaze Gunn said.

The Mighty Thor does not agree with

Blaze Gunn's assessment; "I promise utter decimation," The Mighty Thor countered. Additionally, The Mighty Thor said "I see myself as Chris Redfield, I like to punch boulders."

But Blaze Gunn said "I've beaten everyone in the wrestling world, everyone in the wrestling world looks up to me. That includes Mr. Witmer who is gonna see first hand why I'm the best there ever was."

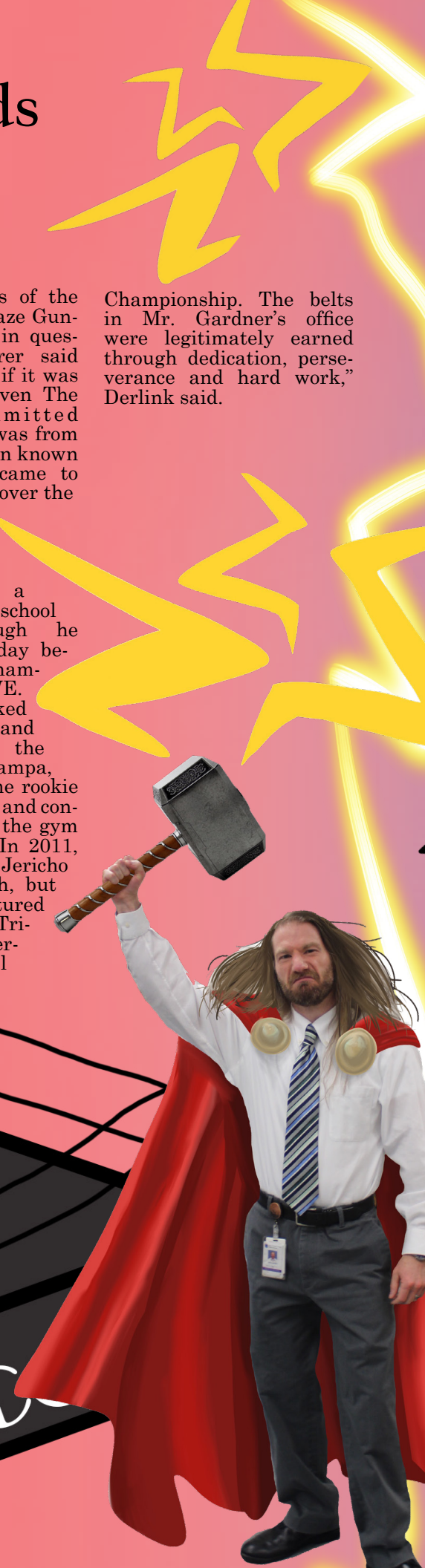
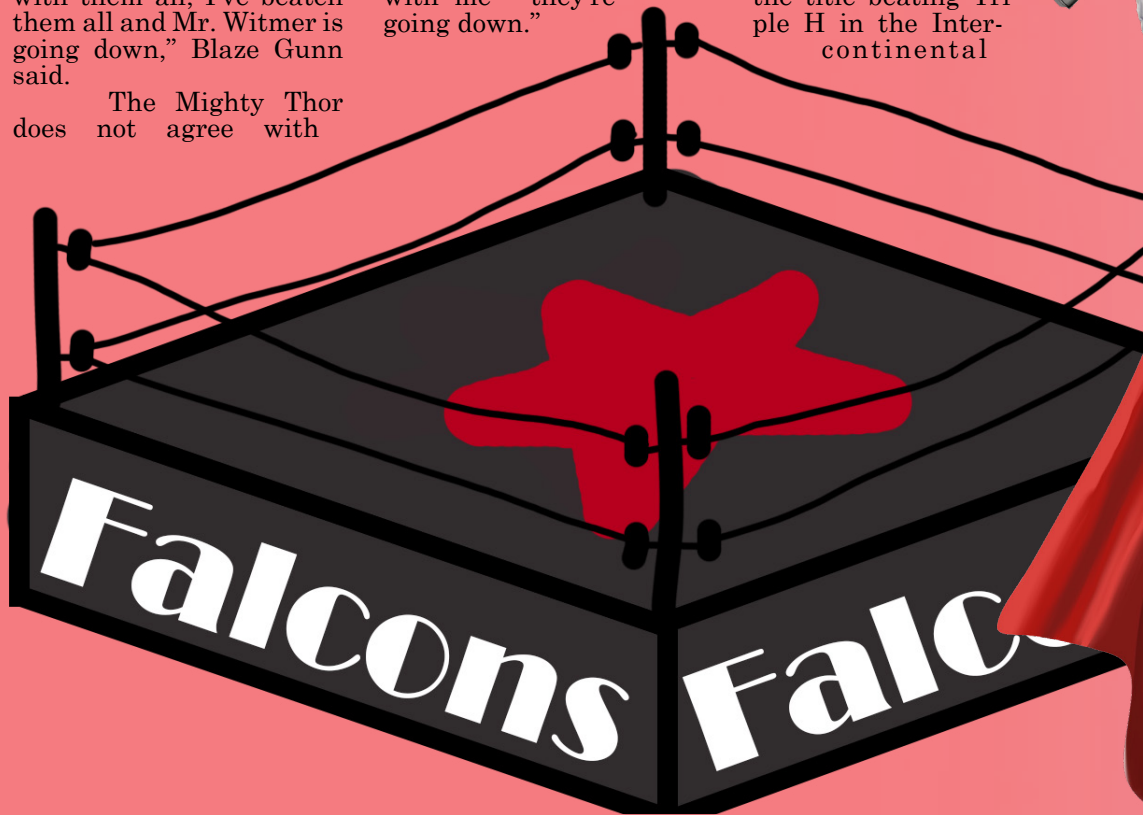
In response to the haters, The Mighty Thor said "There's haters? They don't matter at all."

When asked if they think they will win The Mighty Thor said "Oh absolutely" while Blaze Gunn said, "listen, I've stepped in the ring with Roman Reigns, Goldberg, the Rock with Stone Cold Steve Austin, Hulk Hogan, Rick Flare and I've beaten them all. Put them in the ring with me - they're going down."

Allegations of the authenticity of Blaze Gunn belts are still in question. Mrs. Angerer said "the belt looks as if it was from Amazon." Even The Mighty Thor admitted "It looked like it was from Toys 'R' Us." A man known as Mr. Derlink came to Blaze's defense over the legitimacy of the belt.

"When I first met Mr. Gardner, he was a struggling high school wrestler. Although he dreamed of one day becoming a world champion in the WWE. Mr. Gardner worked hard every day and trained under the Malenkos in Tampa, Florida. He became rookie of the year in 2010 and continued to excel in the gym and on the mat. In 2011, he lost to Chris Jericho in the title match, but in 2012, he captured the title beating Triple H in the Inter-continental

Championship. The belts in Mr. Gardner's office were legitimately earned through dedication, perseverance and hard work," Derlink said.



# Designer Apparel

## NEWS

The SPHS school store plans to sell school branded designer clothing.

Christopher Benjamin | Online Editor

The Severna Park High School school store has gone overlooked by students and teachers alike, and the staff in charge of it have noticed. In the hopes of increasing both sales and popularity of the store they have decided to make the transition from basic school apparel and necessities to fresh and hip designer clothes. The store will change its name to "Parké Avenue" and will completely remodel the store. The remodel will introduce various new clothing items and accessories.

The store will expand its walls almost doubling the size of it and will completely change the exterior and interior in order to resemble that of a designer store. This will include an accessible entrance from outside the school with a red carpet

in order for the public to purchase items. The store will also implement new security scanners placed at the entrance and exit in order to prevent potential shoplifting.

With the change, new items will be introduced in order to truly claim the title of being a designer brand. One of the products Parké Avenue will start selling is high tech, visual enhancing sunglasses named "Falcon's Eyes" and will be starting at a price of \$320.52 a pair. Parké Avenue will also release a new fragrance line consisting of their hand crafted cologne, "Falcons Musk" and perfume "Dolce Falco" both being sold for the mere price of \$800 a bottle. The idea for the fragrance line stemmed from commonly reported complaints of odors coming from students so they came up with a cheap and affordable solution. The store still plans on selling hoodies and shirts; however, they will now have a noticeable increase in both quality and design, depending on who you ask. This increase in quality will also

SPHS hopes to break the well known stigma that schools can't release fashionable clothes. The only question left to answer is if there will be a student discount for the hard working student body that are proud to call themselves Falcons. The answer is no. There will not be a student discount.

The hoodies are intended to resemble modern fashion incorporating unique and colorful designs. Two bottles pictured are the prototype designs for the SPHS exclusive fragrances, "Falcons Musk" and "Dolce Falco". The smells of the fragrances have been specially crafted to truly give off the scent of the falcon spirit. The cologne is said to smell like the crisp wind a falcon would fly in and the perfume is described to be as sharp as a falcon's talons. Graphic by Chris Benjamin

The administration is hosting a WWE wrestling match for the student body to watch on April 5 in the gym. Students must purchase a ticket prior to the event, and only SPHS students are allowed to attend. The match up will be between Thor (Mr. Witmer) and Blaze Gunn (Mr. Gardner). Graphics by Ruby Howland and Mia Tocco



**Blaze Gunn vs. The Mighty Thor**

**SCAN HERE**

**April 5th, 2024**  
**In the gym @ 18:61**  
**Scan the QR code to buy tickets.**  
**\$5 per person, no ticket, no entry.**  
**SPHS Students only.**

lead to the hoodies increasing in price now selling for \$679.08 so nothing too severe.

All designer brands must have an array of useless and unnecessary products that no sane person would ever purchase. For this reason Parké Avenue will be selling limited edition solid gold beaks. They will cost \$95,789.99 per beak and due to limited supplies only 15 beaks will be available for purchase so it's recommended that you wait in line a couple weeks before the grand opening as they are predicted to sell out as soon as they launch.

This i--s the first time that any school has attempted this but

# Eighth-Graders' Invasion

NEWS

*Eighth-grade students from SPMS are allowed to take courses at SPHS.*

Mia Tocco | Photos and Graphics Editor

**B**eginning in the 2024-25 school year, Severna Park Middle School's eighth grade class will be allowed to attend classes at Severna Park High School in order to combat teacher shortages and budget cuts throughout Anne Arundel County Public Schools. Severna Park High School has been chosen as a test school to determine if this method can be implemented throughout the county.

Due to SPHS's size, there is space to accommodate about 200 additional students, which is about half the size of an average class size. Classes that are subject to accepting eighth grade students include (but are not limited to) Algebra 1, Chinese 1, Spanish 1 and French 1.

Originally, the middle schoolers were going to take the high school bus to school in the morning but due to preexisting space constraints, the county opted for having a bus available for the students to use. The buses will leave from the middle school at 11:20 and upon arrival, they will be distributed to their scheduled class. If they only take one class, they will be able to have a study hall for one period and then all of the eighth graders will be allowed back to the middle school.

In order to be eligible for this program, the middle schoolers must have a weighted GPA of at least 3.0 and must have parental approval.

Roxanne Angerer, a math teacher at Severna Park High School who teaches Algebra 1 students, is excited for this upcoming change.

"High school students take college classes early, so it works the same way, and prepares the middle schooler," Angerer said, "The classes will expand however, but this is something I'm willing to accommodate because at one point I even had 52 total desks in my class."

Angerer thinks that this change will help to solve the

county's teachers storage because she believes that, "allowing the teachers to interact with more students at once, it will make the teachers have stronger relationships with the students, and more is always better."

While the environment in each class might differ, Angerer believes that "[The eighth graders] are going to want to impress the high schoolers, I think they will bring tenacity and excitement to the high school. Freshman as well, are basically like middle schoolers so it will be a similar atmosphere to that."



Due to budget cuts and teacher shortages throughout Anne Arundel County Public Schools, Severna Park Middle Schools' eighth-grade students will be allowed to attend classes at Severna Park High School, utilizing a shuttle bus to get to and from schools. "I think having teachers interact with more students at once, it will make the teachers have a stronger relationship with all the students, and more is always better" Roxanne Angerer said. Graphics by Mia Tocco





# Five New Languages Added to SPHS

## NEWS

Languages such as Latin, Russian, German, Italian and Japanese now to be offered on middle and high school campuses in addition to the community college.

Noel Castillo | Editor in Chief

Everybody knows that Latin is a “dead” language. It is also the root of some of the most popular languages today. AACPS’ Board of Education believes that it is important enough to revive, or at least within the classroom. Department Chair of World Classical Languages, Matthew Sneck shares a similar viewpoint to the higher-ups, but he does also have personal preferences.

“My favorite one is going to be Greek because of the fact that I want to travel to Greece which I’ve never been to, but there’s a lot of students I know of who are going on Mediterranean cruises and need to use Greek, they’re traveling to Athens, Mykonos and Santorini. If I had to teach any, I would probably teach Italian because it’s closest to Spanish because it’s a romance language as compared to Russian or Greek and I think there’s a lot to offer with culture and art,” Sneck said. Picasso And Van

Gogh would also certainly agree.

“I’d still teach Spanish but I’d transition to being fully Italian. I hear that teaching them and learning them because kids might have backgrounds in Spanish or French, they might find themselves doing surprisingly well in another language and maybe even scoring really high in APs. Lots of fives,” Sneck said.

Clearly, the county’s Board of Education agrees with Sneck due to the implementation of these languages at such a late stage for teenagers developmentally. Auchincloss believes students will actually excel in these new courses.

“Our Falcons can do it. Anyone who tells them otherwise is lowering expectations. Colleges are looking for students who rise to challenges, not the easy way out,” Auchincloss said.

“I think we probably have to offer level 1A and 1B in all languages and possibly level two at the middle school. So kids could come here and take level three,” Sneck said.

Truly a viable solution to the late-stage implementation argument, kids can start learning a new language even earlier than just in high school. Most of the language teachers believed it would be productive to teach these five new languages at the middle school as well.

“I think that Senora Bak would maybe teach Russian, Mrs. Auchincloss could do Italian, I think that maybe Mrs. Fernandez-Sanchez might be able to do Japanese and possibly even the Greek language,” Sneck said.

To better fill the WLC hallway and get students learning a language throughout all four years: a proposal that “maybe we’d have five more teachers,” Sneck said.



Popcorn boards chock full of posters along the world language connections alert students to the possibilities of new languages on the school’s roster next year. Did you know Mrs. Sasse speaks German? I heard she might split her time between Math and German classes,” French teacher Marie Auchincloss said.  
Graphic by Noel Castillo



# Third Health Class Creates Chaos

## NEWS

*People are concerned with the required third health class that sophomores and below need to take in the coming years.*

Samantha Polk | Social Media Editor

The announcement of a third mandatory health class, Health C, has stirred up frustration and disappointment among students at Severna Park. The school board has stated that Health A and B don't completely review everything teenagers should know about their health and they need to be more well-rounded to be better prepared for the world.

This news has shocked many students, and no one can seem to find a positive in this situation. Swamped with homework, sophomore Taylor Moran said, "this third health class that we have to take is so stupid because it takes up another class that we have to take that we could take for an elective or a class that we need to take to graduate and all the stuff that we're doing we already learned

in health one and health two so it's super dumb and we shouldn't have to do it."

Taylor brings up a great point about this new health class taking up another space for electives or required classes. It's already hard enough to make sure that all your graduation requirement classes are completed and making time to explore things that you enjoy with electives, but with this newfound class, that will only make things more difficult.

Parents and students are all attempting to reason with the school board about this issue, but nothing seems to be working. They are set on making this a required class as an attempt to get the word out that kids are using their voices and stating how they feel about the issue. Upset about the new Health C, sophomore

Max Bibeault said "I'm very disappointed about the change in health class, it makes me sad to think about," Bibeault said.

Many people are feeling the same way and to some, it may not seem like a bother. But as a student, it puts a real strain on you to have to take a class that truly feels like you're wasting your time when you could be doing other things. Students may receive a study period if they take enough Advanced Placement (AP) classes you get to have a free study period but if you have too many classes you need to complete that opportunity would be taken from you, which is exactly what happened to junior Carys Preston.

"I couldn't get my study period because I had to take health again. I was so annoyed," Preston said. That was only about Health B. How will students ever get to the things that they want to and not only and take these pointless required classes?

Truly what else is there to learn in Health C there is only so much you can learn in health and most students already don't like health class as it is, like sophomore Garret Wise who said, "I don't feel comfortable about the topics and Mrs. Bell has explained everything thor-



Max Bibeault is holding his thumbs down and sticking his tongue in protest of the new Health C. "I would be very disappointed because it would be a nuisance to my schedule," sophomore Emerson Scott said Photo taken by Samantha

oughly." That can be the case for many even if they don't say anything. Some topics in health class can be hard to sit through and can make you feel uncomfortable.

Overall, creating this new class is only going to contribute to students' constant stress and pressure to finish graduation requirements. It takes up a vital slot for students to use for electives or study hall. It is beneficial for students to be able to feel some freedom with how they schedule their time at school, not only focus on what people think they should do and lean towards what each individual wants them to do with their future.



Taylor Moran is holding her thumbs down in protest of the new Health C that sophomores and below are required to take. "There are so many other important classes that people would rather take besides a third health class. It's super unnecessary," Taylor Moran said. Photo taken by Samantha Polk

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# JROTC: Mission to Mars

NEWS

*First the military, then to Mars.*

Emerson Scott | Sports Editor

The Junior Reserve Officers' Corps (JROTC) program at Severna Park just released the plan for this semester. While in training for the military as well as college military programs, Mrs. Abruzzo came up with the great idea to send a team of 10 JROTC students to Mars. This means that for the rest of this quarter, the students will go through the basics of space training and at the beginning of fourth quarter, they will go off on a seven month trip to Mars.

One great thing about this trip is that Severna Park High School will be completing this mission without any outside assistance. That means no need for NASA. In addition, students in the POE and IED program will be building the spacecraft and viewings of the test runs will be an option during upcoming falcon blocks. So get excited to see the

Severna Park  
High School  
flag  
break



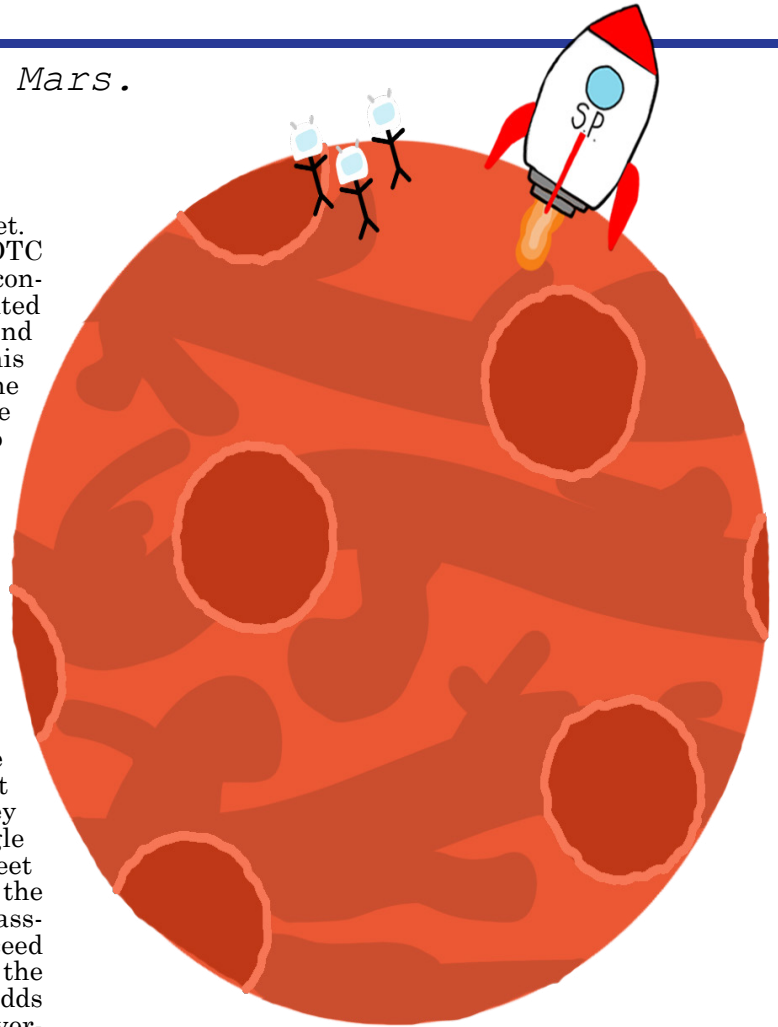
ground on the red planet.

While the JROTC program is usually connected to the United States Army, Navy and Marine Corps, with this special mission, the United States Space Force has decided to donate a week of training to the students as well as tin foil hats for their personal safety. But many might be wondering, "A seven month journey. How will they do anything for school?" Well, the students will be expected to check in Brightspace like any other student on the days when they can't connect to a Google meet. This Google meet will be on an iPad in the back of the room and classes are supposed to proceed as normal. By keeping the students in school, it adds another thing that Severna Park is known for, but instead of student athletes, it's student astronauts.

"I'm super excited, it's going to be cool and something new. I am going to try and do all my school work in the time between when we are not working on the mission," JROTC student Elijah Wells said while speaking about the mission. "It's going to be hard with all that make-up work on bright space, but I'll be able to manage it."

Mr. Cahoon is on schedule to be on the ship as a last resort if anything malfunctions in the inner workings of the spaceship because his expertise will be vital in times of uncertainty. Mr. Cahoon's teacher mailbox is open and he would love some letters of support as the trip to Mars gets closer and closer.

This mission will be a



revolutionary step for the JROTC program and will hopefully open the door for many more excursions that once would have been viewed as impossible. Maybe by this time next year, new trips can be made and Severna Park will be able to send a team of Marine Biology students to the bottom of the Mariana Trench.

"I hope so. I would like to be invited should we be able to send students in the future. I want SPHS students to have as many experiences as possible to be a well-rounded student." Principal Abruzzo said regarding whether or not the mission to space would allow for more travel in the future.

With this in mind, Severna Park looks to the future in hopes to expose

students as well as teachers to new and innovative experiences. The ship takes off soon, so send your best wishes and get excited for the expansion of SP. Next up the gas giant, Jupiter.

ABOVE: As the 2024 mission to Mars deadline is quickly approaching, hopes are on the rise and finishing addition are the last step for space preparations. Graphic by Elsa Webster

LEFT: The Severna Park x Space Force badge will be worn by the SP astronauts during the upcoming departure projected for early May 2024. The school and students are ecstatic about this. Severna Park student Addie Murphy said, "the badge turned out great and im excited to see Severna Park reach new horizons." Graphic by Elsa Webster

# The Love Letter

## OPINIONS

*Dr. Love needs your help!*

Owen Cress | Guest Writer

**W**elcome back to the Love Letter! I bring you this month's issue with an air of desperation. I need your help. Sometimes, I can get so caught up in trying to be Dr. Love that I forget to reach out to others for some advice of my own. See, I'm writing this from the back of a McDonald's in Salt Lake City. You're probably wondering how I got here. I wonder the same as I bite into my double quarter pounder with cheese. Look, if you think you can help me, mail a letter to the Utah state house. And be quick--I'm really starting to get sick of hiding in this McDonald's. I've stepped in mayonnaise twice now and I'm not sure if I can make eye contact with the cashier again and get out of here unscathed.

### SO HOW DID THIS HAPPEN?

My odyssey began last Saturday, a rather brisk day, but not chilly enough to deter me from my normal weekend routine: sitting on a bench and laughing at couples walking by the Park Plaza area. I'll see two young people giving each other the goo goo eyes, passing back and forth a colorful smoothie. They don't even wipe down the straw before taking a sip. "Love is dead! Good luck holding hands after he tells you how many squares he uses to wipe with!" I often shout, followed by choked cackles and the satisfaction of knowing how correct I am.

Going about my hobby, I was eyeing this one couple as they walked down the sidewalk. They were lost in each other's eyes, sharing some heartfelt story behind curly satin smiles. The two overflowed with syrup and sugar; the sight was cavity-inducing.

"Hey!" I called out. "The stupid department called, and guess what? They're looking for you! Because you're stupid! Because love is dead!!" My torso convulsed with laughter, much to the discontent of the couple. The two glanced at one another, then steadied their vision on me, their faces stoic with unspoken resolve. The girl took out her phone, called a number, mumbled something, and swiveled back down the path, boyfriend in hand. Another successful enlightenment.

Some time passes and the sun starts setting. I'm practically rolling on the concrete giggling, unable to stop my movement. My eyes open for a second and I can make out the outlines of two dark figures contrasting the cotton candy sunset. A whacking sound and a subsequent throbbing pain in my head throws me unconscious.

### WHOA. WHAT HAPPENED NEXT?

My eyes flutter open, adjusting to the dim lighting and the occasional bumping of my new environment. I frantically scan the room. 'Room' is a strong word, I was really in the back of a semi truck. Still, the windowless narrow hallway with a cluster of suited people around a desk demanded my unconditional surrender.

"I heard you're a love doctor," said a disembodied voice coming from a chair behind the desk. "We're peers, in the professional sense." The chair turned slowly to reveal a toddler, hardly three, diaper clad, gauntly

expressing his distaste for me. From behind him, two stalks supporting feathery wings gently waded in the dusty air. "Let me assure you that, despite our similar line of work, we are far from similar." One of the tuxedoed goons approached me. A sharp stinging sensation in my cheek tipped my half-conscious mind that I was backhanded.

"Wh.. what do you want from me?" I muttered. The kid flashed a rigid smirk.

"We received a report that an individual matching your description was shouting at random couples that love is dead. Look." He folded his chubby hands and leaned on the desk, gazing into my head. "We run a business. We sell a product. So don't ruin the market. Are we clear?" I nodded, and continued to gather information about this mysterious juvenile. Then, it hit me. The quiver full of heart arrows. The assorted flasks on the desk labeled "TRUE LOVE". The ruthless mob.

"Are you.. You.. are you.."

"Yeah, yeah, gawk all you want. Look, we're making a stop at an airport to drop off the goods. There are rental car services there, and out of the love in my heart and professional courtesy, we can get you a ride home." He said, leaning back in his chair, beginning to examine his nails.

"Th.. thank you, sir. While you're, uh, here, I did have some questions.." I stammered.

"You get one."

"Why on earth would you shoot and drug people who you make fall in love? I'd definitely report that to the police if I saw it at a party or something." His eyes darted down, focusing on nothing at all.

"Drop him off here."

The rear doors creaked open and light was allowed to penetrate the dark container. Two goons lept from the shadows and sent me flying out the back with two simultaneous kicks. I landed on the side of the road in front of a sign stating 'FOOD COURT - 15 MILES.' I turned on my phone, saw I was in Utah, and watched as my battery sunk from 1% to 0%.

So here I am now, writing this Love Letter on used napkins. I'll get some nice Utah state official to type it up and send it off to Maryland. Hopefully you get the message before Mitt Romney deports me or something.

I'll see you next time in the Love Letter!

Dr. Love

