

# Four Rivers Currents

June 2017

## From the Principal's Desk...

GRADUATION 2017: EVERYONE HAS A STORY, SO LISTEN BEFORE YOU TALK

*With our tenth graduation behind us, I'd like to share my remarks:*

I've been thinking about this graduation over the last few months. I suppose I've been thinking about a lot of things as I obsessively watch and read the news for hints of where we are and where we're going. I always think about our school in the context of local, national, or global events. How are we preparing students to be ready for that world? How are we preparing them to contribute? What do they need to learn from us?

One theory of action by which we operate--did you know we have a theory of action--is that having adolescents learn in a small, safe learning community can make them strong enough to take on larger challenges when they move on from high school. We create a bubble--on purpose--to allow those strengths to grow and develop in a protected environment.

Inside the bubble, you get multiple opportunities to demonstrate your learning. Inside the bubble, you can revise tests. Inside the bubble, you fill out a blue slip if you've been disruptive or rude or otherwise violated our community's norms and expectations. Inside the bubble, we stick with you through second and third and fourth chances, giving you time and space to experience the discomforts of the learning process while standing by your side as you figure things out.

Whether heading off to college, work, the military, or gap year, all of you will be leaving our little bubble. I don't think you are yet heading into the cold, tough, unforgiving real world that our newly graduated from college son keeps hearing about.

Still, outside the bubble, deadlines may be more strict. Not following bureaucratic procedures might close you off from opportunities. Professors may not grant you extensions at the last minute and those tests might not be revisable. Outside the bubble, you may have to search out supports on your own.

We've tried over the years to connect you to the wider world. We've gradually reduced scaffolding and increased independence in preparation for today's commencement and what's next. We've tried to help you build confidence and competence in knowing how to approach new situations, new people, and new challenges. Watching you this year, listening to you as you presented your senior expeditions, seeing you set up a doodle poll in order to plan and coordinate your senior prank, I feel confidence in how each of you has grown towards this moment when you leave our bubble.

I came across one nugget of wisdom that might serve you well in this next stage. A story in the Greenfield Recorder about a week ago described one of those projects in our school that takes students into the real world. Tenth graders, in their study of

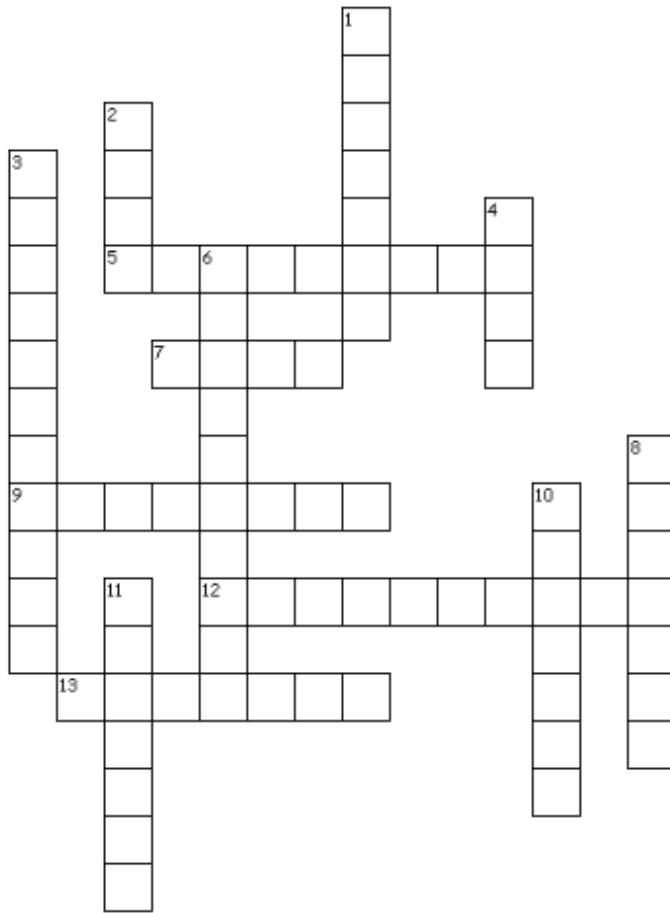
*~ Continued on page 6 ~*



*Peter Garbus, Principal*

## Grade 7—The Year

### Ask A 7th grader



### ANSWER KEY (if you need it)

#### ACROSS

- 5. Amphitryo
- 7. Maru
- 9. Ice Cream
- 12. Greek games
- 13. Filters

#### DOWN

- 1. Alberto
- 2. Yaca
- 3. Proportions
- 6. Playwright
- 8. Frisbee
- 10. Compost
- 11. Spinach

#### ACROSS

- 5. This ancient Greek play set the stage for devices of drama.
- 7. What is the name of the girl who played on the boys' team in Atletico San Pancho?
- 9. Sweet treat served during the latest TWIZ.
- 12. The social studies event that found 7th graders pushing buses, leaping buckets and hurling tires.
- 13. What we built to try to make the simulated sludge clean enough for a fish to swim in.

#### DOWN

- 1. What is the name of the futbolista and entrenador who played professionally in division 1 (hint: ama a Rebeca)
- 2. What is the mascot for Atletico San Pancho?
- 3. Mathematical tool used for sampling populations and winning the M&M challenge.
- 4. Length of the math walk-a-thon.
- 6. The ROLE our seventh grade CHARACTERS took on for their first ACT. Dramatic ASIDE: It will be quite a SCENE as they put these works into PRODUCTION.
- 8. Ultimately, many students preferred the circumference of this disk and the area of the playing field to the cylinders, cones and cubes of 3D geometry.
- 10. A hayride was an unexpected mode of transportation for our fragrant field-work to Martin's farm to learn about this ecosystem.
- 11. This was the mystery plant in our seeds of science project.

## Grade 8 News

### PASSAGES

HOW CAN YOU SHAPE SOCIETY? Eighth graders answered this guiding question as they finished off the school year with Passage. In 8th grade, Passage is an expedition that has many facets. We started with a visit to the Path of Life Garden in Vermont, where 8th graders compared the three-acre garden to the *Hero's Journey*, connected it to their Upstanders Interviews, and kicked off their preparation for their Passage Presentations. Passage in 8th grade also involves designing and making boats using only cardboard and tape, and then rowing them across the river (see photos). They also design a passage ceremony for themselves that celebrates their transition from middle to high school. What amazing passages they all completed - and what an AMAZING year!



*In a final test of their efforts in design and construction, as well as teamwork, 8th graders paddled their boats across the Green River and back. Whether their boat was a failure or success, students all learned something and had a lot of fun on a beautiful day on the water.*



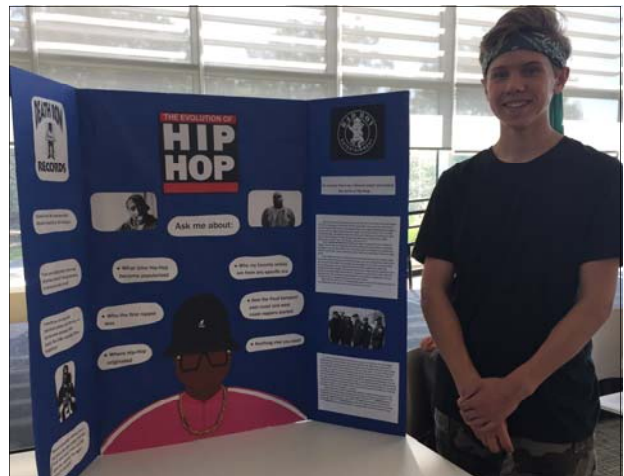


# DIVISION 2 NEWS

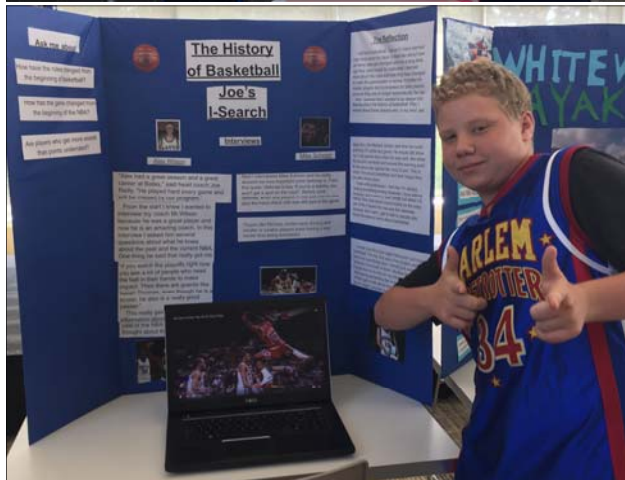
## 9<sup>th</sup> I-SEARCH FAIR

The ninth graders spent the past 8 weeks researching topics of their choice in English class. The main criteria for choosing a topic was that it should be something about which they were passionate and wanted to learn more.

Students presented what they learned through their research at the I-Search Fair at Greenfield Community College on Monday, June 12. Topics ranged widely and included everything from cake decorating, white water kayaking, video game design, and Buddhism to ADHD, PTSD, and the effects of prison on both inmates and guards. At the I-Search Fair, students presented posters and answered questions.



*Clockwise from top left: Students with their projects are Alexis Dimitriou, Isaiah Newcombe, Nick LaCoy, Joe Monkiewicz, and Evan Leaf and Noah Pitcoff.*



## DIVISION 3 NEWS

### TRUTH TO POWER

On June 8th, the Junior class presented ***Speak Truth to Power: Voices from Beyond the Dark*** at the Shea Theater. This Reader's Theater called on students to give voice to human rights activists from all over the world. The production, based on a play by Ariel Dorfman, was a fundraiser for the Traprock Center for Peace and Justice. It was a moving and powerful end to the school year.



### NEW YORK THEATER INTENSIVE

New York Theater spent several days in the city this past weekend. They saw Barefoot Shakespeare Company's presentation of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* at Summit Rock in Central Park, the off-Broadway spectacular *Whirligig*, and the Broadway production of *Marvin's Room*. They also toured some New York landmarks, survived heavy rainstorms, and rode hither and yon on the subway. Thanks for the adventures, New York! ~ Leah Plath & Josh Hornick ~



### SCULPTURE INTENSIVE — Jess Roll



The Introduction to Sculpture Intensive looked at three dimensional art from the most literal and representative, to abstract or conceptual, to sculptures that we weren't really even sure were sculptures: "ready mades", light installations, and interactive sound exhibits. Students traveled to Mass MOCA for a tour of the sculpture collection there. Newly inspired, we returned to Greenfield to craft our own pieces by transforming wood scraps, wire, egg cartons, books, and plaster.





### *Continued from page 1.....* Graduation Remarks

war, interviewed 92-year-old World War II Veteran Ray Elliott. Sitting in an armchair recently at his Amherst home surrounded by a small group of Four Rivers students, reflecting on his decades of life experience, Elliott said, "we have to listen before we talk. Everyone has a story, and we have to listen to get to know each other."

My wish as you head out into the wider world is that you listen before you talk, that you open yourselves to the stories in each and every individual you come across. Perhaps our school prepared you to do so, by throwing you together with a small group of diverse and random individuals with whom you have had to learn together, function together, and get along together on a day to day basis. I believe our communities and country need you to recognize each person's value, worth, and humanity as you encounter new adventures and challenges beyond Four Rivers.

Happy summer, everyone. ~ Peter Garbus, Principal ~

## NURSE'S NOTES

As we enter summer I wish everyone a safe and restful break. There are a few things to remember:

- **ALL students entering grade 7 and 10 in August 2017 require a physical exam by a physician**
- **Athletes must have a physical exam every 13 months**
- If your child takes any medication, **even if only at home**, please obtain medication orders from their physician. (Potentially any student could do overnight field work.) Medication orders are required for inhalers and Epi-Pens.

Physical Exam form and Medication Order Forms (please complete one form for each medication) can be found on our school web site under "Links + Documents -> Forms for Parents." ~ BE SAFE ~ Jeanne Milton, RN

## ULTIMATE NEWS

Congratulations to the girls varsity for winning the state championship this year and to the boys for coming in third place . Both teams had great seasons.

Last call for the summer ultimate intensive, June 26—30. If you're interested feel free to contact Terry Plotkin with any questions at:

[tplotkin@fourriverscharter.org](mailto:tplotkin@fourriverscharter.org)

*Photo: State Champs with their Coach Dovrah Plotkin*



<https://www.samhsa.gov/underage-drinking/about>  
<http://drugfree.org/download/marijuana-talk-kit/>  
**The "Talk. They Hear You." Campaign**

Brought to you by the  
[www.CommunitiesThatCareCoalition.org](http://www.CommunitiesThatCareCoalition.org)

## COLLEGE ADVISING

### *Juniors, are you wondering what to do with all that summer spare time? How about:*

- Read a good book! Need some ideas? The College Board's "101 Great Books Recommended for College-Bound Readers" is here:

[https://www.goodreads.com/list/show/21804.101\\_Great\\_Books\\_Recommended\\_for\\_College\\_Bound\\_Readers](https://www.goodreads.com/list/show/21804.101_Great_Books_Recommended_for_College_Bound_Readers)

- How about a few minutes each day doing some SAT prep? There are lots of good resources on the College Board website. You can review your scores from the June test and use the Kahn Academy test prep for targeted practice.
- Work! Save some money for college and demonstrate that you are reliable, responsible and hard working!
- Take a class at a local college or take a pre-college summer program.
- Visit colleges. Take campus tours and talk with admissions counselors.
- Create a résumé—a record of your accomplishments, activities and work experiences since you started high school.
- Look at the schools on your college list in Naviance. Update the list as you discover new schools that you are interested in and remove ones that don't seem right.
- Thinking about Early Decision or Early Action? If yes, you should be coming back to school in September with a good idea as to where you are planning to apply.
- Get an early start on your college essays. The Common App essay prompts are here:  
<http://www.commonapp.org/whats-appening/application-updates/common-application-announces-2017-2018-essay-prompts>

Relax! Go to the beach, have fun, kick back and prepare yourself for your senior year!

Questions over the summer? You can always email Mr. Stenson! [astenson@frcps.org](mailto:astenson@frcps.org).

## FAREWELL TO OUR NEW GRADUATES

Our newest alums are heading off into the world, and off to new adventures. Here are some of the places they are going and things they'll be doing.

*Becker College, Bournemouth University, Brandeis University, circus training, Colby College, College of the Atlantic, Colorado College, Eckerd College, Emerson College, Endicott College, Fitchburg State University, Full Sail University, gap year, Green Mountain College, Greenfield Community College, Hampshire College, Husson University, Johnson State College, Lesley University, Massachusetts College of the Liberal Arts, the military, Nutmeg Conservatory, Oberlin College, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, Rochester Institute of Technology, Sterling College, travel, U-Mass Amherst, Westfield State University, work.*

***Well Done Class of 2017!***

## ART TRIB — Sara Acton

I am thrilled to share that an in-class project has yielded student participation in *Art in the Orchard 2017* in Easthampton, Massachusetts. A large-scale wood sculpture designed by Division 2 Art students and fabricated during Spring Intensives will be exhibited this summer, and into the fall, at Park Hill Orchard. Students researched and developed a sculptural structure that would not only be visually interesting but would also serve as a habitat to support solitary pollinators like mason and leaf-cutter bees. Opening events for the exhibition will take place at the orchard on Saturday, August 12, 2017.



In other news, Micah Goldstein was nominated and selected to participate in "Art All-State." Micah attended a weekend of intensive arts events and activities designed to introduce rising high school seniors to collaborative art-making and higher education opportunities in the arts. Congratulations, Micah!

"This institution is an equal opportunity provider. To file a complaint of discrimination write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Washington, DC 20254."

Four River Charter Public School is dedicated to educating young people for lives of learning and service. The school offers a rigorous academic program aligned with the Massachusetts curriculum frameworks and an emphasis on character development for moral and social responsibility. Three central themes – nature, technology and community – pervade the teaching and learning at the school. Four Rivers works closely with parents and seeks both to serve and learn from the many resources of Franklin County.



Four Rivers Charter Public School  
248 Colrain Rd., Greenfield, MA 01301