Dear Rivendell Families,

Events in May move us in many directions. We say goodbye to our seniors and introduce ourselves to our new seventh graders. It is a time for reflection on the past year as we also begin planning for future. Here are some highlights.

**Student Accomplishments**

Trillium Cserr, a graduating junior, has been awarded a National Merit Scholarship Nomination as a result of receiving a qualifying score on her PSAT examination. Her score has placed her somewhere in the top 3% of PSAT scores nationwide. Trillium has also been awarded a writing award from the National Council of Teachers of English, thanks to a submission of her work by Eric Reichert.

Good luck to our seniors! They have made their plans for next year—work, military, and college. We have 26 seniors moving on to college.

Thank you Megan Langraff for taking on the yearbook as your senior project. We look forward to it. Hopefully someone or some people can fill your shoes next year!

Ms. Robison’s Women’s Literature class is creating a syllabus for restructuring the health curriculum to include such issues such as reproductive rights; consent; physical, sexual and emotional partner violence; and gender expectations and gender roles. Women’s Lit is also hosting a night of spoken work on May 26th from 6:30-7:30 in the multi.

On May 11th we received a phone call from a woman praising Will Ussler, Max Haehnel, and Isaac Martel. The caller and her husband were heading to Thetford Academy for an event featuring one of their grandkids, when they got a flat tire in front of Rivendell. The three boys rushed out of class and changed the tire. They also refused payment for work. The woman said she and her husband would have never made it to Thetford in time if it weren’t for the quick help from our students.


As a result of years of work by Michael Galli, Nancy Hall and Cindy McLaren, we will have approximately ten tuition students joining our 9th grade class next year. These students will come from Warren, Piermont, and Waits River.

Brenda Gray has done the impossible! She secured a driver’s education teacher for a summer New Hampshire class. Rod Hull will be returning to teach the class. It is nearly impossible to find a certified NH drivers education teacher. **We would love to have a local person get certified to teach the course! Anyone interested?**
Nancy Hall and the Leo’s club combined forces with their sponsoring Lion’s Club Chapter to give eye tests to Rivendell students using a hand-held digital scanning devise.

Jack Winxxx practicing as xxx Gray looks on.

Nancy Hall organized a comprehensive, experienced-based approach to introducing our students to Dual Enrollment and Early College opportunities. At the Norwich campus, CCV faculty gave our 9th and 10th students an overview of their classes. An excellent panel of CCV students, including our own Erin Lapine, gave a great overview of the rewards and challenges of community college.

The Past is Prologue

Mary Rizos and Jenny Ellis picked up the work started by former English teacher, Silas St. James in refocusing our advisory program. Mary and Jenny also broke the ice with the Rowland Foundation by submitting a very competitive application last year.

Following Jen and Mary’s example, Lazlo Bardos and Rachel Sanders submitted a Rowland Fellow application and received $100,000 to continue our work with Critical Exploration. Critical Exploration is an approach to fostering deep learning by engaging learners with materials that allow learners to naturally develop and further their own ideas.  http://www.criticalexplorers.org/about/origins-inspiration/.

In two weeks Kirsten Surprenant, Jen Bottom and Story Graves will travel to San Diego to visit a very innovative set of public charter schools known as High Tech High  http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/on_innovation/2015/03/most_likely_to_succeed_a_film_about_what_school_could_be.html.

These schools are unique in their singular focus on projects. As in Critical Exploration, the projects give students ownership over their learning. With scaffolding from the teacher, these unique projects develop creativity, a capacity to work in teams, problem solving and confidence. A real problem or question drives the best projects.

Where are we headed?

Build on and improve our advisory program including morning meeting.

We need to continuously improve our advisory curriculum. To do so we have rearranged some grade level advisors who will stay with their advisory group for two years. This gives advisors an opportunity to focus on two years of curriculum rather than four. The downside is that advisors need to get to know another set of 10-12 students every two years. We have reestablished our student advisory council and given them specific leadership responsibilities.

Deepen our expertise using Critical Exploration as an approach to learning. This work will continue to be supported by the district’s Committee on Learning through professional development activities and the work of Lazlo Bardos and Rachel Sanders with the support of their Rowland Foundation funding. We hope to create a deeper relationship with the staff of Critical Explorers, a group based in Cambridge, MA.
Develop projects leading to public exhibitions.

Next fall, at the end of the first trimester, the 7/8 students and the 9th grade humanities students will present a public exhibition. Developing the projects and exhibitions will begin with a problem or question. We will judge our success by the impact that these projects have on the audience when students present their final work.

Continue to develop our curriculum documents.

RA’s thematic framework for curriculum (Truth, Choice, Systems and Change) and our learning expectations will continue to drive course development at RA. Our goal is to develop critical, pragmatic thinkers. We want Rivendell students to be well versed in considering these questions: What “truths” need to be brought to bear in understanding a significant problem or question? How are choices impacted by those truths? What systems are created or maintained by those choices? What choices impact those systems?

The Rationale

These goals put student learning in the center of what we do. Advisory is about personal relationships, with specific purposes in mind—becoming reflective learners able to develop a strong community and individual character. Critical Exploration puts students’ ideas at the center of the learning process. Projects and public exhibitions unify understanding and action with the purpose of having an impact in the world. Curriculum that rests on a framework of truth, choice, systems and change supports complex thinking, relevance, and impact. No amount of testing, standards, textbooks, or lectures compare to the virtues these ideas and practices can bring forth in our students.

These ideas and practices require patience and practice. We have produced examples of these ideas. We have experimented and reflected on those experiments. We are slowly gaining control based on what we have learned. We are novices. Yet, I am confident that with continued freedom to experiment, we will have a lot more to say and show for our efforts at this time next year.

I wish everyone a safe and happy summer.

Best,

Keri Geleian
Juniors attended a college fair at Norwich University in April where they were met by Rivendell Alum, Cole Stever, while touring campus. This was followed by a visit to GW Plastics in Bethel, VT arranged by Rivendell Alum, Sean Burke Powell. Students toured the facility and gowned up to watch precision robotics in manufacturing.

Juniors - Have you heard of EARLY COLLEGE?

Current juniors who are VT residents can take ALL classes next year at CCV (Community College of Vermont) for FREE and classes will count for BOTH senior year of high school and freshman year of college. The deadline to apply is August 1st. See Ms. Hall if interested or visit and scroll to bottom: http://ccv.edu/apply/high-school/

~~~~~~~~~~~~~~

For NH & VT residents, Catch-the-Wave offers a similar program at a reduced cost of $235 per three-credit course. The closest program is at RVCC (River Valley Community College) at their new Lebanon campus or online. Scholarships.

SOPHOMORES AND JUNIORS
DUAL ENROLLMENT/ E*START

High school juniors and seniors can take a college class for high school AND college credit. VT residents can access the VT Dual Enrollment Program (free). NH residents can access the E*Start program (cost $150):

VT: www.vtdualenrollment.org
NH: www.ccsnh.edu/academics/estart

Freshmen & Sophomores visited CCV (Community College of Vermont) in May to explore opportunities.

Sophomores Community service field trip to Grafton County.

Juniors—contact Dartmouth College professors before they leave for the summer if interested in taking a class in the fall. Registration deadline July.
New Books at the Academy

The Fever by Megan Abbott

Megan Abbott writes about the madness of adolescence better than anyone. She seems to understand teens’ urgent rush to grow up, to try on adult masks and costumes and play adult games. But she also knows: in the big game of pretend, there are often grown-up consequences. In the spooky town of Dryden—“the cloudiest city in the state,” we’re told—high school girls are getting sick, one by one, seizure by seizure. Is the lake toxic? Is the drinking water poisoned? *The Fever* is a brilliant and chilling tale of the bewildering age when everything—friendship, love, revenge—feels “new and terrifying and significant.” To survive it? It’s heartbreaking.

Smoke Gets in Your Eyes by Caitlin Doughty

Most people want to avoid thinking about death, but Caitlin Doughty—a twenty-something with a degree in medieval history and a flair for the macabre—took a job at a crematory, turning morbid curiosity into her life’s work. Thrown into a profession of gallows humor and vivid characters (both living and very dead), Caitlin learned to navigate the secretive culture of those who care for the deceased. *Smoke Gets in Your Eyes* tells an unusual coming-of-age story full of bizarre encounters and unforgettable scenes. Caring for dead bodies of every color, shape, and affliction, Caitlin soon becomes an intrepid explorer in the world of the dead. She describes how she swept ashes from the machines (and sometimes onto her clothes) and reveals the strange history of cremation and undertaking, marveling at bizarre and wonderful funeral practices from different cultures.

The Porcupine of Truth by Bill Konigsberg

Carson Smith is resigned to spending his summer in Billings, Montana, helping his mom take care of his father, a dying alcoholic he doesn’t really know. Then he meets Aisha Stinson, a beautiful girl who has run away from her difficult family. There’s Pastor John Logan, who’s long held a secret regarding Carson’s grandfather, who disappeared without warning or explanation thirty years before. Together, Carson and Aisha embark on an epic road trip to find the answers that might save Carson’s dad, restore his fragmented family, and discover the "Porcupine of Truth" in all of their lives.

Salt to the Sea by Ruta Sepetys

World War II is drawing to a close in East Prussia and thousands of refugees are on a desperate trek toward freedom, many with something to hide. Among them are Joana, Emilia, and Florian, whose paths converge en route to the ship that promises salvation, the *Wilhelm Gustloff*. Forced by circumstance to unite, the three find their strength, courage, and trust in each other tested with each step closer to safety. Just when it seems freedom is within their grasp, tragedy strikes. Not country, nor culture, nor status matter as all ten thousand people—adults and children alike—aboard must fight for the same thing: survival.

Close Your Eyes, Hold Hands by Chris Bohjalian

Emily Shepard is on the run; the nuclear plant where her father worked has suffered a cataclysmic meltdown, and all fingers point to him. Now, orphaned, homeless, and certain that she’s a pariah, Emily’s taken to hiding out on the frigid streets of Burlington, Vermont, creating a new identity inspired by her favorite poet, Emily Dickinson. Then she meets Cameron. Nine years old and with a string of foster families behind him, he sparks something in Emily. She protects him with a fierceness she didn’t know she possessed. But when an emergency threatens the fledgling home she’s created, Emily realizes that she can’t hide forever.
Rivendell Academy Players presents

“Oklahoma” for the Spring Musical. Coming May 19th, 20th & 21st at 7:00 in the Rivendell Academy gym. Tickets are $5.00 for students and $10.00 for adults. Rodgers & Hammerstein's first collaboration remains, in many ways, their most innovative, having set the standards and established the rules of musical theatre still being followed today.

Set in a Western Indian territory just after the turn of the century, the high-spirited rivalry between the local farmers and cowboys provides the colorful background against which Curly (Caleb Day), a handsome cowboy, and Laurey (Lauren Holt), a winsome farm girl, play out their love story. Although the road to true love never runs smooth, with these two headstrong romantics holding the reins, love's journey is as bumpy as a surrey ride down a country road.

Other cast members include: Trillium Cserr as Aunt Eller, Cameron Day as Will Parker, Tali Gelenian as Ado Annie, Teddy Wilkin as Ali Hakim, Dakota Menard as Jud, Quenla Haehnel as Gertie Cummings, Bea Green as Andrew Carnes and an ensemble with Caleb Haehnel, Kelsey Peebles, Cora Day, Britnee Sargent, Izzy Formica, Adele Tilden, Moria Haehnel, Ariana Baum, Katana Labadie, Sarah Parenti, Megan Landgraf, Thessalie, Butler, and Emma Hayes. Tech crew includes: Guilherme De Souza, Makayla Coffin, Hannah Edwards, Zack Gray, Jeymy Moreno, Jacob Perkins, Nikki Roberts and Noah Weisberg.

The play is directed by Anna Alden & Carol Sobetzer, set designed by Cami Buster, costume design by Brook Lewis, and choreography directed by Crystal Champagne. The band will include: Henry Danaher on piano, Kevin Colon on reeds, Meghan Davis on flute, Jim Tonkovich on trumpet, Denis Lambert on trombone, Bonnie O'Meara on bass with Anna Alden directing.

So come join the fun in the rip roaring musical “Oklahoma!” Thursday, May 19th, Friday, May 20th and Saturday, May 21st starting at 7:00. $5.00/student, $10.00/adult. General seating. Doors open at 6:30.
The Rivendell Academy Chorus will be performing a concert on Wednesday, June 1st at 7:00 in the West Wing Multi-purpose room. The program is based on songs about Earth, Sea & Sky and will feature a cappella songs “Farthest Field”, “Plovi Barko” and “What a Wonderful World” as well as “Fields of Gold”, “Beyond the Sea” and “Blue Skies” with piano accompaniment.

Singers are Cora Day, Bea Green, Hannah Hayes, Karina Ricker, Adele Tilden, Jen DeBois, Quenla Haehnel, Lauren Holt, Sienna Paley, Kelsey Peebles, Arianna Bauman, Trillium Cserr, Tali Gelenian and Sarah Parenti. Directed by Anna Alden.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SENIOR END OF YEAR EVENTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 6 – 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 8 &amp; 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
8th Grade Transition activity

On May 11 and 12th the 8th grade class had the opportunity to go through a rotation of their core classes for next year. This gave them the chance to meet their 9th grade team. They also sat down with a panel of current 9th graders. This gave them the chance to ask question about next year.

8th Grade Ray Chin stress workshop

On Tuesday May 17th Ray Chin will be coming in to work with the 8th grade on ways to manage stress. This will be done through a 2 ½ hour workshop.

Money Smart Program

On May 18th Dartmouth College students will be presenting their Money Smart Challenge Program to the 7th grade class. The objective of this program is to provide students with an overview of potential career options, college aspirations and financial education; including budgeting, wants vs. needs and the consequences and benefits of making choices.

6th Grade Transition Day

The 6th grade class will be coming to RA on June 1st to start their transition to 7th grade. We have several activities planned to introduce them to RA. The 10th grade class will be chaperoning the 6th grade and facilitating some of those activities. The 6th grade will have the opportunity to eat lunch with our current 7th grade.

8th Grade Passage Celebration

The 8th Grade Passage Celebration is scheduled for Thursday June 9th at 6:00 pm in the Rivendell Academy Gymnasium with refreshments immediately following in the Café. This is a semi-formal event and we ask that all students dress appropriately.

A dance will follow in the Multi-Purpose Room until 9:00 pm

Summer Camps/Opportunities

The cold Regions Research and Engineering Laboratory (CRREL) is providing its first Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) Summer Camp Program in the week of July 14-18th. This event is FREE for 7th and 8th grade students who are interested in science and technology. Registration ends March 31. If you would like an application or more information about the camp please contact Cindy McLaren, Middle School Counselor.

Green Mt. Conservation Camp (GMCC), Fish and Wildlife VT. Basic camp is offered for girls and boys ages 12-14. Advance weeks are offered for those who have completed basic camp and passed the Hunter Education course. For more information about GMCC visit their website at: www.vtfishandwildlife.com/edu_camps.cfm. or contact Cindy McLaren, Guidance. Scholarships are available, but limited.

Camp Hochelaga is YWCA camp of VT for girls. Please check out their website at: www.ywcavt.org for information or contact Cindy McLaren, Guidance. Scholarships are available, but limited.

Camp maple leaf a fun day camp in VT focused on developing social skills for children and adolescents living with High functioning Autism Asperger’s Syndrome Monday- Friday 9:00-3:00

July 11-15 & July 18-22

802-446-3577 e-mail:info@mapleleafclinic.com

Students may see the counselor for small group and individual counseling to assist with a variety of concerns and problems, including: friendship, problem solving, academic improvement, divorce, grief and loss and crisis intervention.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or concerns. You can reach me at 603-353-4321 ext 1204 or cmclarren@rivendellschool.org

Cindy McLaren, MSW
May 12, 2016

Dear Parents/Guardians:

Our school is participating in a survey created by Rivendell Academy Students, Staff, and ALL Together. ALL Together is a community resource for substance misuse prevention, treatment, recovery and advocacy as well as suicide prevention in the Upper Valley area. This survey gathers information about types of stressors for our students and ways with which they cope with stress.

The survey will be disseminated to all of 8th and 10th grade students during Morning Meeting on Monday May 16th. Rivendell Academy will use the results to spark a school community conversation on creating a less stressful, more balanced environment for our students and their families.

This survey is anonymous, and survey procedures have been designed to protect your child’s privacy. We would like all students to take part in the survey; however, the survey is voluntary. No student is required to take the survey.

Should you decide to opt your child out of taking the survey please inform us in writing by emailing Cindy McLaren at cmclaren@rivendellschool.org.

If you have any questions or concerns, please call Cindy McLaren at 603-353-4321.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Cindy McLaren, MSW
Middle School Counselor
and
ALL Together

Fairlee, Vershire, West Fairlee, VT and Orford, NH