

HILITES

SUMMER 2024



One In Christ

www.SCHS.ORG |



CALENDAR NEWS

Please refer to the 2024-25 Events School Calendar on our website for more information.
www.schs.org

AUGUST

- 21 First Day of School
- 22 Fine Arts Boosters Kickoff @ 6:00 PM
- 25 Night of Worship - Amphitheater @ 6:30 PM
- 27 Parent Back-to-School Night @ 7:00 PM

SEPTEMBER

- 10 Women's Golf Outing - StoneWater Country Club
- 20 Sailor Night Community Tailgate - Falcon Stadium @ 5:00 PM
- 21 Victory Day @ 3:00 PM

OCTOBER

- 13 All Choirs Concert @ 7:00 PM
- 16 Orchestra Concert (SCHS & BCCS) @ 7:00 PM

NOVEMBER

- 7 - 9 Fall Drama
- 11 Veterans Day Assembly
- 18 Blood Drive

DECEMBER

- 8 All Choirs Concert @ 7:00 PM
- 11 Band & Orchestra Concert @ 8:00 PM

On the cover: SCHS students from the graduating class of 2024.

The South Christian HiLites publication is produced two times per year.

SCHS is an equal opportunity institution. SCHS does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, ethnic origin, sex, or physical/mental handicap in its educational programming and activities, including enrollment, employment, and contracting.

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Byron Center, MI 49315
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P. 616.455.3210
E. office@schs.org



Community Night of
WORSHIP

@ South Christian's
Amphitheater

8.25.24 / 6:30 PM

All are welcome to worship and pray blessings on the start of a new school year.



SAILOR NIGHT
— COMMUNITY —
— TAILGATE —

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 20, 2024
5:00 - 7:00 PM
EAST KENTWOOD - FALCON STADIUM



VETERANS DAY
ASSEMBLY

11.11.24 / 9:00 AM
@ SCHS Auditorium

South Christian will be honoring those who have served in the armed forces during a Veterans Day special assembly. The community, parents, and grandparents of the South Suburban schools are invited to join us.

WELCOME TO THE SUMMER HILITES

ONE IN CHRIST

One of my favorite things about South Christian High School is its mission: **to equip students to live Christ-centered lives and serve God to their greatest potential.** There are so many faithful, essential components of this mission that guide our work here, but a few words in particular are instructive: to their greatest potential.

Our theme for the 2024-2025 school year is "One in Christ." We recognize that, as Christians, our unity and oneness is found only in Christ. More importantly, Jesus himself tells us in John 17:23 that it is the unity of all believers that will allow the world to see a picture of God's love. Sounds like something worth striving for!

So how do we accomplish being One in Christ while also recognizing the greatest potential of each unique student? It starts with honoring and celebrating the "unique and wonderful" in every person here. For some of our students, that unique and wonderful is found on the stage; for some it's in the science classroom. For others, it is through their service, their thoughtfulness, or even their humor.

*"Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it."
- 1 Corinthians 12:27*

Every person who enters our building bears God's sacred image and plays an essential role in the body of Christ. As you read this issue of HiLites I hope you see and enjoy the "unique and wonderful" of our students as we pursue being One in Christ together.

Aaron Meckes
Head of School



NEW STAFF MEMBERS

- Natalie Bultman Art Teacher
- Robert Hooker Science Teacher
- Justin Hudson Assistant Principal
- Taylor Johnson Development Associate & Assistant Athletic Director
- Marissa McCauley Science Teacher
- Melissa Scholten Fine Arts Coordinator

With expanding enrollment, comes the need for additional faculty. It is exciting to welcome our new staff members.

RETIRING STAFF MEMBER



Thank you for your 28 years of service with South Christian High School! May you be blessed in your retirement.

Shari Cashen
Science Teacher

BOARD MEMBERS 2024-25

We are pleased to welcome Steve Alles, Jason Brinks, Steve VanLaan, and Tony Westhouse as newly elected board members beginning this fall. Thank you for your willingness to serve our South Christian community.

South Christian would also like to thank the following retiring board members for all their hard work over the last three years: Matt Buwalda, Ron Fles, Michele Michmerhuizen, and Jason VanderMolen.



Unified Sports offers an opportunity for students with and without intellectual disabilities to come together and foster inclusion through sports. At South Christian, this initiative begins on the basketball court but extends far beyond it, promoting inclusion and belonging throughout our hallways. The goal is to provide all students with a sense of being one student body and a feeling of "togetherness." The joy and camaraderie experienced by both Unified Athletes (students with disabilities) and Partners (students without disabilities) is truly unforgettable!

Unified Basketball Team Triumphs over SCHS Staff!
Congratulations to our Unified Basketball team for emerging victorious in a hard-fought battle against the SCHS staff. Way to go, Unified!

Brady Howe
ESS Teacher





Celebrating the CLASS of 2024

"Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith and in purity."

1 Timothy 4:12, NIV



HONORS DEPARTMENT AWARDS

ART

Justin Vanderlaan

BIBLE

Elizabeth Marcusse

ENGLISH

Evan Spronk, Riley VanderLaan

INDUSTRIAL TECHNOLOGY

Jalynn Helder, Owen Helmholdt, Mitchell Lindhout, Justin Miedema, Seth Miedema, Noah Sherwood, Boyd Tubergen, Connor VanDam

KENT CAREER TECHNICAL CENTER

Austin Wharton

MATHEMATICS

Braden DeMeester, Hope Gritter

MUSIC-BAND

Jaxon Palmbos

MUSIC-CHOIR

Joshua Ezell, Lillian Harkema

MUSIC-ORCHESTRA

Ellia Agar

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

James Thull, Levi VanderMeyden

SCIENCE

Braden DeMeester

SOCIAL STUDIES

Hope Gritter

SPANISH

Ellia Agar, Katelyn VanderArk

TECHNOLOGY

Levi Huisman, Levi Huizingh

Faithfully FORWARD

"For the Lord is good and his love endures forever; his faithfulness continues through all generations."
Psalm 100:5



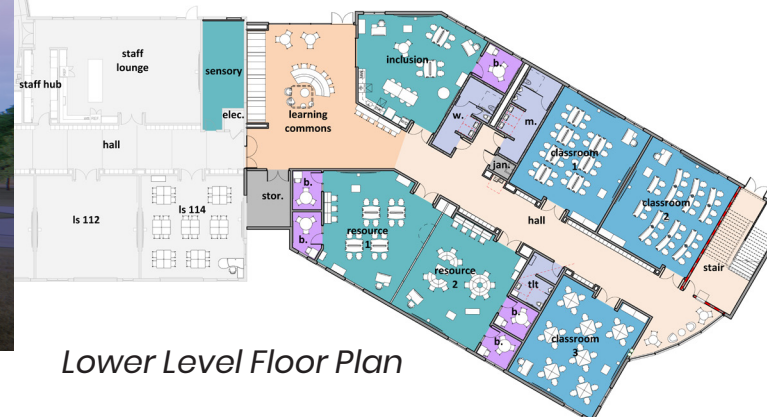
Exterior at night

We could not have imagined this - another addition is needed to the building. We are so grateful to God for the expanding enrollment. Not only South Christian, but Byron Center Christian, Dutton Christian and Moline Christian are all in an expansion mode. It is exciting to see families choosing Christian education.

The new building was designed for 700 students at a time when we had only 630. At this point, we are anticipating 710 students this fall. The following school year we are anticipating 760 students. To accommodate the growth, the plan is to expand the building to the northeast. The addition will include 12 classrooms and be approximately 21,000 square feet.

The Board has requested that 80% of the project be committed by September 30. We are thrilled that Dan Vos Construction Company has lowered the price and now we need \$6.8 million by September 30. With almost \$4 million committed, that leaves \$2.8 million that needs to be raised. We give thanks to God for this amount.

In an effort to reach the goal, would you please consider a pledge for 2024 and 2025 before September 30? At that time the Board will make a decision if we can build the addition now or if it needs to be pushed off for six months or a year. If the funds are not received, accommodations will need to be made. Students may find themselves in a variety of interesting locations for some of their classes.



Lower Level Floor Plan



Upper Level Floor Plan

Please pray for this project and consider what God would have you contribute to this urgent need.

Scan the QR code to bring you to our Giving page or contact Sandy Dobbs, Development Director, at sdobbs@schs.org.



WOMEN'S GOLF OUTING

SCHS is hosting the 6th annual SCHS Women's Golf Outing in September. This is a fun-filled day with friends on the golf course with proceeds benefitting the SCHS Tuition Assistance Fund. The 32-team event is sold out, but additional sponsorships and raffle prizes would be welcome. Scan the QR code for event details and sponsorship opportunities.



TUITION ASSISTANCE UPDATE

Thank you to all who responded to the tuition assistance request this spring. Over \$325,254 was raised to help families in need for the 2024-2025 school year. A majority of these funds were received from the mailed spring appeal and from the telephone fundraiser by J. Milito and Associates. Thank you for answering the call.

Funds were also received through the fall Women's Golf Outing and the year-end appeal. The spring Scrap Metal Drive raised \$27,071.

BENEFITS OF GIVING FROM YOUR IRA

If you are 70 1/2 or older, this is possibly the time for a gift. Distributions made from your IRA directly to the charity are not treated as taxable income. This could benefit you even if you don't itemize deductions on your tax return. This is a great way to fulfill pledges you have previously made. The entirety of your gift will go toward your favorite cause or charity. One stipulation is the gifts made from your IRA must be made directly to a charitable organization.

Memorial Gifts Winter/Spring 2024

John Drukker
Robert Faber
Gordon Oeverman

Thelma Walcott
Mary Warner

ATHLETICS UPDATES

Boys Basketball:

The Sailor Boys Basketball Team, led by Coach Taylor Johnson had another successful season. The Sailors finished second in the OK Gold and ended their season in the District Finals. SC finished the year with an overall record of 19-6. Jake Vermaas, Carson Vis and Davis Kemper were all named All Conference performers for their efforts on the court.



Boys Swimming:

The Boys Swimming program, which is a co-op with Caledonia and Lowell, had another good season. The CLS squad was led by Coach Todd DeJong and experienced growth and success as the season went along. Many PRs occurred all the way until the end of the season at the OK Red Conference Meet. Senior, Luke DeJager, represented the CLS squad at the D1 State Finals.



Bowling:

Boys and Girls Bowling, led under the guidance of Coach Jeremy Kwekel in his first season, had a fun season. The Sailors continued to work hard and showed steady progress. The season concluded with the Girls finishing with a 9-5 overall record and the Boys finishing with a 5-9 record.



Girls Basketball:

The Sailor Girls Basketball program was led under first year Head Coach, Erika Brown, and finished with an overall record of 15-11. The Sailors saved their best basketball for the end of the season and won the District Championship in thrilling fashion before they ended their season in the Regional Final. Sophia Prins and Lizzie Wolthuis were named First Team All Conference.



Hockey:

The Hockey Team which is a co-op with Byron Center, had a memorable and historic season. The Bulldogs won their fourth consecutive Conference Championship and also their 6th consecutive Regional Title. The Bulldogs finished the season with an overall record of 27-2-1 and won the Division 2 State Championship defeating Trenton 6-1.

Check www.southchristiansports.com for schedules, photos, news, livestream, and more!

Follow @sailorsports on Instagram.

Baseball:

The South Christian Baseball team was led under the guidance of first year Head Coach, Harris Fondren. The Sailors finished the season with an overall record of 19-15 and a second place finish in the OK Gold. The season ended in District play. Leading the way for SC were All Conference performers Caleb Herder, Davis Kemper, Jamin VanGrouw, and Noah Funk.

Boys Golf:

The South Christian Boys Golf team had a memorable season under the guidance of Coach Mark VanStee. SC finished second at the Regionals to qualify for the D2 State Tournament at Forest Akers West on the campus of Michigan State University. The Sailors had a very strong showing and finished 4th in Division 2 after the 36 hole event. SC shot a school record 296 on Day 2, which was the lowest of any school at the event on that day to lead to the 4th place finish. Harris Hoekwater, Brody Montsma and Jack Vining were all named First Team All Conference in the OK Gold.



Boys Lacrosse:

The Boys Lacrosse team continued our co-op with Grand Rapids Christian and enjoyed some nice success on the field. The combined team finished the season with a record of 6-14. The boys finished their season in Regional play and look forward to continuing making progress next Spring.

VICTORY DAY 2024



SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 21, 2024
SOUTH CHRISTIAN HIGH SCHOOL

Softball:

Coach Tara Schreur wrapped up her 19th season at the helm of the Sailor Softball program. The Sailors had a very impressive season as they finished second in a competitive OK Gold and finished the season with an overall record of 23-14 before ending the season in District play. All Conference performers included Ava Sherwood, Evie Pylman, Emma Orr, Cassidy Fisk, and Alyssa VanderMolen.

Girls Soccer:

Coach Joel Vande Kopple began his first season at the helm of the Sailor Girls Soccer team and enjoyed a very good season. The Sailors won the OK Gold Conference Championship by defeating Cedar Springs at home. The Sailors went on to win the District Championship at Hopkins by defeating Allegan and went on to the Regional Championship where their season ended with an 18-3-2 overall record. Alexa Boersma, Hayden Donker, Olivia In't Hout, Vivian Mast and Katelyn VanderArk were all named First Team All Conference.

Girls Tennis:

Coach Stulp and the Varsity Girls Tennis team enjoyed another successful season. The Sailors finished 9-5-2 overall in dual matches and 5-1-1 in the OK Gold, which gave them a second place finish in the conference. The Sailors missed out on the State Finals by one point with a fantastic effort at Allegan in the Regionals, which was highlighted by Regional Champion, Audi Burgess. Gabby Young, Savana Michmerhuizen, Kate Niewiek, and Josie Meengs were named All Conference for their efforts this Spring.

Track and Field:

The South Christian Track and Field team had another solid Spring. The Sailors had many successes, which included numerous PRs as the season moved along and sent five athletes to the Individual State Finals. Chloe Rinzema broke the school record in the 800 with a time of 2:17:07. Mallory Huttenga and Chloe Rinzema were both named to the All Conference team in the OK Gold.

Boys Club Volleyball:

The South Christian Boys Club Volleyball Team, led by Coach Mark Rowe, had another successful season. The Sailors won their Conference Championship and went on to finish State Runner Up for the second consecutive season. Boys Volleyball will remain a club sport in 24-25 but will become an MHSAA sanctioned sport beginning in the 25-26 school year.



Thank you to our community for supporting athletics this summer by sponsoring and/or attending the Rod VanDyke Memorial Golf Outing and the Sporting Clay Shoot.

Fine Arts BOOSTERS

We are excited to announce an expanded opportunity for the South community to support the fine arts. Music Boosters has been transformed into Fine Arts Boosters. The Fine Arts Boosters will be seeking volunteer and financial support for instrumental music, vocal music, visual arts, and theater.

The South community is invited to a Fine Arts Boosters Kick Off event on the evening of August 22. Watch for details in SCHS newsletters and social media.



Concert Choir, Women's Choir, and Madrigals performed at Hope College for the MSMVA State Festival in May. All ensembles sang with excellence, with Concert Choir receiving a division 1 rating, Women's Choir receiving a division 2 rating, and Madrigals also receiving a division 1 rating from the judges.

The **Symphonic and Concert Bands** both competed at the State Festival at Lowell High School in May and both received an overall score of 1. The symphonic band received ones from every single judge at both district and state performances.

Congratulations to the **Jazz Band** for their third straight year of earning a 1 at MSBOA District Jazz Band Festival.

Congratulations to a few of our **Orchestra** Students who participated in the MSBOA State Solo & Ensemble Festival. Abigail VanWyngarden, Lydia Peterson, and Maraleisa VandenHeuvel earned a 1 for their string trio. Lydia Peterson also earned a 1 for her harp solo.

Band and Orchestra Nashville Trip

What a fantastic time in Nashville, Tennessee, for the band and orchestra. They started off with a tour of the RCA studio where Elvis did most of his recording. Next they ventured to the Country Music Hall of Fame followed by lunch on Broadway. They then took a tour of the Grand Ole Opry and got to see where some of the greatest country music stars hang out and perform. After dinner at the Hard Rock Cafe, the students saw an Opry show.



"Then we your people..."



...will praise you forever; from generation to generation we will proclaim your praise."
Psalm 79:13

We were honored and blessed to have our grandparents and special friends travel from near and far to spend the morning with us!





Ron with his wife Anne (Venlet, '02) and their 4 children.

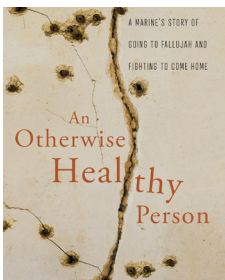
Like many others, I volunteered to go to war in a conflict that was far away from home, literally and figuratively. I joined the Marine Corps two years after graduating from South Christian and deployed to Africa in 2003. I was then deployed a second time, to Iraq, in 2006 and was promoted to squad leader just before leaving the U.S.

Our time in and around Fallujah included difficult and intense firefights in addition to great fun and camaraderie. It was challenging, dangerous and vacillated between incredibly boring and incredibly intense. Over time we worked together with local tribal militias who switched alliances and joined the fight against the Al Qaeda-backed insurgents. My squad performed well, and we were fortunate to leave Iraq seven months later with no physical injuries even though dozens of others in our company were not as fortunate.

My story then entered a new phase as I returned home and jumped back into work, school, church and family life. From the outside, everything seemed to be going well. I had a beautiful wife, several young children, had earned a degree with the GI Bill, and was active in church leadership. By all accounts it appeared as if my combat experiences were a small sentence in the story of my life. In reality those experiences had shaded my story in ways that I could not comprehend.

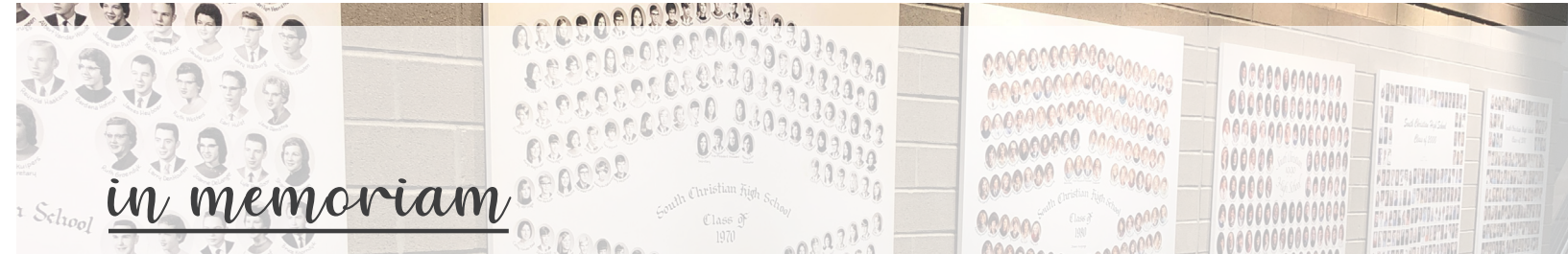
Eventually my life hit a point where I couldn't pretend everything was okay anymore. I had always been a Christian, but over time I drifted away from God and saw him as a distant and judgmental figure. Rather than standing on my own achievements as I had tried to do for so long, I approached God as a broken and defeated soul and was greeted with grace and understanding. That started my healing journey. I still struggle to find perspective in all areas of life but I am living as one who is redeemed.

Ron Jansen
Class of 2000



Book link: <https://anotherwisehealthyperson.com/>

"An Otherwise Healthy Person" highlights a part of Ron's journey of redemption and growth through the trials and tribulations of life during and after war.



1950s

Boyd Berends ('56) passed away March 10, 2024.

Edward Dykema ('57) passed away January 11, 2024.

Karen (Kraima, '59) Hall passed away March 25, 2024.

1960s

Richard Harkema ('60) passed away June 12, 2024.

Claudene (Raterink, '60) Kooistra passed away January 15, 2024.

Ruth (Siebelink, '60) Nederhood passed away July 10, 2024.

Joyce Folkertsma ('62) passed away December 19, 2023.

Bruce Schuurmann, MD ('62) passed away August 10, 2023.

Lori (VanSlooten, '64) Bommelje passed away May 15, 2024.

Gordon VanHouten ('64) passed away October 3, 2023.

Kathleen (Stehouwer, '67) Engels passed away December 13, 2023.

James Apol ('67) passed away April 20, 2024.

Henry Blacquiere ('68) passed away February 9, 2024.

1970s

Marsha (Harkes, '70) Haring passed away March 7, 2024.

Gordon Oeverman ('70) passed away March 16, 2024.

Michael Peters ('75) passed away July 26, 2023.

Ellen (Apol, '76) Juhnke passed away February 9, 2024.

Stephen DeHaan ('77) passed away March 19, 2024.

1990s

Rev. Scott DeVries ('94) passed away April 27, 2024.

2000s

Thomas Sytsma ('02) passed away January 15, 2024.

Kyle Walcott ('07) passed away June 27, 2024.

Dana Heuker ('08) passed away May 14, 2024.

Alison (Knoll, '08) Postma passed away February 13, 2024.

SCHS CLASS REUNIONS

CLASS OF 1959

Saturday, 9.28.24
1:00 - 5:00 PM
Whistlestop Community Center
2120 76th St SW
Byron Center, MI 49315
Contact
Duard Warsen
#616.881.8916

CLASS OF 1964

Saturday, 10.26.24
3:00 - 6:00 PM
Hors d'oeuvres & Desserts
Friendship CRC
190 100th St SE
Byron Center, MI 49315
Contact
Rich Schrotenboer
richsc2@icloud.com

CLASS OF 1974

Saturday, 9.14.24
5:00 PM Hors d'oeuvres
6:00 PM Dinner
Scheltema Barn
4554 7th St
Caledonia, MI 49316
Contact
Mary (Vandemarkt) Stevens
#616.308.9378
<https://myevent.com/schs1974>

CLASS OF 1975

TBD
Contact
David Lanting
dlanting57@gmail.com
or Ron Wierenga
ronwierenga1016@gmail.com

Stay Connected

Visit our Alumni page at www.schs.org/alumni/ or contact Kerri Holbrook at kholbrook@schs.org.



SHREK

THE MUSICAL

This past spring, the SCHS Theater Department entertained audiences with "Shrek the Musical," which included song favorites "The Story of My Life," "I Know It's Today," "The Ballad of Farquaad," "Make a Move," "Build a Wall," and "I'm a Believer." Shrek, Donkey, Fiona, and the Fairy Tale Creatures discovered along the way how to accept themselves for who they are. The cast shared with the audience how to live out Psalm 139:14, "I am fearfully and wonderfully made."

