



We're Back!

Special Alumni Weekend Comeback Issue

Inside:

Guest Editorials by *Pioneer* alumni

Principal's Editorial

Sponsor's Editorial

Meet the New Pioneer Staff

Sports & Entertainment News

Teacher-Alumni Profiles

SLA's Oldest Living Alum!



SOUTH LANCASTER ACADEMY

Serve. Love. Achieve.

Mr. Bisson Loves SLA (and SLA Loves Him)

By Maya Thomas, *Pioneer* Staff Reporter

If you are a student at SLA, you are probably familiar with the kind, gentle Mr. Bisson. He's been a math teacher here at SLA for many years, and I think it's safe to say that we all appreciate his kind, giving spirit.

I sat down with Mr. Bisson to get more info on the man we all know and love.

How long have you been teaching at SLA?

I started in the year 2000, so, 23 years.

What inspired you to become a teacher?

I mean, I wanted to improve kids' education, but I became kind of obsessed with the idea of teaching. I just kept thinking, "Oh, I would do this and that if I were a teacher". I couldn't stop thinking about it.

Have there ever been any teachers in your life who inspired you?

Continued on Page 4



Mr. Kevin Bisson, SLA's resident math wizard.
Photo Credit: Anya Neidigh

Crusaders Sports Update

By Andrea Baldwin, *Pioneer* Staff Reporter

South Lancaster Academy offers many sports, including unisex cross-country, girls and boys volleyball, girls and boys basketball, and boys soccer. Last year was definitely a very good year for our sports program. Between the girls volleyball team and both basketball teams, a lot of trophies were added to the trophy case. We even need another trophy case because there isn't any more room left in them. And this year's teams are very committed to their sports and so far are off to a good start.

Last year, the varsity basketball teams attended the Hoops Classic Tournament at Southwestern Adventist University (SWAU) in Texas.

Lots of fundraising and time was put into being able to go. A big thanks to everyone that helped fundraise and donated money. We all appreciate it so much.

We made the most out of it by both teams winning and brought home first place trophies.

Mia Demartino and Elon Prather got MVPs for our teams. It was definitely a great achievement.

The previous year the girls got second place to North Tampa Adventist Academy and the boys got 4th place. But at least we got the Spirit Award for sportsmanship.

The Hoops Classic Tournament was so much fun and a great part of our basketball season.

The 2023 Girls Varsity Basketball team additionally won Girls over-all best score in our conference and won Conference playoff trophy, with an additional appearance in state play-offs.

For the first conference all-star game, several of our lady crusaders were selected to play: Mia DeMartino, Karleigh Collins, Bella Brito, Junia Alce, and Andrea Baldwin. They formed a team with Bethany Christian Academy (BCA) and played against Trivium and Immaculate Heart of Mary and won.

For the Boys varsity basketball team, they won the conference playoff game trophy and also appeared in state playoffs. Some of the boys were also selected to play in the conference all-star game.

The men's Crusaders team took a big hit as six of their team members were seniors and graduated in May 2023. But we will see what this season brings for them as many of the juniors (now seniors) will get moved up.

The soccer and cross-country teams also bring us pride. The Class of 2023 seniors included Nathan Neidigh as the captain and Matthew Seymor being the fastest.

Meet SLA's Oldest Living Alumnus

By Andrea Baldwin, *Pioneer* Staff
William Fairbank Baldwin, Sr. (aka Bill) is the oldest living alumnus that graduated from South Lancaster Academy. He was born on May 29, 1926 at Stoneham Memorial Hospital and was raised in Sudbury, Massachusetts. His parents were Mira and Clarence Baldwin and he had one sibling, Louise.

During his childhood, William enjoyed carpentry and farming. His family owned a farm and raised animals and crops. He was born a Methodist but at the age of 9, he and his family became Seventh-day Adventists.

He attended Meadowbrook SDA School in Hudson, MA. His favorite teacher was Ms. Adams, his first-grade teacher, because "She treated us with kindness and was like a mother". He then transferred to SLA in 1941 for his Junior and Senior years of high school. At that time, SLA was a part of Atlantic Union College. SLA was in a small building on the AUC campus. It wasn't until years later that the current buildings of SLA were built.

When William attended SLA, there was no gymnasium which meant no sports. But he didn't have time for it anyway because of his responsibilities on the farm. "I would have liked to have played basketball at some point in high school or in my life but I never got around to it." Years later, his son, Shawn (class of 1989) played basketball at SLA and his granddaughter, Andrea (class of 2025).

Continued on Page 7

Continued on Page 2

Pioneer Alum: Student Journalism Is Practice in Truth-Telling

I was eight years old when I made up my mind to be a writer. I already had the kind of love for stories that keeps children tented beneath blankets with a book and a flashlight long after their bedtime. I read because I wanted to know more about the world, but I wrote because I needed to make sense of the world.

Though I couldn't have known what I was doing at the time, I processed through grief, family dynamics, religion, illness, gender roles, and growing pains all in an adorable notebook with a puppy on the cover. Through writing I was able to put to words the difficult things going on around me, even as I was only beginning to comprehend them.

Our young people are growing up into an increasingly fraught and confusing world, and they are desperate to make sense of it.

THE MOMENT WE NO LONGER HAVE A FREE PRESS, ANYTHING CAN HAPPEN. WHAT MAKES IT POSSIBLE FOR A TOTALITARIAN OR ANY OTHER DICTATORSHIP TO RULE IS THAT PEOPLE ARE NOT INFORMED; HOW CAN YOU HAVE AN OPINION IF YOU ARE NOT INFORMED? IF EVERYBODY ALWAYS LIES TO YOU, THE CONSEQUENCE IS NOT THAT YOU BELIEVE THE LIES, BUT RATHER THAT NOBODY BELIEVES ANYTHING ANY LONGER.

HANNAH ARENDT
POLITICAL PHILOSOPHER

It is demanded of them—via smartphones, news cycles, and social media—that they confront fear and violence on a daily basis. When they try to make change, to do something, we tell them that their voices don't matter yet.

We tell them that they do not know more about the situation than we do.

We tell them that they do not know more about the situation than we do. We tell them that they cannot possibly understand what goes on in the “real world,” as if their world is any less real than ours.

Overwhelming helplessness and despair can quickly turn them towards apathy, but putting a pen in their hands gives them their power back.

Student journalism is a way for young people to make sense of what is happening around them. It gives them control over their own narrative. It shows them that their voice and what they have to say matters.

It assures them that what is important to them is important. More than that, it makes them into thinkers. It requires that they ask difficult questions of their peers, their parents, their teachers, and themselves. It trains them not to flinch away from uncomfortable truths, but to meet them head on.

From politics to the pulpit, these days it seems like truth matters less and less. Even some of our most trusted news sources, who pride themselves on their journalistic integrity, are owned by corporations looking to further their own selfish interests.

Continued on Page 6

The Importance of Student Journalism

An Editorial by SLA's Journalism Sponsor

As best I can tell, the last time anything was published under the title of *Pioneer* was during the 2015-2016 school year, and that was in an online format. And to be honest, I'm not entirely sure how long it's been since an issue of the *Pioneer* has actually been printed—as in, paper and ink.

Either way, I'm happy to be a part of bringing it back, particularly in time for Alumni Weekend.

There's a lot I could talk about in reference to this project, but I'll focus on only three things.

First, I want to thank the students who took the plunge and decided to take the journalism elective this year. It's because of them that you're holding this paper in your hands. Andrea Baldwin and Maya Thomas (juniors) and Anya Neidigh and Patric Zabala (sophomores) are the newest members of the *Pioneer* newsroom—a tradition that goes back to at least February, 1959. That was when the first issue of the *Pioneer* appeared in print.

Before that issue, student journalism on SLA's campus was a subsidiary function of Atlantic Union College's journalism program.

Believe it or not, the move to establish a student newspaper staffed by and for South Lancaster Academy students was a controversial topic. It initially failed to pass a student vote, and even when it did pass, it was by a fairly narrow margin: 191-159.

That it passed at all was due largely to the efforts and advocacy of SLA students themselves. This is an important point that should not be overlooked, particularly since the *Pioneer* is published by and for a Seventh-day Adventist institution.

All too often, we overlook the fact that Adventist journalism is as old as Adventism itself. This is the second point that is worth emphasizing in this issue.

In *Life Sketches*, Ellen G. White recalled a meeting that took place not far from South Lancaster, in Dorchester, where she first delivered the instructions that the church ought to print “a little paper.” That “little paper” turned out to be the *Present Truth*, which over time has morphed into today's *Adventist Review*. And the publishing ministry became one of the Seventh-day Adventist Church's hallmarks.

Baldwin: SLA's Oldest Living Alumnus

Continued from Page 1

William graduated with the class of 1943 from South Lancaster Academy. He also attended Atlantic Union College the following school year. His wife, Geraldine Colley, also went to SLA and graduated from SLA in the class of 1958.

William and Geraldine went on to have four children. All four attended and graduated from SLA. Their oldest son, also named William, graduated in the class of 1984. William Jr. went on to have a son, whom he also named William. William III graduated in the class of 2021. Three generations, three “William Baldwins”; that is quite a legacy!

William and Geraldine were committed to Adventist Education. They sacrificed in order to have all of their children go to SDA schools. But to them, there was no other option.



Over the years, they have been able to watch, with pride, their children and grandchildren be a part of SLA. Currently, their daughter, Cheryl (class of 1981) works at SLA and their daughter-in-law, Joanne (class of 1989). Their granddaughter is a junior (and the author of this article).

William's faith has always been a very important part of his life, especially through the hard times. One of the hardest points in his life was when he was struck with “Guillain-Barre syndrome”. He developed it after getting the flu vaccine. He was paralyzed for over 2 years and was unable to walk or function normally. He slowly recovered but not fully.

“Work hard all the time and do your best”, is the advice that William would like to share.

Today, he is 97 years old. He still lives in his home town of Sudbury, MA with his wife, who he has been married to for 65 years.

God bless you, William!!

Photo Credit: Andrea Baldwin

Appearing: William Baldwin I (center), William Baldwin, Jr. (right), William Baldwin III (left).

Continued on Page 4



Ariana Grande (Image Source: Wikimedia Commons)

Break Up With Ariana. I'm Bored

By Maya Thomas, *Pioneer* Staff Reporter

No one can deny that Ariana Grande is an extremely talented woman. With her iconic hairstyles, multiple musical awards, impressive vocal range, and acting skills (if you call Nickelodeon shows quality acting), there's no denying she's a force to be reckoned with.

At age thirty, Grande has amassed a net worth of \$240 million and has broken 20 Guinness world records for her musical accomplishments. She's one of the most followed women on Instagram, and the fourth most streamed female artist on Spotify (Taylor Swift is number one. Nice work swifties!).

Nevertheless, being rich, famous, and talented doesn't mean you have a good personality. Just ask Andrew Tate, the internet's favorite alpha male (he has no talent, but that's beside the point). I say all that to make a point: sorry Victorious fans, but the former "Sam And Cat" star is a huge diva.

Arianators, strap yourselves in. You're not going to like what I've got to say.

If you're a fan of Ari, you probably have a lot of affection for the songstress. Chances are, she feels the exact opposite about you. Not that she'll have the decency to say it to your face. According to an insider, she was all smiles when she was signing autographs for fans one night... until she got into the elevator. The second the doors shut, she immediately said "I hope they all die". Well, that was very nice of her.

Anyway, other than the fact that she wants you dead, she probably won't be thrilled to meet you, either.

One dad has a very, uh, shall we say interesting story about her.

His daughter and a young man won a contest to meet the "superstar". They were instructed to give interviews about how great it was to meet Ariana *before* she arrived. When she did show her face, she just toyed with her hair while she was swarmed by her assistants.

The boy had won the contest with beautiful violin covers of her songs. He had wanted to present them to her, but security snatched the violin from his hands. So, that dream didn't last long.

As for the man's daughter? She showed Ari a picture they had previously taken together, and Grande demanded that they retake it. She didn't even smile and spent 15 seconds with each winner. You know, the least she could've done was spend at least a minute with them. I mean, it's only sixty seconds out of your day. If you're going to snub your fans, at least have the decency to make it an even number.

Fans spend so much time and money on her, and this is the thanks they get?

It doesn't stop there, because Ari won't just take your money. She'll take your man too, if you give her the chance. Naya Rivera had a lot to say about Ari in her autobiography. Rivera let herself into the house of her then-fiancee, Big Sean. When she went inside, you'll never guess who was sitting on the couch. Big Sean and Ariana started dating shortly after Naya and Big Sean broke up.

Yeah, that's most definitely a coincidence.

Continued on Page 5

The Cultural Significance of Barbie

By Anya Neidigh, *Pioneer* Staff Reporter

For those of you who don't live under a rock you've most definitely heard about the Barbie movie. At the very least you've seen hordes of girls wearing their pink outfits and shouting "Hey Barbie!" across the street at each other. The Barbie movie that came out in July has become this year's biggest box office hit with a profit of 1.38 Billion dollars.

The movie is about Barbieland, a matriarchal society where the Barbies control everything and the Kens are ignored. Having the reverse of our own society brings more attention for things typically unnoticed.



Image Source: Elena Mishlanova on Unsplash

I have watched this movie twice and enjoyed it even more the second time, but what makes it such a good watch? Firstly, while this article is mostly about the serious elements of Barbie, most of the movie was laugh out loud hilarious. It includes some of the best one-liners like, "I'm a man with no power, does that make me a woman?" and "To be honest, when I found out the patriarchy wasn't about horses, I lost interest anyways." Also the sound track was amazing.

But the Barbie movie is so much more than just an entertaining watch, it has helped bring out the culture of girls everywhere. The diversity helps bond us, the speeches move us, and the story resonates with all of us. Seeing those hordes of girls dressed in pink may seem silly but being able to embrace something so closely viewed with femininity? That is priceless.

Continued on Page 5

Grande's POV: Show a Little Grace

By Patric Zabala, *Pioneer* Staff Reporter

Santa tells me singer Ariana Grande has been receiving backlash due to fans and others stating that she is a rude person. Many state that she is unapproachable, rude to her fans and staff, but I could say the opposite.

In recent research a fan said that Ariana was very approachable. She was sweet and nice to her even though she disrespectfully popped in front of her screaming about how she loved her new song. Ariana replied with "that's so cute, hehehe thank you so much." She even replied by complimenting the fan's hair. Another fan has stated that she went to meet her at her local radio station. The interaction was short, but Ariana kindly hugged her and asked how she was doing, and posed for a photo while the radio station owner was rushing the superstar.

There are many that say that she is selfish for not doing anymore tours, but on the contrary, her so-called "Arianators" forget that she was depressed.

There was a bombing in the Manchester arena on May 22, 2017, during her concert.

The bombing left 22 people dead and many injured. Ariana Grande remembers the bombing to this day. She posted a picture of a heart made of words saying "although grief is ever-present and our relationship to it is constantly evolving and expressing itself in different ways every day, year round.... I know that this anniversary will never be an easy one. Please know that I am thinking of you today. Manchester, my heart is with you today and always."

Writing this she showed that she showed sympathy and sorrow for the families and all her fans that were lost that day. She showed that she loves every single one of her fans. After the bombing the popstar was never the same and never went on another tour out of being scared of something like this could happen again.

You might think she is rude and selfless, but remember that she was going through a lot. Even you would act differently if something like that happened to you.

Another reason for her "rudeness" to remember is that, if she is in a rush to remember, she has a job.

Continued on Page 5

Bisson an SLA Icon

Continued from Page 1

My science teacher. He was one of those people who just knew how to interact with students.

Have you ever wanted to be anything other than a teacher?

Yes. Architect, and a dentist. It was the dentist first actually. I looked at a couple of checks on a dentist's wall and I started thinking, "Dang, this guy makes bank." Then I started thinking more altruistically. Then, I started taking chemistry, and was like, all right, that's it.

What's your best experience as a teacher?

When someone really struggles with math really improves and goes from an F to an A.. You know what I'm saying? Seeing my students improve.

What's your worst experience as a teacher?

One of them was probably the time I fell down in the chapel. There used to be like a riser where the floor went up, you know what I mean? I tripped on it and just totally wiped out (laughs).

What's one thing you love about teaching?

I think getting to know the kids. Playing around with them, joking with them. It's also a really good feeling when you get to teach them something, when you know they've learned something from you.

And some things you hate about it?

So, probably, when students get too rowdy. I like them to be active, but not too loud. It's discouraging, it kind of wears me down.

Favorite SLA student and the least favorite. Don't hold back!

I have lots of favorites, but my kids are my favorites. There have been some students who have been disrespectful just for the sake of it. But I'm not naming names cause that wouldn't be right of me, you know?

When it comes to discipline, what is your approach?

Not strict enough, probably (laughs) I try to reason with them, but I'm trying to get better at it.

Would you ever consider being stricter with your students?

I consider it. Was that question made specifically for me? (laughs)

On average, would you say that you love your job?

Yes. on average, yes. but there are some days. (laughs)

Five years from now, do you see yourself somewhere else?

Good chance I'll still be here. But you never know.

Continued on Page 7

With Mrs. Lira Cady, SLA Is Alive With the Sound of Music

By Anya Neidigh, *Pioneer* Staff

We all know Lira Cady, our resident music expert. Somehow juggling Elementary and High School classes plus the numerous concerts she plans all while maintaining her iconic calm. This is her 15th year of working at SLA and she teaches Kindergarten to 8th grade, Voce, Bells, Choir, and Band. She even goes outside of the school to do a community bell group at College Church.

She is not only a teacher at SLA she is also an alumni, class of '82. So, in honor of alumni weekend I asked her a few questions to learn more about our favorite music teacher.

Q: What is your favorite high school memory?

A: My class trip.

Q: How does it feel to be an alumni teaching at SLA?

A: I would say that coming back to teach at SLA was never on my horizon but the good Lord changed my path and I'm very happy to be at SLA teaching new students.

Q: What is your favorite part of being a teacher?

A: Sharing my love of music and the lord with my students.

Q: What is your favorite class to teach?

A: I don't have a favorite.

Q: Who is your role model?

A: My mother.

Q: What do you like to do in your free time?

A: I like to garden, perform, read, cook and bake, and watch movies.

Q: What is your favorite movie?

A: The Sound of Music.

Q: Where did you attend college? What Major?

A: I went to AUC and was a business major and music minor.

Q: Why did you pursue music?

A: It was just always a part of me, I loved music.

Q: Do you prefer to play the harp or sing?

A: I love them both.

So that's it folks! The inside scoop on your one and only Mrs. Cady. I feel the most appropriate way to end this article is with some of her own advice which is to "follow God's plan and be true to yourself".

The Importance of Student Journalism

Continued from Page 2

It would be easy to glance at the publication you're reading and dismiss it as trivial, if for no other reason than that it was produced largely by a handful of highschoolers. After all, you won't find any articles here about the interpretation of prophecy, such as you would have found in that first issue of *Present Truth*. But I assure you, nothing could be further from the truth.

School newspapers, like the *Pioneer*, are responsible for starting young people on paths that give them an entryway into influencing culture for good. At least one example of this can be found in the editorial of Miss Edyn-Mae Stevenson, an alumna of the *Pioneer*, who went on to write for Southern Adventist University's newspaper, the *Accent*, and now actively works in media for WCRB, Boston's public-radio classical music station (when you aren't listening, you can read her writing on the station's website). This is just one example, close to home, of how student journalism breeds Christian young people eager to engage and influence the culture around them.

When you read the student articles inside this issue, don't dismiss them because you're reading about pop stars bad behavior and movie reviews about Barbie dolls. Instead, look for the unique, Christian perspective these students bring to these cultural issues.

In each, you'll detect—I hope—cautionary tales about idolizing cultural figures and a passion for ideas like equal rights, both of which are concepts rooted in biblical ethics.

Finally, I want to emphasize something that journalism teachers in both high schools and colleges constantly harp on: student journalism is one place in American media where local, independent reporting still exists.

In the United States, 90% of all media is controlled by just six corporations: AT&T, Comcast, CBS, Disney, Newscorp, and Viacom. That means virtually everything Americans read, watch, or listen to is produced and published by just these six companies—companies that function on the premise of profit maximization and increasing sales.

In contrast to this trend, student-led newspapers in American high schools and colleges are one of the last repositories of truly independent and local information. And in a Christian setting, student-led newspapers are one of the last repositories of newsgathering from a perspective that aims at faithfulness to Christ and his mission.

Let me be perfectly honest with you (and my students!).

Continued on Page 5

Break Up With Ariana

Continued from Page 3

The now-deceased actress wasn't the only one who was taken by Ari's supposed charm. People have been accusing Grande of boyfriend snatching and infidelity since 2013. She was in her first public relationship with Jai Brooks back then, and she dumped him less than a year later, ditching him for Nathan Sykes. Jai accused her of cheating, writing a very long message on Twitter.

Now, let us move on to the infamous Pete Davidson engagement. While we're on the topic, why on earth do beautiful women date him anyway? I mean, sure, he's funny, and that's great. But has anyone looked at that guy's face recently? I mean, yikes. He'd been dating Cazzie David for a long time, and one day, she told Pete she wanted a break. When she called a few days later to end the break, Pete said he was "the happiest he'd ever been" and proceeded to dump Cazzie in a text message days later. The following day, she learned that Davidson had chosen Ariana to be his new pet.

I don't know about you, but being accused of being a heartbreaker for 10 years isn't exactly a good look. Then again, she couldn't hold onto Davidson or that husband of hers for very long, so I suppose justice was served.

If that wasn't enough, when Ari's mouth isn't on your man's lips, it's probably on your favorite food.

TMZ took footage of Ari licking a donut at a baking shop. She didn't pay for it by the way. It was sitting in a display on a counter, and she put her nasty tongue right on it. When she was caught in the act, she replied "Ugh, I hate Americans, I hate America." Well said Ari.

Just so you all know, I'm officially boycotting donuts now.

By now, I'm sure all of you are asking yourselves, "Dang Maya. Why do you hate Ari so much?!" Well, I'll happily inform you that I don't hate her at all... I was a proud Arianator many years ago. "Break up with your girlfriend, I'm bored" was my favorite song for quite a while. I once had a pair of her limited edition cat ear headphones. I'm even a proud owner of two of her perfumes (they were birthday gifts... but my point stands), and even though I'm no longer an Arianator, I must say, they smell pretty great.

I'm saying all this because I think that we, as humans, tend to put celebrities on a pedestal. No matter how beautiful or talented someone may be, they aren't a perfect angel. So, no matter who you listen to... enjoy the music, but don't get too attached to the artist.

Maya Thomas is an SLA Junior and reports on celebrity news and entertainment for the Pioneer.

Student Journalism

Continued from page 4

Analyses of Ariana Grande and the Barbie movie would not have been at the top of my list of important cultural issues to cover and sports I can take or leave (although as an SLA parent, I am certainly a fan). But they are issues with influence on young people, and I'm glad to be a part of a publication that can deal with these issues while standing on a Christian foundation. I'm even more glad that the publication is led by a group of Christian young people who decided to take on these issues from a Christian perspective.

Let me close by making you a promise.

This will not be the last time you read the *Pioneer*.

The Cultural Significance of Barbie

Continued from Page 3

There has been some criticism against the film, and one complaint is that the movie is totally against men. For example, the Critical Drinker considered it "114 minutes of spiteful, bitter, mean-spirited, borderline unhinged hatred of men". But is the film really man-hating?

The Ken's are all portrayed as loveable and funny dorks. At the end of the movie, when Ken and Barbie are having a heartfelt conversation, Barbie apologizes for not being clearer about her romantic feelings and taking Ken for granted. However, (spoiler alert) Ken never apologizes for destroying her home and brainwashing her friends. (Image Source: Wikimedia Commons)



There is a scene that shows the Kens bonding despite their animosity but they still never paid attention to the other guy character, Allan. So is that really fair?

Now I can't write an article about a movie praising everything good and ignoring what I didn't like. One part that bothered me was at the end of the movie when the Kens wanted to have equal rights. The Barbies seem unsure and the narrator tells the audience that "the Ken's ended up with as much power as women do in the real world."

The reason I didn't like this part of the movie was because it didn't feel fair. I had just assumed that at the end of the movie everyone would be equal. I questioned the feminist ideals. Feminism isn't just about women, it's about everyone.

It made me feel like there wasn't hope for equality for us off the screen, because if Barbieland can't be equal how can we?

Continued on Page 6

Ariana's 'Bad Decisions' Need Forgiveness

Continued from Page 3

These celebrities constantly get calls, texts, and emails of people asking them to feature in their stuff. Their manager will take care of that, but the manager is the one that informs the celebrities about the propositions. It can also make them stressed under the pressure of all these messages they are receiving. You cannot tell me you get cranky when you have too many messages.

There were many statements of Big Sean cheating on Naya Rivera with Ariana Grande. Rivera stated that she went downstairs in Sean's house and saw Ariana sitting there cross legged on the couch with Sean. She stated that they were "listening to music," stating that they were doing something else. She also said that Sean stole a rolex watch from her house.

Big Sean after months confronted the accusation saying that he did not cheat with her, and he did not steal the watch. Later on he stopped the engagement he had with Rivera. Soon he started dating Ariana, well that lasted 8 months. We don't know for sure if Big Sean did cheat with Ariana, but we shouldn't spread accusations.

Even if they are a celebrity you should never spread rumors even if they are true. They could have just been good friends, working on a collaboration, or anything else, there are many different things they could've been doing. How would you feel if you were being told that you were the reason for a divorce, when you could've been doing your job.

Continued on Page 6



Edyn-Mae Stevenson: Young Journalists Are Truth-Tellers

Continued from Page 2

Disinformation and half-truths sow seeds of fear, hatred, and division wherever the wind blows. That is why it is so important, now more than ever, for students to engage in journalism as a *practice* in *truth-telling*.

Our students will be the next changemakers. They are our future politicians, preachers, voters, teachers, parents, and writers. So, it is vital that they are also truth tellers. Student journalism teaches them that speaking truth is not just a vocation, it is a calling.

It is also vital that our students be good listeners.

Journalism trains their eyes and ears so that they may hear every side of a story with discernment, empathy, and clarity.

So that they may view every word they are told with objectivity and through a critical lens.

So that they may cut through all of the chaos and noise right to the heart of a story.

All without abandoning their own humanity or the humanity of others.

A pen is a tool with which we can equip our young people to meet the world. It has the capacity to do more than just lift them above hopeless circumstances—it shows them that hopelessness is an illusion.

When they are incapable of any other action, writing is always available to them as a way to be heard and to connect with one another.

I, for one, am excited to see what our student journalists have to say. We need as many askers, thinkers, listeners, empathizers, and truth tellers in this world as we can get.



Edyn-Mae Stevenson is a graduate of South Lancaster Academy who served as a writer and member of the editorial staff of the Pioneer.

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Barbie's Cultural Significance

Continued from page 5

But the more I thought about it, I started to understand. That scene wasn't for women. It was the men watching. The role reversal done throughout the movie was an eye opener for a lot of people, especially those who don't notice it daily. And that scene, as I mentioned earlier, wasn't fair. This scene helps open men's eyes to see how unfair the real world is.

Overall, while some may think it was a feminist load of baloney. Or a marketing ploy to line the pockets of Barbie's male CEO. I think this movie was a healing experience. A lesson that we are better together and a reminder that being a woman is a beautiful thing.

Even writing this article I feel a sense of pressure about being able to properly word my argument. Not just because I want to do a good job or get a good grade, but because I am defending women.

I see it all the time: a girl will have an opinion and express it and the instant a man contradicts her, her confidence crumbles. The ingenuity of Barbie is that it predicted its own response. When Barbie first came out everyone loved it, but then more men watched it and offered their opinion. Suddenly the women's opinion seemed more subdued, and all over social media you see videos about Ken not Barbie.

How have we allowed men so much control of our lives that a single, often uneducated, sentence from a man can blast our thought-out paragraph to shreds?

This isn't because we are weak or not as intelligent, it's because our society makes a point of pushing us down because men are scared of what we can do if we stand up.

So to all the girls reading this, the little girls who are told that a boy bullying them means he likes her, the big girls who don't feel pretty until a man tells them so, and the grown-up girls who are told their lives don't have meaning until they have a husband to attach it to, stand up.

Stand up for yourself and the little girl that lives inside all of us.

Anya Neidigh is an SLA sophomore. She is a Pioneer staff reporter and enjoys writing about movies, books, and humanitarian issues.



Grande's POV

Continued from Page 5

There was a time that Ariana did lick donuts and say, "I hate America, I hate Americans."

I do have to say she had no excuse for licking donuts in a public place without paying, or saying what she said. Although I do have to say it looked like she was drunk, and was being persuaded by her ex-boyfriend.

No one should do something just to please someone else, but that doesn't mean you should judge them based on their past. Ariana has been changed ever since her album.

She started a makeup line called R.E.M beauty that is very popular. She has created an empire of over 370 million fans that love and adore her.

Then she had to answer fans' questions.

The celebrity has received many statements talking about how she looks very skinny. How she looks sick and was copying K-pop artists.

She answered these by making a video on TikTok saying that this was the healthier part of herself.

She kindly asked that they would stop asking her to change her physical appearance for their own pleasure, and allow her to be herself.

Some fans heeded this call and stopped, but others did not listen to her and are still saying mean comments about her body. Body shaming is not a joke. It could lead to depression, anxiety, and those could lead to death.

She said that this is her being happy and healthy, so the people that say otherwise need to respect that.

This is my reason why Ariana is a nice celebrity, and why it's not her being rude, it's her fans.

So even if she did something wrong, we shouldn't judge her by her past.

We should only expect the only best of what's to come in the future.

Patric Zabala is an SLA sophomore and writes about social events, celebrities, and whatever else strikes his interest for the Pioneer.

Faculty Profile: Kevin Bisson*Continued from Page 4*

Do you have any plans to retire? If so, when?

I'd love to someday, but life is so expensive. I feel like I'm gonna have to work until I drop. (laughs) Maybe when I'm 75 or 80. I don't know. As long as my brain is sharp enough to.

When you aren't teaching, what is something you enjoy?

I like being with my family, of course. I like reading and learning. But swimming is probably my favorite of all of those.

How can you tell if a student is struggling with your class?

Uh, well you can see from the results of their work. You can also see it in their faces, like, their expressions.

How do you help your student's parents to feel included in their child's education?

Usually, the student and I can handle the situation, but I will reach out to them if need be. And if they reach out to me I try to reply right away.

In your years of teaching, what have you learned?

I guess patience, on some level. Maybe give the kids a chance and give myself a chance. I can be a little hard on myself.

What would you tell your younger self first starting as a teacher? What is something you would tell people who want to pursue a career as a teacher?

Give yourself a few years before deciding if you like teaching or not. It'll get easier but the first few years are hard. Because when you enter a new school, it's like being a new student again, because every school has its own culture. Maybe not worry so much. I tend to be a worrier. I still worry a lot, but it was worse when I was younger.

In your opinion, what is the best method of teaching students math?

My favorite way is to just, like, let the students discover. But I would say that tutoring one on one is realistically the best way.

Do you hope that your children will follow in your footsteps?

And teach? I wouldn't mind if they did, but I don't know if they want to. I want them to do whatever God wants them to do, I believe everyone is different and God has special plans for them. But if I feel like God is telling them to do a certain thing, I try to encourage them.

What is one thing you want all of your students to know?

Honestly, this sounds corny, but I care about them. Some students are struggling or whatever and I want them to know that I'm here.

Mr. Tom Bloom Is Literally SLA History

By Anya Neidigh and Andrea Baldwin

The *Pioneer's* Andrea Baldwin and Anya Neidigh sat down with Mr. Bloom who, in more ways than one, embodies South Lancaster Academy history.

Q: What year did you graduate from SLA?

A: 1989--Same class as Mrs. Baldwin and Larson.

Q: What are your hobbies?

A: PC gaming, watching sports of any kind, and history (of course!).

Q: What is your favorite thing about teaching?

A: When students come to an understanding of what I'm trying to explain to them -- the lightbulb moment.

Q: What inspired you to do food day?

A: It's the saying that you understand a culture best by eating. You understand the culture, Mr. Bloom likes to eat. And you understand each other better when you're sitting down to eat a meal together.

Q: Who inspires you?

A: My father. He fought for his faith and lost his job over the Sabbath. I saw that he had honor to fight for what Adventists believe, and that makes him a hero in my eyes.

Q: What is your favorite class?

A: U.S. History

Q: What is your favorite high school memory?

A: Winning the AUC intramurals as a high school basketball team. We won 13-1.

Q: Is there something you'd like to bring back from your high school days at SLA?

A: I would bring back formal banquets. People used to drive up in limos!

Q: What made you pursue history?

A: I love history. It's not just a profession, and I figured out that I have a gift for education. So, I put the two together. I don't want to sound snooty, but I had people tell me that I was good at explaining things.

Q: Favorite history topic?

A: Military history.

Q: Best advice you've ever received?

A: If you're gonna do it, do it.

Q: What got you into fantasy football?

A: I'm a sports nut. I love sports of all kinds. My wife says if you made a sport of throwing rocks off a building for points, I'd watch it.

Thanks, Mr. Bloom, for letting us get to know you a little bit better. See you in class!

Sports Update*Continued from Page 1*

With the soccer team forming a cooperative team with Immaculate Heart of Mary, they have 20 players on the roster compared to last year's team with only 13. This year's soccer team is looking very promising and has great commitment to the season.

So far for the current school year, 2023-24, the stats are: (as of 9/21/23)

Girl's Varsity Volleyball: 3-3

Girl's JV Volleyball: 6-0

Girl's JV 2 Volleyball: 2-0

Boy's Varsity Soccer: 0-3

One of the highlights of the year will be Alumni Weekend. The gym will be full of energy and cheering as the students compete against the alumni in volleyball and basketball.

Andrea Baldwin, Sophomore, covers sports for the Pioneer.

The Age of Grace

Principal's Editorial

I grew up in the Age of the Pharisees and Sadducees. No, not 30 A.D., the 1960's, the Age of questioning authority, writing, singing, and protesting everything that was wrong with the establishment. The Age where rules and regulations defined my Christianity. I grew up with the music of the 60's/70's, like the song, "Signs" by the Five Man Electrical Band,

"Sign sign
Everywhere a sign
Blockin' out the scenery
Breakin' my mind
Do this, don't do that
Can't you read the sign?"

It was stifling. Why does organized religion create so many rules to try and define what God gives freely, without strings, Grace?

You have to love the *The Message* translation for Matthew 11:28-30:

"Are you tired? Worn out? Burned out on religion? Come to me. Get away with me and you'll recover your life. I'll show you how to take a real rest. Walk with me and work with me—watch how I do it. Learn the unforced rhythms of grace. I won't lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on you. Keep company with me and you'll learn to live freely and lightly."

It took me until my 50's to figure this out. I guess it's never too late in life to realize what Christ did for us on that cross almost 2,000 years ago. Accepting grace from God with no strings attached. Wow! It's that simple.

David Branum is the principal of South Lancaster Academy.

Will You Support Student Journalism and the Freedom of Speech?

Perhaps you noticed the two banners that appear on pages 5 and 6 of this paper.

This week is not just SLA's Alumni Weekend event. It is also national Banned Books Week and National Newspaper Week -- events that celebrate the importance of what we, in the United States, refer to as the First Amendment.

As I'm sure you already know, included in the First Amendment is the freedom of religion, along with that of speech and of the press. And there are still two more freedoms yet worth mentioning: assembly and petition.

The First Amendment guarantees what are commonly referred to as "The Five Freedoms": Speech, Press, Religion, Assembly, and Petition. Each of these freedoms are inextricably linked together and support one another. Without one, the other four may as well not exist.

The *Pioneer* is an important part of SLA's efforts to teach young Christians the value and importance of these freedoms. And you're holding this issue in your hands because generous people made it happen.

Please consider becoming a supporter as well.



Lady Crusaders Heloisa Reis (Freshman), Kaylee Mustard (Junior), Andrea Baldwin (Junior), Sophia Hough (Sophomore), and Nataly Mukulukusso (Junior), strike a pose for the camera. Photo Credit: SLA Yearbook Staff.

The Red Sox Matron of Middle School

By Patric Zabala, *Pioneer* Staff Writer

Mrs. Baldwin is the 7th grade teacher at South Lancaster Academy. She has a son and a daughter: Andrea and William Baldwin.

For alumni weekend, I asked her a few questions about herself so that you can know a little bit of her life.

Let's start with what year she graduated. She graduated in 1989, and has worked at SLA for 16 years. She graduated from Atlantic College, with a major in Elementary Education and psychology. Even though she had many highschool memories, her favorite was SA events, trips, choir with Miss Redmer, Bible class with Mr. Anderson, and gymnastics with Mr. D.

Teaching 4th and 7th grade, she states that they both have things she loves about it. We asked her about how she feels about being an alumnus teaching at SLA. She says that it's an honor. SLA gave her wonderful experiences and memories.

Her favorite part about being a teacher is being around the young people. She adores their energy and curiosity. Mrs Baldwin said that she wanted to become a teacher because she has always loved everything to do with school.

She has taught in many different schools like a multi-grade in Connecticut and one in Massachusetts. She also taught in Marlborough public schools and public schools in Leominster.

Even though she is a very busy woman, Mrs. Baldwin, when she has freetime, does fun things to get away from the school life.

Starting off, we asked her what she does in her free time. She says that she travels. Let's be honest, she doesn't love to travel. Like many other people, her favorite movie/tv show is *Downton Abbey*. Her role model is Jesus, her advice to people is always be honest, don't be fake.

For the question you all have been waiting for, why does she like the Red Sox so much? In her words not mine she says, "I'm not sure. But it started when I was at SLA. We went to a Red Sox game once. Our SLA field used to have a baseball diamond, and we would play together all the time. I just liked it. Also, baseball starts in the Spring and goes on all summer long, which is my favorite season."

So if you ever asked yourself that question you know now. Some of her students wanted to state their favorite memories with Mrs. Baldwin when she was their teacher. An anonymous person said that he really liked it when we would watch the Oshkosh videos during our lunchtime. He loves the cranberry and the pie making activities that we did. He also appreciated when she would allow them to play with their Beyblades during free time.

Mrs Baldwin will always be a part of our SLA family and always be one of the students' favorites.