

# Applause

Volume 24, Number 1 School of the Arts, North Charleston, SC August 2022



**EMERALD**

David Thompson Studio,  
Architecture + Design

**RUBY**

Duren Family  
The Forss Family  
Shamus & Lynn Anne Gillen  
The Criscuolo Family  
Tina & Chris McDonald  
Tyson and Erin Schuetze

**SAPPHIRE**

Ruth and Ed Baer

The Johnson Family  
The O'Malley Family

**AMETHYST**

Nayeon Casey

**TOPAZ**

Andrew & Ginger Colvin  
John & Anna Cusatis  
Da'Lonzo Gibson  
The Simons Family  
Steed Family  
Lisa Jones-Turansky

**GARNET**

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Princess Petunia Pickle Bottom  
Amanda Miller  
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**TURQUOISE**

Ivanov Family  
David and Katy Southwick  
Beth Webb Hart

**Applause**

*presents*

**United States Poet Laureate  
Billy Collins**

**September 15, 2022, 6:30 PM**  
**Academic Magnet Lecture Hall**  
**Poetry Reading / Book Signing**  
**Free Admission**



“The most popular poet in America” - *The New York Times*

**SOA Graduate in the  
International Spotlight**  
by Gracie Pennington

SOA 2010 graduate Jonathon Heyward was recently appointed Chief Conductor of the Baltimore Symphony, starting in the 2023-2024 season. Since his appointment, Jonathon has appeared on *NPR* and was profiled in *The New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *Baltimore Sun* and other high-profile publications. Heyward was a cellist at SOA, and was actively involved in the Charleston Symphony Youth Orchestra and Chamber Music Charleston. After SOA, he studied at the Boston Conservatory of Music and the Royal Academy of Music in London. Currently, he is the conductor of the Nordwestdeutsche Philharmonie in Germany, and will continue to conduct there for the remainder of the 2022-2023 season. “If it wasn’t for the Charleston County School of the Arts,” Jonathon told *NPR* last week, “I certainly wouldn’t be where I am today.”



Senior Jonathon Heyward conducts the high school orchestra

From the June 2010 issue of *Applause*

**From the Editors**

Dear Readers,

Welcome to the new school year at SOA! It's great to see new faces and reunite with friends we last saw in June. For those new to the school, you've probably already adjusted pretty well to your schedule and arts major, a rare feature of this school that provides so many great opportunities. *Applause* is excited to meet you in our future Questions of the Month, features, trivia, and news articles.

*Applause* is proud to publish its first August issue in our twenty-three year history, completed by our new staff in just one week. This year we will release eleven papers from August to our June graduation issue. Since its inception, *Applause* has been funded by our patrons and advertisers, and last year we were proud to garner a record 140 patrons and thirty-five advertisers. This year we hope to beat that mark. Please visit [soa-applause.com](http://soa-applause.com) to support the paper by donating any amount from \$5 to \$500 or to advertise for your business.

Meet this year's staff on pages 6-8, SOA's new teachers on pages 12 and 13, and learn about what your fellow students did over the summer in our centerfold. *Applause* wishes you a great and successful school year!

Your Editors,  
Peter O'Malley, Lauren Holladay, and Giovanni Cusatis

*Peter O'Malley Lauren Holladay Giovanni Cusatis*



**Applause**

since 1999, the official student publication of

**School of the Arts**

*Founded in 1995 by Rose Maree Myers*

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**Cover by Lauren Holladay**

**SOA Calendar**

**Sept. 5th:** Labor Day - No School

**Sept. 15th:** Billy Collins Poetry Reading

**Sept. 19th:** Progress

Reports Distributed

**Sept. 23rd:** Teacher Workday - Early Release

**Oct. 7th:** Teacher Workday - Early Release

**Oct. 19th:** End of First Quarter

**Oct. 20th:** Half Day

**Oct. 21st:** Teacher Workday - No School for Students

**Oct. 24th:** Report Cards Distributed



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**In This Issue**

**Mme. Bednarczyk's Europe Trip**  
by Beatrice Criscuolo

**Where Were They Then: Mr. Miller**  
by Z'Nyah Nelson

**SOA Athletes Participate in Junior Olympic Championship**

## Sass Attack: Back to School Rush

by Beatrice Criscuolo

We've all been there - that ill-fated, last minute trip to Staples. There's that sinking feeling in the pit of your stomach as you realize you need glue for a school project due tomorrow, or notecards to study for a final exam. What's even worse is when it's the day before school starts, and everyone experiences that same exact sinking feeling. There's a mad dash for the last five-subject notebook, a tussle over the best gel pen, an argument about folders. Every year, the same thing happens; every year, you're cursing your memory because you thought there were more page separators under your desk. And every year, the storm clouds outside match your inner anger over standing in line.

Once you've survived your LAST TRIP EVER to Staples, (yeah, right), it's time to organize. Backpack, lunch box, outfit, the list goes on and on. Am I the only one who decides to organize my whole room the night before school? Morning comes - you're bright-eyed and bushy-tailed, no matter how late you stayed up. After first day pictures in the front yard and a surprisingly easy drive to school, the chaos starts. Where are my classes? What is my schedule? Why is my schedule wrong? These questions are present in every single student's mind up until fourth period, when all you have to do is make it until 3:30. And once you do, you're done! You've survived another hectic first day of school: not your first, and not your last.



Beatrice Criscuolo

## Opinion: Will This Matter in Five Years?

by Kenya Hines

It's finally that time where we're back in school. Some people might be happier than others about this, but personally, I'm excited. Not just because I'm finally a senior and will try to justify all of my actions by saying "#SENIORSZN," but also because I get to see my friends again. I was practically pacing around my room with energy waiting to be reunited with them the night before school, but I had one more important thing on my mind: What am I going to wear? If you remember last year's *Applause*, I had a column featuring my advice in relation to current fashion trends. To no surprise, stressing about whether I should wear pants or a skirt that night was obviously more important than my college applications. The next day, when I had finally decided (after asking tons of people their opinion), I realized one thing: This is pointless.

Every year I've spent so much time contemplating which of my outfits will be the one dropping jaws. In all honesty, I devour all my first day of school fits (if we ignore the time in eighth grade I carried around a *Stranger Things* lunchbox). It wasn't until I walked into my first class of the day that I realized people weren't throwing roses and telling me how I'm the most perfect person on the planet because I was wearing earrings from Claire's. I came to the conclusion that no matter what I put on, it wouldn't matter. At the end of the day, I'm just an NPC who laughs really loud and gives you directions to the cafeteria when you interact with me. I don't know if it's a rule to try and look your best the first day to basically say, "Hey, look how much cooler I got in three months," but that's sure



Kenya Hines

what it feels like. I won't lie, I am one of the people who look up "How to glow up overnight?" hoping I magically get a slim face and long eyelashes in two hours solely by drinking lemon water.

How I look affects myself more than it does anyone else, so because of this, I've decided to use the "will this matter in five years" rule. For example: If I trip on my shoe lace in the middle of the breezeway, will it matter in five years? Probably not. Yes, the embarrassment may linger in the back of my mind, but I will be nowhere near this school in the next five years. Hopefully by then I'm kicking it up with Zendaya on a yacht, but who knows?

I write this all to say, don't dwell too much on something that won't matter in the future, especially if it's only for validation from others. Do things because you want to do it, not because your hallway crush might be looking at you on the way to fourth block. When you do things for the satisfaction of yourself, it is a much better feeling in comparison to doing it for everyone else. This is why I now spend twenty-four minutes on my makeup instead of twenty-five. With that being said, I hope you guys enjoy the start of your year, and I encourage you all to keep this "five years rule" in mind for future first days of school, and future every-other-days of school as well.

## How a Piping Plover Spends the Summer Months

by Anna Garziera

Applause *writer Anna Garziera reflects on her summer internship.*

When still a child, it is widely accepted that summer is essentially a synonym for laziness. The days spent sleeping in, glued to a screen, or napping outside are undoubtedly abundant compared to the days spent doing schoolwork or household chores. When I was still a child, I lived for that kind of summer. Still living in Italy at the time, summer usually started with a couple weeks at the seaside, followed by July at grandma's house surrounded by cousins (and children said to be cousins), then the hottest of weeks in the mountains and an amble return to Milan, where that dreaded back-to-school shopping began. In fact, I so craved that workless lazy summer that I would finish my summer reading before summer vacation even officially started. I wanted the full ninety days clean of tasks or commitments. Though I didn't grow much in height, I have grown in spirit since those days, and that's why this June I promised myself I would live life to the fullest this summer, fill each day to the brim, make each hour so rich that time would be forced to slow down. Suddenly, I was seeking experiences.

Sending an application for an internship at Coastal Expeditions turned out to be the best thing I've done for myself in a long time. Coastal Expeditions is a lowcountry outfitter that offers kayak rentals, guided tours, summer camps, boat rides to islands in the Charleston Harbor, and most importantly, is an advocate for conservation and protection of the coastal ecosystem. It was because of this that when I was chosen as an intern, I was completely bewildered.

As it turns out, this experience was tougher and more rewarding than I imagined. Waking up at 6:30 AM every weekday was exhausting



Anna Garziera

and thrilling, but the more I was there, the more I loved it. Being the counselor for fourteen six-year-olds is nothing short of draining. Seeing them learn about the local birds in front of my eyes, however, was somewhat magical.

And now I sit here, as time nears the end of the tenth and final week of the internship, working on my final project that I have been building on from the start of the summer.

Since beginning as an intern, my interest in bird species has quite simply gone from meek to peak. Not only can I now name at least a dozen coastal birds, I also thoroughly enjoy observing them. Last Friday, as I was meandering the creek on my last kayak tour, I noticed that not all pelicans have the same color eyes: some have brown, some light blue. As I later discovered, this difference is noticed in the breeding season, when adult pelicans change to lighter colored eyes while the juveniles' remain brown. This same manner has been used by scientists and bird enthusiasts to study species for decades, and that's how we now have data about both thriving and endangered species, such as the Piping Plover.

Like an American traveling through Europe, the Piping Plover is migratory. The bird begins the year breeding and nesting on the Great Lakes in the spring and migrating to the southern coast in the fall. That's when we see the Piping Plover right here on the coast of South Carolina, looking to spend the winter in warmer weather and attempting to rest for the great journey that awaits him in early spring.



allaboutbirds.org

The Piping Plover

The population of the Piping Plover was not always so low. The downward trends began, of course, with its early interactions with humans; no surprise there. The few laws and efforts to bring those figures back up were futile, and the Plover remains an endangered species to this day. Not only is disruption to nesting in the north damaging, it is also out of our control. The best attempt we can make at conservation on that front is educating the Great Lakes residents about the fragility of the Piping Plover and the importance of their nesting season; even simple calls to action like "keep dogs on a leash," "share the beach," "don't feed the wildlife," and "keep away from nesting sites" can make a difference. The same rules also apply to our local beaches, where interaction with humans can make the birds stressed and unable to rest. At the end of the day, these birds are simple and similar to people. Just as you wouldn't want to be awakened early on a Sunday morning, neither do the Piping Plovers.

With all that said, there is still hope. Just like my grades, the population figures of the Piping Plover are stagnant, not rising, but we can at least be thankful that we're not seeing a downward trend. Most importantly, after years of poor efforts and outright lack of interest in conservation, people are making the first move. This first move is why there is still hope for the Piping Plover. Just like me today, thousands of other enthusiasts are educating on the importance of habitat preservation in our local environment and sustaining the ecosystem that inhabits it.

This internship opened my eyes to the passion we can have towards our native species. More importantly, it made me realize that there is indeed a step between indifference towards nature and awareness and appreciation of nature, but there's a much bigger leap towards adoration of nature that most of us have not made yet. I have finally made that step.

## 8th Grade Graduation Friday, May 27th, 2022 Rose Maree Myers Theater



# Meet Your New *Applause* Staff!

Photos by Carolina Agrest, Lauren Holladay, and Z'Nyah Nelson



**Tai'la Wilson**  
*Sophomore Theatre major*

**Clothes:** always perfect  
**Hair:** awfully bleached  
**Favorite movie:** *Pulp Fiction*



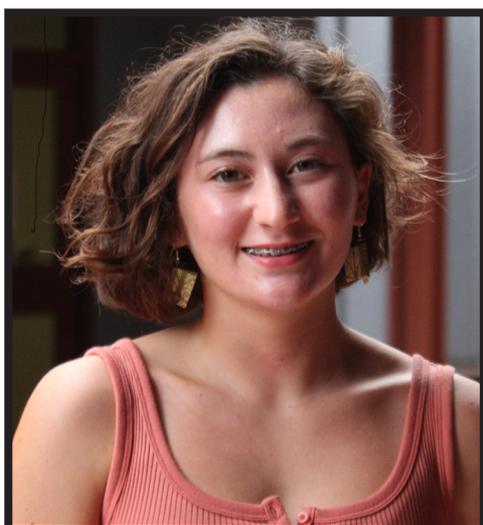
**Anna Garziera**  
*Senior Fashion major*

**From:** Italy  
**Will take you:** kayaking  
**Wishes:** she could do trig identities



**Ariana Lane**  
*Senior Visual Arts major*

**Trying:** To think of something to write here  
**Cannot:** Think of anything to write here  
**Fears:** Creative Writers



**Beatrice Criscuolo**  
*Senior Fashion major*

**Ask me:** what to do for a jellyfish sting  
**Don't force me:** to eat yogurt  
**You'll find me:** winking at my dog



**Catherine Traywick**  
*Sophomore Creative Writing major*

**Special Skills:** making toast  
**Bad at:** Cosine  
**Walks:** too quickly



**Eliana Gross**  
*Senior Visual Arts major*

**Age:** seventeen years young  
**Weakness:** driving  
**I ask of you:** Look upon the bounty of the land of which you walk and ask yourself if you are worthy of all the gifts that it has given you



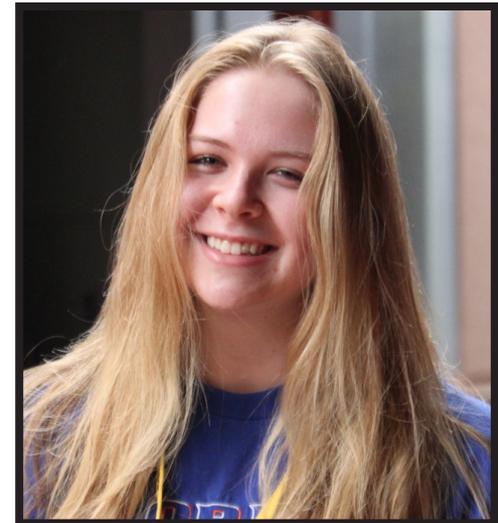
**Manny Stavrinakis**  
*Junior Strings major*

**Name of fish:** Wilfred  
**Foot size:** 11.5  
**Bench:** 135



**Giovanni Cusatis**  
*Senior Strings major*

**Taking bets with Peter:** that  
Manny won't drop out of this class  
**Misses:** 2016 Chicago Cubs  
**Runs:** A lot



**Lauren Holladay:**  
*Senior Visual Arts major*

**Needs:** more sleep  
**Reads:** too much  
**Cooler:** than you



**Peter O'Malley**  
*Senior Strings major*

**Taking bets with Gio:** that Manny  
will drop out of this class  
**Glad:** I don't play viola  
**Colleges, please:** stop spamming  
my inbox



**Riley Borkowski**  
*Sophomore Strings major*

**Has:** A mango allergy  
**Glad:** I don't play cello  
**Scared of:** Elevators



**Carolina Agrest**  
*Junior Strings major*

**Ask me about:** my dog  
**Glad:** I don't play viola  
**Don't:** steal my food



**Gracie Pennington**  
*Senior Strings major*

**Loves to:** compose music  
**Probably:** taking a walk or a nap  
right now  
**Ask me about:** Nintendo games



**Isis Hanna**  
*Sophomore Creative  
Writing major*

**Skills:** Minecraft building and Irish  
dance  
**Ask me about:** Roller coasters  
**Loves:** Secretly writing poems  
about all of my friends



**Z'Nyah Nelson**  
*Sophomore Dance major*

**Loves:** taking pictures of sunsets and things  
that look nice  
**Thinking about:** becoming a therapist or  
photographer  
**Currently:** playing Rod Wave's album on  
repeat



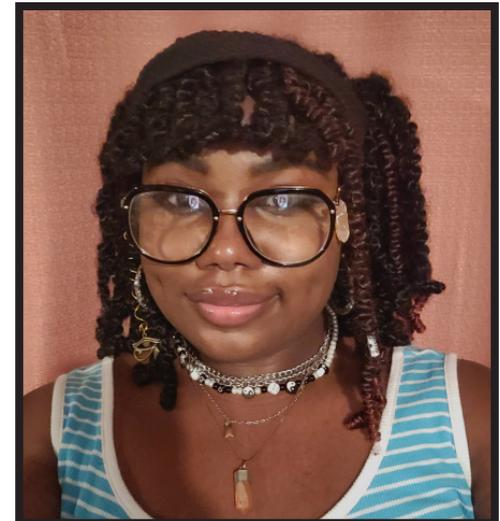
**Pai Petchsuriya**  
*Junior Strings major*

**Bread:** banana  
**Replay:** ENHYPHEN  
**Don't ask:** how I slept last night



**Madison McDonald**  
*Junior Creative Writing  
major*

**Gas:** light  
**Gate:** keep  
**Girl:** boss



**Kenya Hines**  
*Senior Theatre major*

**needs:** a license  
**looking:** for love  
**knows:** only seven zodiac signs

## Horoscopes

by Lauren Holladay



**Virgo (August 23 - September 22)** - You're gonna be fine, Virgo. Don't stress too much about tests this year: study, do your best, and you will do great. That being said... maybe do stress a little about making sure your shoes are tied; I saw you trip on the laces in the hall earlier.

**Libra (September 23 - October 22)** - I'm in love with all of your fits this year, Libra; Friday's pink shoes and Wednesday's green shades were by far my favorites. But, knowing you, you have woken up two hours early every day this past week to choose an outfit, am I right? Just pick it out before bed the night before, bud. Those eyebags could use some rest.

**Scorpio (October 23 - November 21)** - Scorpio!!! The submit button on Canvas is really not that scary, dude. Let's start this year off right. Go back and turn in all of those already missing assignments... after finishing this issue of the *Applause*, of course.

**Sagittarius (November 22 - December 21)** - I'm sorry your schedule isn't the best this year, Sagittarius. Let's make the best of it, though. Spend time with your friends at lunch and make time to hang out after school too. Your friends are excited to see you, even if you don't have math or English together.

**Capricorn (December 21 - January 20)** - Capricorn: please keep in mind that even though school has started, it's okay to continue to have fun during your free time. Stop turning down all of those invites to hang out with your friends at the mall. Studying for tests and working non-stop on homework is great and all, but so is shopping.

**Aquarius (January 21 - February 18)** - Already reminiscing about summer, Aquarius? Blasting your "Summer '22 Vibes" Spotify playlist sadly won't bring it back. Maybe start making a new playlist? Or even better, just put the new *Applause* Spotify playlist on repeat and you'll be good to go.

**Pisces (February 19 - March 20)** - Pisces... I know starting a new school year is difficult. Waking up early and getting to school before the birds wake up is a hassle, but it's going to be fine. Don't yell at your mother, she is only trying to get you out of bed and into your math class; it's not her fault.

**Aries (March 21 - April 19)** - Oh, Aries. Just because you watch all of those 2000s high school drama movies doesn't mean you have to make them your reality. Believe it or not, running down the halls singing Sharpay Evans' "Bop to the Top" at 8:00 AM is not everyone's favorite way to be greeted. We love you, but maybe tone down the *High School Musical* outbursts.

**Taurus (April 20 - May 20)** - I'm loving the positive attitude, Taurus. Your funny jokes and bright smiles never fail to make us happy, and we are excited to see you back at school. That being said, you might want to consider brushing your teeth... I think I saw a piece of broccoli stuck in there earlier.

**Gemini (May 21 - June 20)** - I loved seeing all of your Instagram posts of your vacations this summer, Gemini! Summer,

however, is over now, so it's okay to stop posting about the trip to the mountains you took in June and the hundreds of trips to the beach you took in July... really... it's okay.



**Cancer (June 21 - July 22)** - Don't worry, Cancer. Less than 180 days until summer starts again, right? As excited as you are for summer break next year, make sure you make the best of your time at school! I know the school work isn't always the best, but keep it up. You're doing great, and we are proud of you.

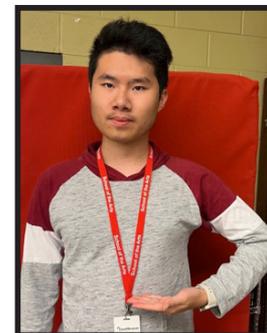


**Leo (July 23 - August 22)** - Summer has passed, Leo, and sadly, your summer birthday has too. Let's look at the bright side, though; you now have almost a full year ahead to start getting your 2023 Birthday Wishlist together! I suggest adding some sunscreen to that list; your complexion is comparable to a tomato after all of those trips you took to the beach.

## Sign of the Month: "Welcome back"

by Ariana Lane

Demonstrated by Rio Dong  
12th Grade ASL & Deaf Culture



1. To begin, bring your dominant hand to your forehead with your palm facing downward.
2. Bring your hand downward in an arch from your head. You should end with an upward facing palm.
3. Raise your hand with four fingers held up and your thumb resting on your palm.
4. End by putting your pointer and middle finger in a typical peace sign shape, with your thumb placed in between the two pointed fingers. Your palm should still be facing outwards.



Ms. Richardson, SOA Visual Arts teacher, painted a mural at North Woods Academy for their senior class.



Natalie Glaser, senior Fashion major, explored Italy with other SOA fashion students.



Alex Park, Band major, visited the "Beyond Van Gogh" exhibit at the Charleston Convention Center with his family.



Emma Stavrinakis, freshman Strings major, had a magical time at Disney World.



Morgan Schatmeyer (bottom left), senior Theatre major, spent a few weeks training in theatre technique at NYU Tisch School of the Arts.



Emily Apostolico, senior Visual Artist, flew solo in a DA-20 and got a private pilot's license



Eliana Gross, senior Visual Arts major, traveled to Israel over the summer.



Ms. Sylvia Edwards, SOA Admissions and Communications Coordinator, and her husband vacationed in Alaska with her sister and brother in law.

# What did SOA do over Summer Break?



Makenna Grozis, senior Vocalist, traveled to Disney World and rode the Rock 'n' Roller Coaster.



Kayla Herrman, senior Visual Artist, attended Camp Woodward in Pennsylvania for skateboarding.



Senior Strings Majors Peter O'Malley, Decker Elam, and Nash Doar spent a week in Vermont and made charcuterie boards.



SOA English teacher Ms. Rhetta Foster visited Karyae, Greece, with her family.



Senior Creative Writer Anne Wilson Varnado visited the Mediterranean and the Swiss Alps on a week and a half long tour to Europe chaperoned by Ms. Bednarzyck and had a great time.



Senior Dance major Melanie Gaillard swam with dolphins on her two-week trip to the Florida Keys.

## SOA Welcomes its Newest Teachers and Staff

### Mr. William “Billy” Grauer, High School Counselor

by Lauren Holladay

**Lauren Holladay: Where did you work prior to coming to SOA?**

**Mr. Billy Grauer:** Prior to SOA, I worked at the International School at Gregory in Wilmington, North Carolina where I oversaw all of the counseling for the Middle School.

Gregory was the only Spanish Magnet school in Wilmington, and I had the opportunity to work with teachers from Spanish speaking countries from all around the world. I also learned a lot of Spanish! Before working at Gregory, I was the department chair of school counseling at Kent County High School in Maryland.

**LH: Did you grow up in the Charleston area? If not, where did you grow up, and what attracted you to Charleston? And why SOA?**

**BG:** I grew up in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania (Go Eagles!). My fiance and I have family in Charleston and instantly fell in love with Charleston when we came to visit for the first time this past October. Also, one of my goals is to move into school administration, and I think Charleston County Schools will do a great job in supporting me in that journey. I chose SOA because I have a passion for music and spent a good bit of time working in the music industry. I am especially excited to see our talented musicians at SOA perform. It has been amazing getting to know all of the students during the first week of school. I look forward to an incredible school year!

**LH: What interests do you have inside or outside of your job as a guidance counselor at school, and to what degree are you able to pursue them?**

**BG:** Outside of school, I really like to go to the beach, go fishing, go to the gym, explore new restaurants, travel, and take our black labrador retriever named Sullivan on adventures. Most of our adventures happen on the weekends, but we are able to stay active at the gym during the weekdays after school. I am currently earning my school administrator’s license at the University of North Carolina at Pembroke, and that takes up a lot of my time.

**LH: Is there any moment or story you’d be willing to share that stands out to**



**you as one of those “this is why I do what I do” moments?**

**BG:** Simply putting a smile on a student’s face is always a “this is why I do what I do” moment. I am in a unique position in that I have a “get to” job as opposed to a “have to” job. I GET TO come to work and learn from our amazing students. I GET TO be in a position where I can empower all students to be their best, most authentic selves. I GET TO have the opportunity to work with some of the best students, teachers, counselors, and administrators around!

**LH: Is there anything else you’d like SOA to know about you as this year begins or any advice that you’d like to offer to students?**

**BG:** Just that I am here for all students and staff and my door is always open. Please do not hesitate to reach out to me. I am here for you!

### Ms. Zoe Roff, Middle School Math

by Peter O’Malley

**Peter O’Malley: What classes will you be teaching this year?**

**Ms. Zoe Roff:** I am currently teaching sixth grade mathematics.

**PO: Did you grow up in the Charleston area? What brought you to SOA?**

**ZR:** I was born and raised here in Charleston (as well as many generations in my family before me). I grew up on James Island, but we have lived in West Ashley for about twenty-five years. I have loved SOA for years. Before I was a math teacher, I worked with arts teachers all over Charleston County and had a lot of respect and affection for the amazing arts faculty and administration here. My son attended SOA in the Band program from sixth grade through his graduation in June of 2022! Coming to teach at SOA feels a lot like coming home.

**PO: How did you become involved in education as a career and how long have you taught?**

**ZR:** I always knew I wanted to be in education, but life took a turn for me after high school and I didn’t immediately pursue it. In 2007, I began working in an administrative support role in the District Curriculum office. I realized



I definitely belonged in the classroom, and while working a full time job and raising my son, I slowly and diligently pursued a teaching degree at the College of Charleston as a part-time student and graduated *summa cum laude* in 2017. I have been teaching since. This will be my sixth year.

**PO: Where did you work prior to coming to SOA?**

**ZR:** I have spent my entire teaching career in North Charleston. Prior to SOA, I taught at Northwoods Middle School, and I loved it very much.

**PO: What do you most want students to take away from your classroom?**

**ZR:** I most want my students to know that no matter their backgrounds, their passions, their abilities, or their difficulties, they are valuable and capable and have the potential to make powerful impacts on their communities. I hope that when they have completed my class that they have built the confidence to persevere through any challenge. I want my students to KNOW that they are SEEN.

**PO: What interests do you have inside or outside the subject you teach, and to what degree are you able to pursue them?**

**ZR:** I love to read, to paddleboard, to enjoy live music, to travel, and most of all, I revel in every opportunity to spend time with my friends and family. I am incredibly lucky to get to enjoy all of these.

**PO: Is there anything else you’d like SOA to know about you as this year begins or any advice you’d like to offer students?**

**ZR:** I think it is important for SOA students to know that they’ve accomplished something rather remarkable and every single student is here because we saw something noteworthy. Sometimes all of us question ourselves, our abilities, our relevance; I hope students know that we SEE you.

### Ms. Katherine Carver, Physical Education

by Beatrice Criscuolo

**Beatrice Criscuolo: Where did you grow up, and what attracted you to Charleston? And why SOA?**

**Ms. Katherine Carver:** I grew up in a place called Dacula, GA, about forty minutes north of Atlanta. I’ve been traveling to Charleston for the last five years and have absolutely loved each trip here. I chose SOA because I wanted to further my professional development and

have only heard amazing things about Brian Johnson. I'm excited to learn from him!

**BC: Where did you attend college and what degrees did you earn?**

**KC:** I went to Georgia College and State University in Milledgeville,

GA, where I received my bachelor's degree in Exercise Science with a minor in Physical Education. I then went to grad school to get my Masters in Kinesiology and Physical Education.

**BC: How did you become involved in education as a career?**

**KC:** From a young age, I've always loved sports and exercise. My major in college was Exercise Science, and I intended on going to Physical Therapy school after undergrad. During my clinical rotations at the PT clinic, I discovered that line of work wasn't for me. My favorite professor suggested I join the MAT (Masters of Arts and Teaching) Kinesiology and Physical Education program, and I ended up loving it! Now I'm a Health and PE teacher!

**BC: What did you like or dislike about your own early education?**

**KC:** There wasn't much that I disliked in school. I loved most classes, especially the classes with the teachers that made learning fun and interesting. I think teachers played a big part in whether or not I enjoyed a subject.

**BC: What were some of your earliest jobs, and what did you learn from them?**

**KC:** Growing up, I was a lifeguard, and I absolutely loved it! I loved being outside by the water and being in the sun, being able to swim during breaks, teaching swim lessons, and getting ice cream whenever the ice cream truck came by. I learned a lot about water safety and the importance of staying hydrated, especially in the sun. I know CPR and have learned skills that could help save lives. Highly recommend!

**BC: What do you most want students to take away from your class?**

**KC:** How important it is to be physically active! PE (and Health) is one of the few subjects in school that every single person needs to be applying the knowledge you learn from it for the rest of your life.

**BC: What interests do you have inside or outside the subject you teach, and to what degree are you able to pursue them?**



**KC:** I love sports, working out, and being active, and my main outlet is ultimate frisbee! Fortunately, I am able to pursue it to a high degree with the occasional soreness or tiredness on the Mondays after a hard practice or tournament.

**BC: How do you encourage students who might be having a hard time in PE?**

**KC:** I encourage them by doing it with them. Any chance I have to participate with my class in any activity, I will do it! If I'm making you do it, I'll do it as well.

## Ms. Kyrene Gerideau-Grant, Assistant Administrator

by Riley Borkowski

**Riley Borkowski: How did you become involved in education as a career?**

**Ms. Kyrene Gerideau-Grant:** I became involved

in education as a career because of the many educators who made a difference in my life and the possible impact I could make in a child's life. This is my second career since graduating college, and it has been the best decision I have ever made.

**RB: Did you grow up in the Charleston area? If not, where did you grow up, and what attracted you to Charleston?**

**KG:** Yes, I grew up in Downtown Charleston, and I graduated from Burke High School as an Honor Graduate.

**RB: What interests do you have inside or outside the subject you teach?**

**KG:** I am currently not teaching here at SOA; I am Assistant Administrator. I am a certified Business/Computer Technology Teacher. I live and breathe business. I equate all things to what I learned through business.

**RB: How has your early education shaped you as a person?**

**KG:** My early education taught me that hard work pays off. I also learned that the teachers I had would be lifelong people along my journey. They left a lasting impression, and to this day, I still contact many of them.

**RB: Is there anything else you'd like SOA to know about you as this year begins or any advice you'd like to offer students?**

**KG:** SOA should know that I am an advocate for children. I believe that we are



in the business of serving children and their academic and social/emotional needs, so with everything I do, I try to consider the needs of the students and how it will benefit them. My advice to offer students is that you should never be afraid to work hard for what you want. You are brilliant and you can achieve what you set your mind to do. Always set goals and make a plan so that it can happen. Write it all down and keep those goals and your plan in a place where you have to look at them daily, and you will find that you are diligently working towards them.

## Ms. Leslie Campbell, High School Science

by Giovanni Cusatis

**Giovanni Cusatis: Where did you grow up and go to school?**

**Ms. Leslie Campbell:** I went to school all over the U.S since my Dad was in the Army, but my family ended up returning to Batesburg-Leesville, SC, where my parents grew up. I graduated from Batesburg-Leesville High School.

**GC: What college did you attend, what did you study, and what degrees did you earn?**

**LC:** I earned a Bachelor of Science in nursing from USC-Aiken and a Masters of Arts in teaching from the University of Southern California.

**GC: Where did you work prior to SOA?**

**LC:** Prior to working at SOA, I was at Septima P. Clark Academy.

**GC: What classes will you be teaching this year?**

**LC:** I'm teaching Biology and AP Environmental Science.

**GC: What are you most looking forward to this year?**

**LC:** Getting to work with such talented and motivated students.

**GC: What are some interests beyond SOA?**

**LC:** I love the beach, reading, and Clemson football.



**Follow Applause on Instagram!  
Riley Borkowski, Social Media  
Manager**

## Madame Bednarczyk and Five SOA Students Spend Ten Days in Europe

by Beatrice Criscuolo

Usually, Madame Bednarczyk takes students on a trip each year. However, her 2020 trip to Switzerland, Italy, Monaco, France, and Spain was canceled due to Covid. This past summer it was finally possible!

Mme Bednarczyk and five students (Ryan and Jack Hinske, Marin Sinclair, Anne Wilson Varnado, and Maile Merklin) traveled around Europe finding adventure at every stop.

During these adventures, according to Mme B, they “froze because it was in the thirties” at the top of a mountain in Switzerland after riding a cogwheel railroad car up a forty-eight degree incline, and then were “sweating in the south of France” a few days later. In addition to reaching great heights in Switzerland, the group jumped off rock cliffs at Pont du Gard in France, and spent lots of time boating and swimming in the Mediterranean Sea. They faced near-tragedy and awe-inspiring views in Cinque Terre, one of Mme B’s “bucket list destinations” where Ryan almost lost his phone, “but miraculously got it back! (thanks to Jack).”

The travelers saw human castles, or Castells, being built in Barcelona, when Castellars climb on top of each other to form a tower-like formation. And, although Mme B freaked everyone out by eating kiwi with the skin on, the group enjoyed delicious-looking macaron ice cream sandwiches in France.

Mme Bednarczyk says she really enjoys traveling with students due to their contagious excitement and cannot wait for her next trip, this summer, to Japan! If your own traveling excitement is piqued, stay tuned for information about her 2024 trip to Thailand, Cambodia, and Vietnam.



From left to right: Anne Wilson Varnado, Marin Sinclair, Ryan Hinske, Jack Hinske, Mme Bednarczyk, and Maile Merklin

Provided

## Where Are They Now?

**Anna Garziera** spoke with **Graham Crolley**, 2015 SOA grad and former Applause editor, about his life in Creative Writing since leaving SOA.

**Anna Garziera:** What college did you attend and what did you major in? How did SOA affect that choice?

**Graham Crolley:** I got my BA in Writing, Literature, and Publishing from Emerson College. I knew throughout my years in Creative Writing at SOA that I wanted to go to college for writing, and because of the familiarity and practice of the craft I was lucky enough to develop during middle and high school, I was able to branch out just a bit and discover a college major that didn’t solely focus on the creative side of writing but technical writing, copywriting, literature studies, and publication processes as well.

**AG:** Where did that take you? What career are you pursuing?

**GC:** As it turns out, school took me to more school! After I graduated from Emerson in 2019, I went on to get my MFA in Creative Writing (Fiction) from Queens College, City University of New York. My career goal at the

time was to get my MFA as soon as possible so I could start teaching creative writing, potentially on the college level. When the pandemic hit, I decided to move back to Charleston and ended up taking a much-needed break from writing work once I graduated remotely last year. Since May of this year, I’ve been working at local kayak and ecotour outfitter Coastal Expeditions where (among other things) I lead tours out of Shem Creek, Isle of Palms, and Cape Romain. While being an outdoor guide was never necessarily a part of my plan earlier in life, I grew up kayaking and getting intentionally lost in the woods, and this has been by far the most hands-on, purposeful, and rewarding job I’ve ever had! Plus, as the universe would have it, I’m essentially learning to teach while out on the water.

**AG:** How has Creative Writing influenced your life?

**GC:** I don’t know if I’d be able to call myself an artist without my time spent in Creative Writing. I’m so privileged to have grown up in an environment that so profoundly fostered creative growth and experimentation. Because of teachers in the program like Rene Miles, Rutledge Hammes, Sean Scapellato, and Beth Webb Hart believing in me and encouraging me, I was able to push myself to continue down the writing path, and now I have my MFA! While I may not be currently working in the field, I know these skills and the passion the program instilled in me will inevitably express themselves in a career setting the way they are meant to.

**AG:** What is the biggest accomplishment (so far) since leaving SOA?

**GC:** I guess the MFA is a big deal. My master’s thesis was the first 100 pages of a neo-Southern Gothic novel, and I feel like young Graham would be pretty stoked about that. Honestly, getting more comfortable with myself and learning to take life one day at a time has been the biggest accomplishment for me since ye olde high school days.

**AG:** Do you have any advice for upcoming graduates?

**GC:** Find a way to do what you love every day! If you don’t know what you love yet, that’s okay! Take care of you, please. Drink more water.



Crolley enjoys kayaking as an outdoor guide at Coastal Expeditions.

Provided

## Where Were They Then?

**Z’Nyah Nelson** sat down with **Mr. Miller** to learn about his life outside of teaching at SOA.

**Z’Nyah Nelson:** Where did you grow up and what are some of your favorite childhood memories?

**Mr. Austin Miller:** I grew up in many places because of my Dad’s job, like Chicago, IL, Louisville, KY, Denver, CO, and Georgetown, TX. When I was in elementary school, we lived in Chicago and I attended a magnet school that went to the Adler Planetarium, the Field Museum, and the Shedd Aquarium to conduct class twice a month, which was AWESOME!



Mr. Miller coaches his football team

Provided

**ZN: Where did you attend college, and what degree(s) did you earn?**

**AM:** I attended Western Michigan University and earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in Secondary Education with a Minor in History. I am currently attending Gardner Webb University to earn my Masters in Educational Leadership

**ZN: What made you pursue teaching, and where else have you taught or coached?**

**AM:** I always felt a calling to educate and raise the next generation. It always warms my heart to see former students becoming strong members of communities and great people! I have taught at West Ashley High School and SOA. I have coached at West Ashley, Porter Gaud, and Academic Magnet.

**ZN: What was your background in sports before teaching? AM:** In high school, I was a three-year letter winner in Football and Track, and four-year letter winner in Powerlifting. I also played football for Western Michigan University.

**ZN: What brought you to Charleston, and can you tell us about your family?**

**AM:** I was at a recruiting fair for teachers in Michigan and a Charleston County School District representative was there who asked if I would be interested in coming down and taking an interview in Charleston. Once I saw the city and met the people, I knew this was the place to be. My wife teaches middle school math at Allegro Charter School of Music, and we have a daughter, Louisa, that just turned two this past Tuesday!

## Applause Asks New Students About Their First Day

by Isis Hanna and Z'Nyah Nelson

**“What was the most memorable part of your first day?”**

### Helen Traywick, 6th Grade Dance

“The most memorable part of my first day was walking out of my first class and trying to get to the other side of the breezeway to dance without getting trampled by highschoolers!”



### Sonya Washington, 9th Grade Dance

“My most memorable thing about my first day in



Mr. Miller and his track team their

Provided

high school was dance, because we got to bond a little, play some fun games, and get to know our teacher!”

### Nathan Wright, 6th Grade Vocal

“I have been looking forward to starting SOA all summer. The best part of my first day was hearing about what we were going to be doing in our major and all of the cool concerts we were going to be doing. I also was excited to get my own locker.”



### Isla McClain, 6th Grade Creative Writing

“I dropped my phone on the bus and I had to go under the seats to get it while everyone was looking at me.”



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## SOA Junior Sings in Vienna

by Giovanni Cusatis

Over the summer, Kayley Genova, junior Strings major, was selected to perform in the High School Honors Performance Series in the renowned Musikverein located in Vienna, Austria. Kayley sang Soprano 1 in the Honors Choir.

Earlier this year, Kayley performed at Carnegie Hall in the High School Honors Performance Series String Orchestra. Kayley mentioned how singing in the choir this summer gave new insight to her musical experience: "After playing in orchestras for so long, performing in this choir taught me some musical similarities and differences which I think are important as a musician."

Kayley was one of 200 finalists chosen out of 10,000 nominations for the High School Honors Performance Series. Finalists met for six days at the end of July to learn repertoire and rehearse under world-renowned conductors. Kayley's favorite part of the experience was being able to rehearse and perform in the Musikverein. "The architecture, acoustics, and rich history of the Musikverein made the experience surreal." Marion Gomez, program director of the performance series, said that "working with these conductors and performing at the Musikverein is a once-in-a-lifetime experience that these students will never forget."

Kayley says that this opportunity brought her a new understanding for music, and she plans to audition again.



Kayley and the Honors Choir performing in the Musikverein

## Theater Department offering "Information Session" for potential *SpongeBob* cast

by Tai Wilson

Applause reporter **Tai Wilson** spoke with SOA Theater instructor **Mr. Derek Pickens** about the upcoming "SpongeBob Information Sessions" to be held on Wednesday, September 7th in the Black Box Theater. SOA will present the musical in the Rose Maree Myers Theater, February 16th - 19th.

**Tai Wilson:** Could you offer a brief summary of what'll happen at the session?

**Mr. Derek Pickens:** We will include a discussion about what to expect at the auditions, along with a Q&A. We will also go over what is expected of those who are cast in the production. For those who are unable to attend, information packets will be made available in both digital and physical form.

**TW:** What is your advice for students who are new to auditioning? Some prep tips? Words of encouragement?

**DP:** I would say that if you are new to auditioning, especially for a musical, to come to the information session. During the session, I will talk about how to make your audition as successful as possible and try to quell any fears. The most important thing I would want people to know

is that the production team that will be overseeing the auditions wants you to feel comfortable and at ease - we are kind and welcoming and want everyone to do well!

**TW:** What are the main benefits of attending the sessions?

**DP:** The main benefit students will take away is the feeling of being prepared. We will go over every step of the process and make sure everyone understands. We don't want anyone to feel that they had a bad audition because they felt like they were blindsided by part of the process.

**TW:** When and where will the information session take place?



**DP:** The information session will take place on Wednesday, September 7th at 3:45 to 5:00 PM - the day after Labor Day. The event will take place in the Black Box Theatre, which is in the first door on the left when you walk into Building 3 (the Theatre, Dance, and Fashion hallway).

**TW:** When will the actual auditions be taking place, and how can students sign up for them?

**DP:** Auditions for the musical will take place on both Monday, September 19th and Tuesday, September 20th. Auditionees will only need to attend one of these days. Student's will sign-up through a Sign-Up Genius, where they will get to pick the date and time that works best for them. This link will be shared via QR code on audition posters, as well as a link shared in the high school Google Classroom. If you are unable to attend the auditions - please contact me via email at derek\_pickens@charleston.k12.sc.us to see if we can work out a lunch time audition. It's not a guarantee, but we will do the best we can.

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## SOA merger with Academic Magnet brings new opportunities for student athletes

by Giovanni Cusatis

Students at SOA finally have the opportunity to participate in sports at Academic Magnet. Student athletes now have the choice to compete either for Magnet or their home school.

In the upcoming fall season, there are fifteen SOA students competing in a variety of sports at Academic Magnet, including football, swimming, volleyball, and cross country. Those students are Emma Stavrinakis, Ava Whitener, Gwenny Svendsen, Ben Fancher, Maggie Largent, Tyler Nelson, Simon Ford, Niko Mackie, Finley Bowers, Sophia Barden, Mery Traxler, Dylan Sweeney, RJ Jenkins, Ayden Caffarel, and Cameron Leach.

In addition to our student athletes, five SOA teachers coach for Academic Magnet; Mr. Brian Johnson is the boys cross-country and track coach, Mr. Austin Miller is the defensive coach for football, Ms. Jacqueline Healy is the head boy and girls swim coach, Mr. Brett Johnsen coaches boys basketball and girls softball, and Mr. Ernest White is the

head football coach.

SOA's student athletes are eager to play, and the coaches are just as excited as the players: "With the dedication that our students give to their majors, many of our students never thought they would be able to be a part of a high school sport," Ms. Healy says. Although students had the opportunity to play for their zone school, many did not feel that same sense of community as they have competing with a team that shares the same campus.

It is going to be an exciting fall season for our athletes and coaches. Cheer them on!



**Emma Stavrinakis has switched from West Ashley's Cross Country team to Academic Magnet**

## SOA Student Athletes Compete in Junior Olympic State Track Championship

SOA sixth grader Joshua Simonis, seventh grader Annabella Cusatis, freshmen Emma Norton and Luciano Cusatis, and senior Giovanni Cusatis all competed at the South Carolina Junior Olympic State Track Championship in late June at Winthrop University. All five athletes were among the best in the state in their various events.



**Joshua Simonis**



**Giovanni Cusatis**



**Luciano Cusatis**



**Anabella Cusatis**



**Emma Norton**

### Summertime and Travel Trivia

by Gracie Pennington

#### Questions:

1. What is the hottest U.S. State?
2. What three Zodiac signs occur during summer?
3. Where did fireworks originate?
4. What percentage of watermelons are water?
5. What is the largest city in the world?
6. What is the largest museum in the world?
7. What vitamin does direct sunlight give?
8. What is the birthstone of August?
9. What does SPF stand for?
10. What U.S. holiday marks the end of the summer season?

#### Spotify Playlist

by Beatrice Criscuolo

Visit "SOA Applause" on Spotify or scan the code below to listen.



### Aidan Penna Senior Creative Writing Major



Provided

5/10

### Delaney Kirk Senior Strings Major



Provided

4/10

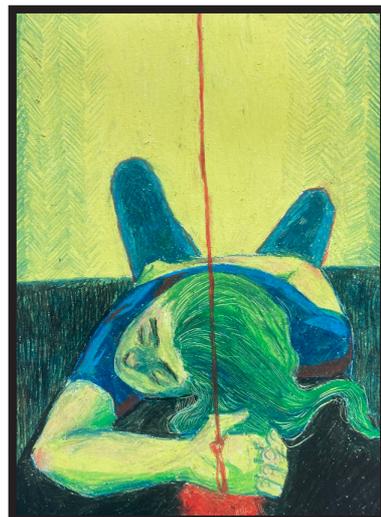
#### Answers

- |                           |                           |
|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. Nevada                 | 10. Labor Day             |
| 2. Cancer, Leo, and Virgo | 9. Sun Protection Factor  |
| 3. China                  | 8. Peridot                |
| 4. 80%                    | 7. Vitamin D              |
| 5. Tokyo                  | 6. The Louvre             |
| 6. The Louvre             | 5. Tokyo, Japan           |
| 7. Vitamin C              | 4. 92%                    |
| 8. Ruby                   | 3. China                  |
| 9. Sun Protection...?     | 2. Cancer, Leo, and Virgo |
| 10. Labor Day             | 1. Florida                |

## Student Artwork



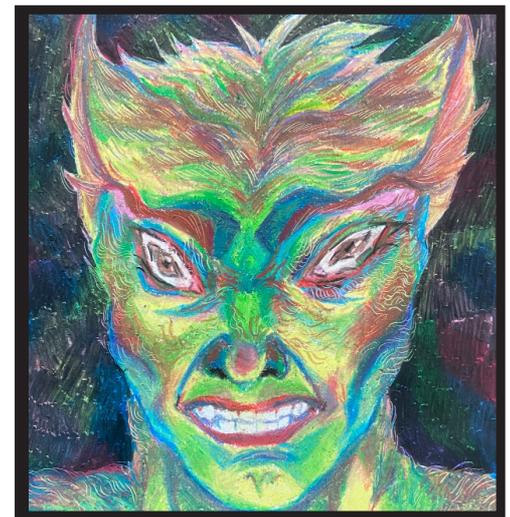
"Deep Conversations,"  
by Abby Short, 12th  
Grade



"Bloodline,"  
by Margeaux  
Burkhardt, 12th  
Grade



"Broken Dreams,"  
by Abby Short, 12th  
Grade



"The Becoming,"  
by Margeaux Burkhardt,  
12th Grade



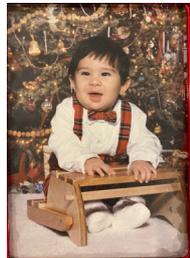
# SOA Word Search

Pegasus  
 RMMT  
 Applause  
 Art  
 Strings  
 Writing  
 Dance

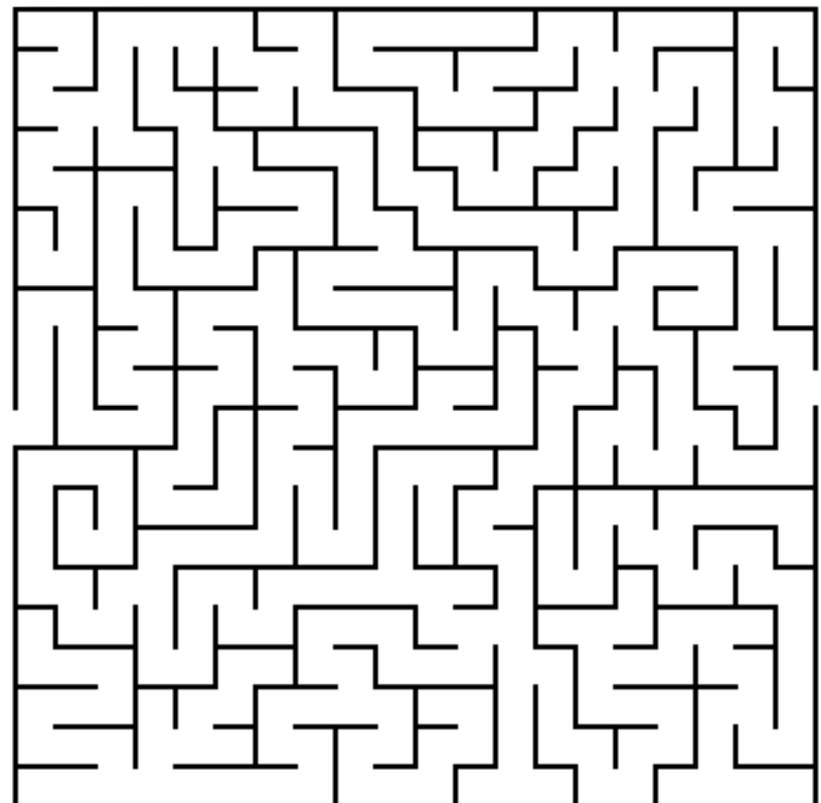
Theatre  
 Band  
 Vocal  
 Piano  
 DeafHOH  
 Fashion

# SOA Sudoku

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



# Help Mr. Miller find his football!





"I went to Lithuania."  
Ula Katinas, 6th grade  
Vocal



"I wouldn't stop giggling after  
riding the biggest rollercoaster  
at Kings Dominion."  
Daniel Gross, 7th grade Band



"I toured Elvis' recording  
studio."  
Juliet Ladd, 8th grade Vocal



"I got a new roof."  
Mr. Clark, Interventionist

## What was the most interesting thing you saw or did this summer?

by **Eliana Gross and  
Isis Hanna**



"I saw The Dead Kennedys and I am  
pretty sure I saw Guy Fieri in the mosh  
pit. I also landed my first kickflip."  
Amelia Counts, 9th grade Visual Arts



"I went on a literary  
pilgrimage"  
Ms. Hart, Creative Writing



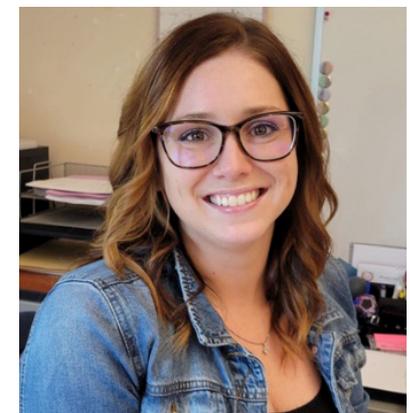
"I went to Greece and visited  
an island called Hydra."  
Caroline Henley, 10th grade  
Piano



"I went to the Space Needle,  
Glass Bridge, and Dollywood."  
Reagan Villegas, 11th grade  
Dance



"A kid at Splash Zone got himself  
stuck in one of the tube slides while  
I was working one day."  
Griffin Culp, 12th grade Theatre



"I went and saw the other half of the  
United States: the Grand Canyon,  
Colorado, all those places."  
Ms. Whittemore, High School Math