

# Shen-Val-Lore

The Student Voice of Shenandoah Valley Academy

Shenandoah Valley Academy

May 8, 2024

Volume 93, Edition 4

## The Heart of Samana Salome Tembo

Shenandoah Valley Academy was blessed with the opportunity to have another mission trip with a different spin to it. This year's mission trip was shared with the Music group in the beautiful Dominican Republic! The students and staff spent several months praying and fundraising for the group. The events leading up to the trip included several meetings in the auditorium, determined students working at the mission sale every Sunday, and thousands of letters being sent to family and friends for donations. Senior Rebecca Reis found the whole process of preparing for the mission trip to be stressful but also a blessing because although things were getting tough, the Lord provided a solution for her problems.

Fast forward to March 13, 2024, the day of the mission trip. The day started off at 6:00 am in the cafeteria where all the students came for a delicious breakfast followed by everyone loading the buses at 6:45 and heading to BWI airport for our flight. The bus ride was about two hours. You could hear a lot of excited students and see a lot of sleepy students catching up on their sleep. When we first arrived at the airport, everyone was instructed to take two luggage bags and take them into the airport, which was followed

by the chaperones looking for their travel groups to begin the checking in process. After everyone was checked in, they all headed to the boarding gate. While waiting to board the plane, students were either calling their family and friends or buying food.

The flight to the Dominican Republic was amazing. The airline provided movies on our phones and gave us snacks and drinks. After the five-hour flight, we finally arrived in the Dominican Republic where we were greeted with scorching heat. While at the airport, the mission and music people split into two buses, then met up for lunch at one of the Seventh-day Adventist churches in the country. The church members blessed the students with delicious rice and beans, plantains, and fried cheese. Senior Kika Auguste describes the food as very flavorful and appetizing. After lunch the students split ways again, with mission trip heading to Samana and music to Punta Cana.

The ride to Samana was very eventful. There were several students shouting and laughing while other students tried to get more rest, but regardless, the view was amazing. Upon arriving at the beautiful Hotel Figaro, the students collected their bags, filled up their water bottles, turned in their phone and passport, and went to their rooms for a good night's rest.

The following day was amazing. The sun was out, and the students had the opportunity to see Samana in daylight, which was beautiful. Before beginning the day, the students met in the cafe of the hotel where they had breakfast and planned the rest of the day. The day consisted of a few students going to work at the school while the other students worked at the construction site.

When the students arrived at the school, they were greeted by the kids with big smiles but shy faces. The school day started with the kids lining up to sing the country's national anthem before heading to their classrooms. The SVA students followed to the classes they were helping with, where they sang and played with the kids and helped the teachers. When the SVA students first came into the classroom, the kids were mostly shy, but it did not take them too long to get comfortable. After the SVA students finished working at the school, they went back to the hotel to get geared up for the worksite. When they arrived at the worksite, everyone was ready to work. Although it was hot, the heat did not stop the students from doing the Lord's work.

Because the students worked very hard, they were awarded beach time after working on the construction site. "It was so refreshing and relaxing

being in the water after a long day of work," says Junior Juri Castellanos. The students worked very hard and were able to get the church finished a few days early. Because of this, they were able to enjoy whale watching, souvenir shopping, and more beach days! The students were also awarded with two excursion days where they went to a waterfall and more beaches.

After a week of labor, the students rested on the Sabbath at the Central Seventh-day Adventist Church. The church members greeted the students with so much love and showed their gratitude towards them. This was also an amazing opportunity for the students to connect with the church members.

The mission trip was very rewarding. Being able to give was a blessing for so many. To make the experience even more memorable, the church members and some of the school staff came to the hotel and said their goodbyes to the students.

## Upcoming Events

### May

- 2 - 6 New England Trip
- 5 SAT
- 6 - 10 Teacher Appreciation Week
- 7 Worship Min. CCLC
- 10 ROK Hayride Vespers
- 11 Spring Music Concerts
- 12 SA Picnic
- 16 - 17 Senior Exams
- 17 Awards Chapel Outdoor Vespers
- 18 Flower Eventide Handshake Video Yearbook
- 19 - 22 Senior Class Trip
- 20 - 22 Final Exams
- 24 - 25 Graduation Weekend
- 31 Faculty/Staff Agape Feast

### August

- 14 RA Arrival
- 15 SA Officer Arrival Early Registration
- 16 - 17 RA/SA Retreats
- 17 Teacher Dedication
- 18 Registration
- 19 Classes Begin
- 19 - 22 School Orientation



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# The Sound of Music

Iona Kantzer

The journey began on a chilly Wednesday morning as almost 100 students trudged from their respective dorms to board the buses that were to transport them to the Baltimore/ Washington International Airport. Despite the lack of sleep and early start, there was a tangible buzz of excitement among the students. They were headed to the Dominican Republic! Flying into Punta Cana, the students eagerly looked out the plane windows to see the crystal blue water of the Caribbean. Coming from the cold and rainy weather in New Market to the humid, 85-degree weather in Punta Cana was a shock, and one that all were very willing to embrace. After sorting out Music and Mission groups, the two coach buses were loaded and began the long drive to the first destination.

The Mission team went straight to Samana, where the church members and building site were eagerly waiting, while the Music team arrived at its first stop, an Adventist camp called Brisas del Mar. Pulling into the camp at well past midnight, the students unloaded their luggage and made their way into their respective cabins. Though difficult, the Music group rose the next morning at 5:00, ate a delicious breakfast provided by the camp, and made their way to the Dominican Adventist University (Universidad Adventista Dominicana). Senior Maetzy Flores commented on the first sunrise at the camp saying, “It was so beautiful! The best way to start our trip.” Arriving at the large campus church, the orchestra quickly set up chairs and began tuning while the choir practiced on stage. As the orchestra was preparing, Associate Music Director Kelly Wiedemann began to panic. In all of the fuss and flurry of packing, the music stands had been left back in New Market, which meant that the orchestra

members had nothing to hold their music! Thankfully, the students adapted quickly and began pulling out instrument cases and extra chairs to do the job. The first concert at the university was a success, with almost 1,500 other high school seniors in attendance for UNAD’s College Days.

Afterward, the music groups were invited to join in the afternoon activities and thoroughly enjoyed playing volleyball, basketball, and even a bit of baseball. Returning to the camp just in time for sunset, Mr. Biaggi took the students down to a small beach to cool off and enjoy the ocean for a little while before they headed back to rest.

Friday morning, the buses were off again, this time to two Adventist schools, one of them being the oldest Adventist school in Santo Domingo! There were many adventures to be had along the way and even some mishaps. The first school that the Music group performed at had four flights of stairs to lug the heavy keyboard, speakers, timpani, and other equipment up. While performing, the orchestra and choir surprised Ms. Wiedemann by playing and singing Happy Birthday to her, instead of the piece she was expecting! At both schools, students were delighted by the smiling kids and the chance to make some new friends. Although Friday was very busy as the groups rushed from school to school, the students embraced all of it. They quickly adapted to unlikely situations and readily stepped up to help when things did not go as planned. An example of this was when the coach bus got stuck in a small alley on the way back to the Adventist University. The bus driver was working hard to get the bus turned around but unfortunately could not make it because of a car parked on the corner curb. In the words of sophomore

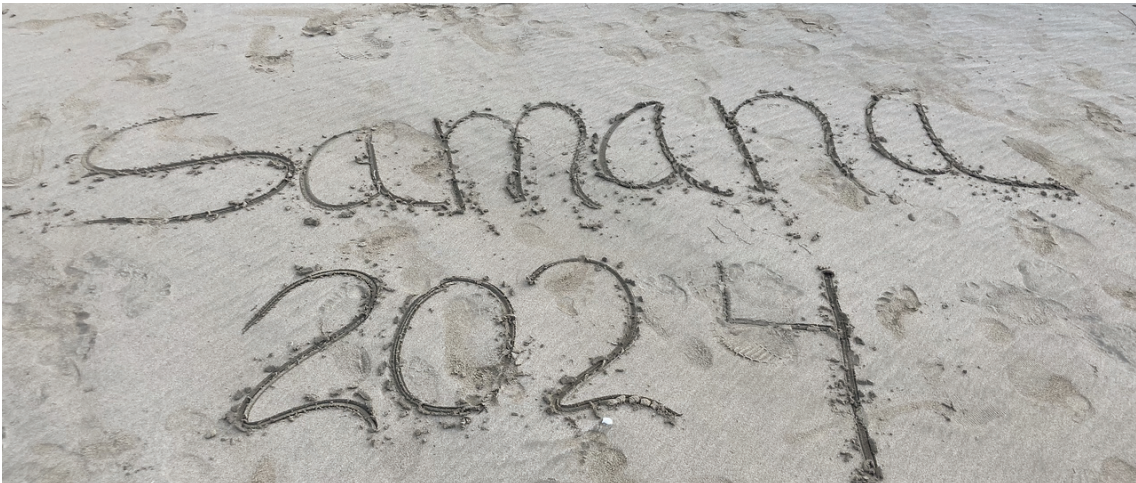
Belmaris Mercado, “It was silly, and a little bit annoying!” The boys were more than happy to lend a hand when a cry went up to move the car. Almost unbelievably, they picked the car up and moved it just far enough out of the bus driver’s way to allow the bus through!

At each of the schools, the staff set out snacks and juice for the hungry and tired performers to enjoy. What a blessing the students received from this simple act! After the two school performances, the music group made their way back for vespers at the UNAD and welcomed the Sabbath with the university students. Sabbath morning brought the music group to the largest crowd they had ever performed for when the bus pulled into Puerto Plata, a stunning coastal city. Nollynn Dahlberg, a junior, exclaimed, “That was my favorite day of the whole trip! You could feel the Holy Spirit moving and it was a very revealing moment for me to see how much music affects people.” As the students sang and played in front of the 2,000 people who had gathered there in Puerto Plata for Global Youth Day, many were struck by the passion and enthusiasm that the crowd brought to worship with them. A tired but happy group arrived in Samana later that night, eager to join with the Mission group and see the new church.

From Sunday on, Music students were kept busy with teaching music classes and aiding the teachers at the Adventist school (Colegio Adventista La Esperanza) or applying stucco and laying concrete blocks. The week was filled with the joy and smiles of the students, delicious empanadas, music, and the fulfillment of hard work for God. Freshman Collin Dauer was very enthusiastic in his praise, saying, “God was working tremendously through students, staff, teachers,

pastors, construction, schooling, literally everywhere you looked God was working!” With the combined efforts of the Music and Mission teams, the church building went up much faster than expected. Almost two excursion days were spent hiking to a stunning waterfall and sailing out to Samana Bay to whale watch.

All of those moments culminated on the final night as the church members and students trekked up the hill to the dedication of the new church. As sophomore Andres Munoz fittingly put it, “Our final performance in the newly constructed church was a night I’ll never forget. That final rendition of the “Hallelujah Chorus” was one of the most memorable moments of the trip. God was surely moving.” What a privilege and blessing it was to share the sound of God’s music. Prayers were answered on both sides; a choir singing in the new church, a desire to serve God and accept a life of service. This trip was a truly unforgettable experience that has forever connected the Shenandoah Valley Academy family to the people of the Dominican Republic.





# Spirit Week

## Princess Alcantara

Spirit week is when teachers and students dress up according to daily themes and then celebrate those themes in and outside the classroom. Many love Spirit Week because it is timed perfectly near the end of the school year, when every day seems so mundane and boring and suddenly every day becomes so fun and different. Spirit Week is designed for students to loosen up and show their school spirit through their crazy outfits, hair, and accessories.

The first day of Spirit Week was Decades Day, when everyone dressed up in outfits that represented different decades such as the Seventies, Eighties, or Nineties. People who dressed up from the Seventies wore button-down shirts, band t-shirts, glory blouses, bell-bottom jeans, platform shoes, and boho, beaded, accessories. Those who dressed from the Eighties wore baggy clothes, hats, vibrant colors, and goofy glasses. Lastly, those from the Nineties wore butterfly clips, flannel shirts, fanny packs, and chunky sneakers. The week got off to a good start not only with Decades Day but also with the

eclipse. Sixth period classes got out early and everyone was given eclipse glasses and taken out to the front campus to enjoy the eclipse. Even though it was cloudy, those watching were still able to get a glimpse at the eclipse when the clouds moved out of the way.

The second day was Monochrome Day, and participants dressed up in one color of their choice. Most people were easily able to dress in all black but others were more creative. Some wore the neutral colors such as brown, white, or gray. Almost the entire rainbow was represented on this day except for purple.

Day three was crazy hair day, which is usually a hit or miss; either you go all out or you sit this day out. A favorite look was Tori Zimmerman's octopus hairstyle. She wore a high bun with eight pipe cleaners sticking out as legs and two googly eyes. Several others had similar ideas.

On day four, the Student Association decided to keep a tradition going that

was started last year called Anything But a Backpack Day. The name is fairly self-explanatory, but basically, students were encouraged to bring anything but their backpacks to carry their books around. One of the most favored and creative "anything but a backpack" was Jackie Vidal's. She got permission from her mom to bring her little sister, Ariana Vidal, a second grader at Shenandoah Valley Academy Elementary School, as her backpack for the day. She wore an SVA polo and khakis which made her fit right in with the rest of us. Some other "backpacks" were strollers, microwaves, laundry baskets, shopping carts, scooters, and coolers.

Last but not least was a continuation of the tradition of Dress Like a Staff Day. This year I decided to dress as Mrs. Patrick and I was surprised to see that Eman Matagaro also dressed as her. This was an easy task for me since I had dressed as Mrs. Patrick my Freshman year. Eman, Mrs. Patrick, and I wore flowy black dress pants with a black bodysuit and a gray cardigan. My favorite look-alikes were Samantha Trigo dressed as Mrs.

Biaggi and Alex Cuellar dressed as Mr. Biaggi.

Student Association Secretary Naomi Coreas said, "Spirit week is always one of my favorite SA events because you get to see everyone's creativity and pride for their class. As an SA officer, it is always important to us to take into account what the student body enjoys dressing up as while also maintaining tradition. For that reason, days like Anything but a Backpack day and staff look alike days are always kept the same. My personal favorite day is Anything but a Backpack day because it is funny to see what everyone brings. For days like crazy hair day and decade day, I decided to step out of my comfort zone a little bit and change my look either with makeup or changing my hair color. I think the student body did a great job of sharing their school spirit and I enjoyed being part of it."





# Church Connect

## Nolynn Dahlberg

The students who had signed up for Church Connect at the very beginning of the year took advantage of being able to share in worship at Valley Fellowship church in Woodstock, VA. This fortunate group has met with this church around five times throughout this first year of Church Connect, and each and every student has expressed wonderful feedback regarding his or her personal experience, which covers several aspects. Omaris Mercado said, “It was fun, and I met a lot of people. We did FLAG camp and it was awesome because we got to sing and teach kids about God.” It truly was such a sweet experience to be involved in activities where we became more familiar with the reality that people of all ages have a longing for something bigger, and reaching out in the community gave us the opportunity to develop relationships with others. Throughout the various trips, the students became more eager to go participate in Church Connect, and excited for the warm welcomes that greeted them on Sabbath mornings. A seemingly simple yet very inspiring action that affected one of the students was how the congregation never failed to show great enthusiasm for study the Word of God. Members opened their Bibles on their laps and flipped through its pages with dedication. Their desire to be involved with the new features of the family was utterly meaningful.

Luis Ac described just some of the wonderful blessings received when doing God’s work: “Church Connect was very fun and I enjoyed getting to know other people, and knowing how I can help better. My favorite memories were the delicious potlucks, visiting the nursing home, and most definitely working with FLAG camp.” During one Sabbath reserved for Church Connect, the group spent the afternoon singing and socializing with some of the elderly folk at a nursing home. Similar to what Michelle Atuti said, “Yes, I would do it again! I loved Church Connect so much! It was a really fulfilling experience and I feel like it really got me closer with God, especially the FLAG camp stuff and the things we did with kids. It made me consider that maybe I really want to do something like that with kids in my future.”

Being able to spend the Sabbath interacting with those who are not as able as yourself, and using your time to bring joy to people is something so fulfilling on its own. The kids witnessed what may have appeared at first as cold faces or stubborn spirits melt into smiles that were attentive as they listened and watched the music being sung in front of them. Some individuals even voiced their song requests with passion, proceeding to go into detail about how they knew the song and why it was their favorite hymn when they were younger. Afterwards, the younger generation

dispersed, each introducing themselves to the people living at the nursing home. They shared stories and found out interesting facts about their lives, such as their past career, where they grew up, and what they were like when they were in high school. One junior relayed how they had been conversing with one of the patients, and discovered that they had been a director of a big choir and lived for many years where that student is currently living, so they were able to create a bond from what they had learned about the other.

Iona Kantzer stated, “So, I just really loved hanging out with the kids. That’s the first thing. I loved getting off campus for a little bit, having a ministry other than on campus. I really enjoyed connecting with other church members and making new friends. But FLAG camp was definitely my favorite. Even if it was for one afternoon, I felt like I could actually make a difference in the children’s lives, even just making them laugh and smile, or introducing them to Jesus when doing the skits. I love the skits.” Naomi Pakkianathan goes on to say, “My favorite part was FLAG Camp, because even though I am not really that good with kids, I still felt like I was helping them in a way, and it was very fun.” When engaging with the kids who showed up to FLAG Camp, whether it was inviting them to sing and learn new hand motions to songs, helping

them decide what snack to choose, encouraging them in completing their craft, or guiding them in making it across the field during an activity or game of trees come, each one would open up and begin to show curiosity by asking questions about what the skits meant, what is a Christian, how did we know all these songs, etc. It was easy enough to get attached to the little ones, but working as a staff, you also got to observe how the parents of the children reacted to the whole change of scenery for some of them. They showed appreciation for providing their kid with a safe place where they were surrounded with love and care. The biggest, most humbling part was being able to testify to how God works on hearts. He turned a student who was dreading to sacrifice a Sabbath afternoon at school hanging out with friends, into a joyful heart, ready and willing to do God’s work in order to serve Him and to be of service to others. By being a part of Church Connect and teaching others about fully relying on God, you ultimately are the one who learns to fully rely on God. Camila Soriano declared, “Church Connect was awesome sauce. 10/10 would go again. I loved helping with FLAG camp. Also, the church members were mad nice. Mr. Man (Pr. Reed) is the coolest guy alive. Ima do it again next year, trust. Signing off, see ya later chap.

# 30-Hour Famine

## Jonathan Pelote

A famine, usually associated with struggling and helplessness, is used by World Vision to fund relief for countless children around the world. The 30-hour Famine is a campaign to fundraise for children overseas who deal with hunger every day. It involves a group of people who get sponsored and do not eat for 30 hours. During that time, they participate in events that teach them how life is for some kids. They also go out into the community to collect non-perishable items for food banks. Our efforts at Shenandoah Valley Academy, led by Mr. Leeper and Pastor Harley, raised around \$600 and brought in more than 1,000 articles of food for our local food banks. This event, however, does not only benefit people overseas or out in the community– this event leaves lasting impressions on the people who participate in the event as well. The 30-Hour Famine made the students acutely aware of the hunger that many kids around the world go through each day.

Belmaris Mercado, referring to the hunger she experienced during the 30 hours, says that she was not very hungry at all; she attributes the activities and her disposition to not eating a lot for her lack of extreme hunger. Belmaris, however, does not represent the large majority. Aleks Ullrich gives a more accurate and perhaps relatable account of the 30-hour Famine, saying, “It hit Saturday night, but I was looking forward to

the buffet, so it was fine.” Although having a stomach bug during the mission trip and hardly eating before the famine, he, like Belmaris, also did not struggle too much in completing the challenge. Another student, who will remain anonymous, was not able to complete the challenge. He resolves to try again next year, hopefully with better results.

Making it through the 30 hours without eating would have been impossible if not for the activities, which were arguably the most impactful part of the event. Steve Paz says that, “Activities and groups made it possible to reach the goal,” the goal being to not eat during the 30 hours. He reflects that the small groups provided support to get through the event successfully, and he says these groups allowed him to grow closer to fellow students. Steve also loved reaching out to the community. He sees the importance in community involvement and in a summary of his experience he leaves us with a short summary: “It was wonderful.”

Steve is not the only one who found the activities impactful. Mrs. Pelote and Gisele Castillo both agree that the water filling activity was, along with being disgusting, efficacious in illustrating the struggles of people in less fortunate conditions. Mrs. Pelote, who has been living in a third world

country for the past six years, also pointed out how realistic the activity of finding things in the grass was. She says the activity is a great illustration of the struggle to get food in third world countries. It is an illustration that shows both the scarcity of food in these countries, and the competition to find anything of worth to trade or sell for food. These activities will no doubt leave a lasting impression on all those who were involved.

Esther Rapley, a senior, when questioned whether past experience helped her with getting through the famine this year, answered with a flat “I suppose.” She says this is because this famine was the hardest famine due to her feeling sick before the famine started. Although the experience as a whole was not as enjoyable as past famines to her, she pointed out that talking to the community members was a highlight of the event.

People who participated in the famine were not the only ones who were impacted by the event. Avery Browne did not participate this year because he had a solo to sing for Sabbath and wanted to be able to praise God to the best of his ability. Though he did not participate, he says that it was heartwarming to see people bonding. He says, “I think suffering brings people together,” a sentiment most can agree with. Mr. Leeper was asked how he felt about leading out

his first famine and he said that he was extremely grateful for P.H. and the other adults who helped. He was worried about his being able to succeed though the weekend but was happy to report that he felt good all the way through. He says that he was reminded of the importance of fasting and that he should do it more often.



# Andrews Trip

## Nicole Kidin

At 5:00 in the morning on March 28, about 50 seniors boarded a bus provided by Andrews University to make the estimated twelve-hour drive from Virginia to Michigan. We arrived at Andrews at 4:30 after a technology and sleep-filled drive, almost two hours earlier than expected and to shockingly pleasant weather.

Mrs. Shelley, the visit’s coordinator, welcomed everyone warmly into the Advent Prayer Center, where all the SVA seniors stayed. Nicole Kidin describes the APC, saying, “It was so nice; it felt just like a little hotel on campus and was perfect to accommodate the whole group.” After dinner at the admittedly very nice dining hall, everyone explored campus for a while before retiring for the first night.

Friday morning marked day two, the first real day to explore and discover more about the campus. All students gathered first to eat breakfast in the cafeteria and then ventured on to a brief meeting with Pastor Shane at Pioneer Memorial Church. After this, everyone was split into groups based on the majors he or she was interested in and taken to two academic appointments. The group of students who attended the aviation department even got to fly around for a while. Iona Kantzer states, “It was an amazing adventure! Actually being able to get in a plane and fly gave me

a taste of what it might be like to take aviation at Andrews. Flying over the beautiful Lake Michigan was so cool and getting to do a touch-and-go right by Notre Dame was...insane. 10/10 would recommend!”

Once all the academic appointments had concluded, SVA reconvened for a financial aid and enrollment presentation and lunch in the cafeteria. After the meal, the students were given free time to explore the campus, use the wellness center, or relax in the APC. Sarita Sanchez and Mia Rivera agree that this part of the trip was, “Spectacular!” “Nice wellness center!” “Actually good food and cafeteria!” “Fun!”

After some exploration and relaxation, the students attended dinner and returned to the APC to prepare for vespers, an Easter concert at the Howard Performing Arts Center on campus. It was truly a spectacle when the group arrived at the show 30 minutes late and missed over half of the performance! Fortunately, the part of the show that the group attended was familiar– the same piece SVA’s choir performed for our Christmas concert, “Illuminare.” Afterward, the group returned to the PMC to join the remainder of the regular vespers program.

Sabbath morning was a slow but lovely start, for all students had

“breakfast in bed” goody boxes. The students then chose between three different church services, the Easter program at the PMC, a gospel church service, or a contemporary service. Following church was a nice lunch in the cafeteria and a small dessert get-together for former alumni attending Andrews to meet with the current seniors.

The final adventure of the trip was the Easter musical play, entitled “Through His Eyes.” It was a truly touching play and starred one of our own SVA alumni, Caleb Rivera. The play outlined the story of the Gospel but focused on some of the conflicts of other characters such as Judas, Peter, and the Pharisees as well as Jesus. It was a very well-thought-out concept written mostly by the students at Andrews, and executed nicely between dance numbers, songs, props, and spoken content. After the play, SVA was quickly rushed out of PMC to eat a late dinner at

Azul Tequila Mexican Restaurant in St. Joseph. The meal was provided by Andrews and was a delicious and fun end to the trip. Finally, bright and early on Sunday morning, all staff and students woke up to board the bus for the long trip back to SVA.

The Andrews trip experience was truly enlightening. Students came out of this experience with new insights

# Bowling

## Joseph Pelote

Eight buses started down Interstate 81, en route to an evening of food, bowling, and face painting. The school arrived at Valley Lanes just after noon on Sunday, March 10, and we walked in, expectations varying. Some came to play and win while others studied for upcoming tests. The night started off mellow as people were figuring out how to bowl again. As the night went on, everyone started to loosen up and began playing for real. It was announced earlier that there was a cash prize for whoever got the highest score in one game. After an hour passed, the game officially started. At first, a couple of people started off strong, having a score of 90 and more, but as the night went on, more and more people started getting over 100. Raquel Gomez, a first-time bowler, achieved a score of 118 and she was ecstatic. She was later interviewed to get her opinion on the whole night, saying, “At first I went into the night not expecting much. I didn’t plan on playing because I have never played before, but after I gave it a try I couldn’t believe that I got one of the highest scores. But Erika beat me, which annoys me, by only two points. It’s okay. I had a lot of fun; more than I thought I would have.”

The evening continued with the opposition growing more intense. While many people were trying their best to get the best score, others were spending their time painting

their friends’ faces and just enjoying themselves. There were many faces that had elaborate work done on them. Bowling was not the only option available at Valley Lanes. There were multiple people who, despite boys’ and girls’ club efforts, decided to play pool for the majority of the night. The billiard room was a hit for many of the attendees. They spent a couple hours playing with their friends. The most frequently used thing that night was the food bar, with the line wrapping around the corner to get fries, burgers, or drinks. Most people used that commodity to the fullest, ordering large fry after large fry. The evening took on a life of its own when students’ cameras came out. Pictures varied from silly to Instagram worthy. Many memorable pictures were taken that evening. Avery Browne said, “Overall I enjoyed the night a lot, and I think one of my favorite parts was just being with my friends as well as taking pictures. I think this was an amazing last Boys’ and Girls’ Club event to close out my senior year.”

On the competition side of things, things were heating up. Many students kept beating each other and running to Dean Kristi to see if they had the winning scores. The competition got intense as the night drew to a close. Student after student went to Dean Kristi with their new and final number. It started in the low 100’s and steadily climbed to a

score around 130. Overall, the staff came out on top with Dean Hunt taking the win for the adult men, and Mrs. Pelote coming out on top for the women. Dean Hunt achieved the fabulous score of 187 in just one game! Mrs. Pelote had an amazing score of 140. The student winners of the night were just behind the staff. Marco Torres came out on top of fierce men’s competition and took home the prize money. Erika Lopez won the wild women’s competition by just a few points. The winners were announced, and it was time to head home. Most, if not all students, regardless of if they wanted to go, had an amazing time at Valley Lanes.



# Junior Religion Trip

## Lia Thomas

This year, the Junior class had the amazing opportunity to visit the General Conference headquarters, Ellen White’s Estate, and the National Museum of American History on April 22. Our first stop was the General Conference, where we split into two groups of around 20 students. The tour began in the lobby, where we admired paintings of the Old Testament on the right side. Moving forward and taking a right turn, we entered a small hall showcasing the life of Jesus on the right and Jesus’ resurrection on the left. Turning around, we learned about the life of Paul on the right and saw a stunning statue on the left depicting the second coming of Christ with people from various cultures. Passing by the statues, we entered the auditorium on the left side, where worship services, school performances, and their Spring meeting are held. Exiting the auditorium and walking past the statues, we encountered the AWR station and a large globe in the center of an open area. Surrounding the globe was information about our Adventist community worldwide.

Later, we were guided up the staircase where we encountered ADRA figures. Right in front of ADRA is a prayer chapel. This is used when an employee is facing difficulties, and there is even a prayer request box so that others can pray for their colleagues. As we walked along the hallway, we noticed an exhibit of an Adventurer’s uniform and badges on our left. Moving further down the hallway, we came across the artwork of Harry Anderson, a renowned illustrator for Bibles. The tour guide informed us that Anderson would have individuals dress up as characters from the Bible so that he could accurately depict the stories he was supposed to illustrate. He also created illustrations for the Mormons but declined to illustrate anything other than stuff from the Bible. On the left, we were able to view the tools he used, and some of his work was also on display. Continuing down the hallway, after making a left turn, we saw one of the earliest paintings of

Jesus with children before arriving at the entrance of the Hope Channel, a Christian radio station.

After we finished exploring the second floor, we made our way up to the third floor. On the left side, there were large windows that overlooked a small garden on the roof of the building. We spotted an old goose’s nest and a variety of plants. Looking out the window, we could see the storage unit for the GC across the parking lot. Behind it, there were numerous gifts from people around the world. As we walked further down the hall, we came across a wall dedicated to the former and current GC presidents. Continuing our tour, we reached one of the many “mini museums” on the other side of the floor. The tour guide then led us to the Public Affairs and Religious Liberty department, where we learned about the leader’s role in protecting religious freedom. Turning right, we encountered two different departments—legal on the left and minister on the right. The tour continued with a display of vice presidents and the Codex Sinaiticus copy, followed by a series of turns down the hall. Another right turn led us to a collection of Bibles, including a print of the smallest one. Turning left, we saw paintings depicting the creation week alongside mathematical and scientific formulas. Another left turn brought us to the presidential section of the building, where we watched a video introducing the current president. Turning right, we saw the gifts the president had received during his travels. On the left side of the hall, there was a wall displaying the vice presidents.

Once we completed exploring the third floor, we made our way back to the second floor, and stumbled upon the Sabbath school section, adorned with pin badges and a wall showcasing the youth directors. As we continued down the hallway, we encountered a wall dedicated to family ministries. And just beyond the family ministries, we discovered the Adventist Review department, the sole department of

its kind. It was at this point that our General Conference tour came to a close.

Once the tour ended, we made our way to the basement for the Ellen White Estate tour. The first group accidentally started on the wrong side of the building, so we started in a room filled with screens displaying games about Ellen’s life, drawings, and a family portrait. As we turned left, we came across a colorful picture of Ellen. Then, on the left side, there was a small room with a stool and typewriter, showcasing how Ellen wrote her books. Turning right, we encountered a famous painting of Ellen White’s first vision, with Jesus in the center and real people walking on a narrow path. Across from the painting, there was a wall displaying Ellen’s writings, including her first writings of the Great Controversy. We sat on benches in between the wall and the painting, watching an educational video about Ellen White’s visions and the influencers of the SDA community. After watching the video, the guide instructed us to participate in a game. The guys were required to extend their arms and hold a copy of the Bible that Ellen used to teach her friends. This particular Bible weighed around 18 pounds, and Ellen would keep it raised for approximately 20-30 minutes while educating her friends about God.

To our left, as we gazed at the painting, there stood a vault filled with Ellen’s written work, protected by an impressive security system. In case of a fire, the system would detect smoke, seal the vault, and remove all oxygen from the room. This way, even if fire managed to enter the vault, it wouldn’t survive without oxygen. Besides her writing, the room housed her marriage certificate, a video explaining Ellen’s concept for the vault, the famous beasts poster, and statues from the book of Daniel and Revelation. On the other side of the vault, there were two glass covered filing cabinets filled with more of Ellen’s writings, photos of her, and many other items.

After stepping out of the vault, facing away from the wall where Ellen’s initial writings were displayed, we noticed a section dedicated to how she transformed her visions into written form. It was intriguing to learn that Ellen lacked formal education and had to abandon school at the tender age of nine. Consequently, she relied on numerous editors to refine her work, with her husband being the first. Remarkably, Ellen wrote everything by hand. One quote from that particular side of the wall resonated deeply with us. Ellen herself uttered these words before her passing, “Whether or not my life is spared, my writings will constantly speak, and their work will go forward as long as time shall last.”

On the right side, while still facing the wall covered in writings, there is a timeline that spans from James White’s birth to Ellen’s passing. If you take a turn towards that side of the hall, you will come across a realistic representation of what Ellen’s room might have looked like on the left, and a timeline on the right. They even went as far as to include a real bed in the display. This hallway also provides information about the fashion trends of that time and how Ellen influenced a more modest style within the SDA community. There are also informational screens and details about other pioneers. As we continued down the hall, we encountered a room designed to resemble one of Ellen’s homes from the outside, complete with a wooden cabin aesthetic. Inside, we learned about the types of dishes commonly cooked during that era and discovered many other interesting facts about her homes in general. This room eventually led us to another room that only had a screen, and after passing through it, we found ourselves back in the lobby.

Following this, we ate a lunch of chips and dip before moving on to the National History Museum. While there, we wrote down some of the facts we learned in the different exhibits. After wandering around the museum for a while, we loaded back into the buses and returned to SVA.





# Junior/Senior Banquet

## Cami Prudencio

Junior/Senior banquet is one of the events that many upperclassmen look forward to in the school year, and this year’s banquet did not disappoint! The students learned about the theme of the banquet when Mr. Short was suddenly “killed” while giving an announcement during chapel. The junior class officers then revealed the theme of the banquet as Clue, a popular murder mystery board game. This theme was different from any other banquet the students have experienced at SVA, which brought more excitement to the event.

The venue was at the American Hotel in Staunton, VA, which is right by a train station and several historic looking buildings. It was decorated beautifully to match the theme of Clue, with vintage items such as typewriters, books, and bottles. When the students first arrived, they were greeted by junior class officers. Then as they walked into the dining area, they had to find their assigned tables by shining a special light on the place cards written with invisible ink. Every table was named after a room or a character from Clue, such as the conservatory room or the character Ms. Peacock. After everyone was seated, the seniors were recognized by having their detective names called out, as well as their defensive weapon or place where their escapades would occur. After the thoughtful introduction, dinner was served. Jambalaya with rice was the main meal, with mushrooms, asparagus, and rolls as the sides and cake as dessert.

Students were then given free time to take pictures, play games such as giant Jenga or Clue, or just chat with friends. There was never a boring moment during this banquet, especially because of the main activity: the scavenger hunt. Each table became a team that worked together to figure out clues regarding the “death” of Mr. Short. The officers read out the several teachers at SVA who were suspects—Pastor Harley, Mr. Biaggi, and Mr. Lechler, and their accomplices, Ms. Wiedemann, Mrs. Patrick, and Mrs.

Short. These suspects and accomplices all had valid reasons to be suspects in the case. Then, the groups were handed envelopes containing the first clue on who could have killed Mr. Short. This clue was a picture of something around the venue, such as a picture of a window frame of one of the surrounding buildings or a bench by the train station. The groups had to figure out where the picture was taken, go to that location, and find their next clue there. To find these clues, groups had to do a good amount of walking (or running for some groups) all around the area. The envelopes also contained a piece from a picture of the crime scene, and when all the clues were found, groups could connect the pieces to see the whole picture. There were six clues to find, but it did not take long for groups to find them all. In the end, students found that the murder weapon was a Nerf gun, and Mr. Short was killed by Mr. Lechler due to a dispute regarding funds for the baseball team’s jackets. His accomplice was Mrs. Short, whose reason for helping Mr. Lechler was because of a lack of finances for new horses.

The banquet came to an end soon after, but not without a special surprise for the seniors. To bid them farewell, the juniors split into two lines as they all held sparklers. Then the seniors came out and walked through the lines with their own sparklers as everyone cheered for each other. Salome Tembo, a senior, says “This year’s Junior/Senior banquet is the best one yet! The food was delicious, the scavenger hunt was so creative, and the venue had so many places to take pictures. The weather was great, and it was the perfect day for this event. My favorite part was the great time I had with my friends. Thank you to the junior class officers for planning this banquet. This was a great ending for my senior year.” Juridia Castellanos, a junior class officer, says “Our main goal for this banquet was for the seniors to enjoy and be satisfied with the outcome of their last banquet. Sometimes it would get stressful, but it was still fun to plan. I

had the most fun decorating the venue. I hope the seniors enjoyed their last banquet.” This banquet was a lot of fun for the students and is one that they will remember for a long time.





Happy Birthday!

May

2	Georgia Wakeman	26	Daniela Muñoz
	Miranda Jenkins	28	Asa Johnson
4	Lia Thomas	29	Kurtis Ma
	Guerdy Thomas	30	Alex Cuellar
6	Dylan Jimenez		
8	Raphael Perez		
	Derek Alcantara	1	Kaydin Kinney
11	Conner Kabler	2	Rosmaily Peguero
12	Camila Soriano	3	Milagros Mojica
14	Gabriel Do Carmo Rodrigues	6	Aleks Ulrich
		8	Zaida Galva
17	Neijer Ortiz Paredes	9	Camille Hamilton
19	Naomi Coreas	12	Omaris Mercado
	Chloe Juncal	16	Brandon Padilla
22	Thomas Rogers	17	Kevin Quintiana
23	Emanuel Matagaro	28	Pablo Hernandez
24	Heily Vigil	29	John Mathai
25	Princess Alcantara	30	Daniel Hernandez
	Diara Bonilla		Quinaze Matthew
	Camden Prudencio		
26	Sara Barrueta Briceño	31	Jim Perez
	Abigail Dugre		

June

2	Juan Tarazona Caro
6	Ruth Alejandro
8	Camila Rojas Sofia Segura
14	Ella Short
15	Steve Paz
16	Tabor Parker
18	Joshua Franco
20	Belmaris Mercado
22	Faith Richardi
25	Ethan Kareti

SHOUTOUTS!

to Mr. Short and P.H. for being Mission Trip MVPs - the student body  
to Chole Junk for the amazing newspaper - Becky G. & Ni-chole  
to Mrs. Fátima for the great food all year - the student body

If you want us to publish your shoutouts, email them to:  
chloe.juncal@svasda.org  
- Chloe Juncal, Newspaper Editor

SENIOR WORD SEARCH

J	H	A	N	D	S	H	A	K	E	I	O	D	P	N					
O	S	P	A	C	Z	U	D	R	B	E	X	V	W	G					
A	T	G	K	L	N	H	Y	S	N	X	S	O	R	S					
H	O	N	O	R	S	K	D	O	F	A	G	O	T	C					
A	G	N	I	C	O	L	I	P	H	M	R	T	O	H					
N	N	A	S	C	B	T	T	R	S	S	D	L	L	O					
O	W	H	E	K	A	F	A	L	I	B	L	G	Y	L					
S	C	F	R	U	I	H	M	P	Z	E	W	N	R	A					
H	A	K	D	L	N	J	O	U	G	R	O	O	M	R					
I	P	A	I	I	M	S	L	E	L	P	I	D	I	S					
N	R	V	B	T	U	C	P	M	O	N	M	P	T	H					
G	T	O	W	N	L	J	I	U	E	L	K	J	C	I					
O	S	T	A	W	A	R	D	S	E	C	N	I	R	P					
N	O	R	S	E	E	M	T	R	I	N	Y	G	W	Q					
C	E	L	E	B	R	A	T	I	O	N	R	N	O	P					
ALUMNI					COLLEGE					GRADUATION					SCHOLARSHIP				
AWARDS					DIPLOMA					GPA					SENIOR				
CAP					EXAMS					HANDSHAKE									
CELEBRATION					GOWN					HONORS									

If you have poetry you want to be published, send it to:  
chloe.juncal@svasda.org  
(If you would like it to be anonymous, please let us know)

All photos were taken from shenandoahvalleyacademy.smugmug.com

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