

SUMMER
2016

HERON NEWS



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Hellos and Goodbyes...



For most adults, December and January are months in which we celebrate endings and beginnings. Having spent my professional life as an educator, however, I have found this to be true of the months of May and June, when I watch my students leave my classroom for the last time. After some deep breaths, early summer is usually the time a teacher reflects on what has been and actively prepares for the next school year. In kind, this edition of The Heron News is about endings and beginnings, goodbyes and hellos.

Farewell to Janet Edmondson, who has successfully shared her joy of music and sound with our young beneficiaries. Thank you, Janet, for giving so much of yourself to The Riverside School, I'm pleased that we can give tribute to your efforts here on pages 2-3.

It was just a little over a year ago when I learned that Kim Butler would be taking on the role of Interim Head of School. I remember then how impressed I was that the "call" to Riverside could be so strong for a professional that had made her mark in another field. Kim's knowledge, support, and contagious enthusiasm for all that is best for Riverside have been welcoming to me. Kim, this is a heartfelt personal thank you for the time and energy you have given me in these past four months!

June begins by welcoming our new three and four year olds to Riverside's campus! Preschool Director Heidi Jenkins Andrews and assistant Dianah Hale will lead our youngest students in what has been our music and art room and a dedicated outdoor play space. Specific updates on the program and facility are on page 7.

We say hello to two brand new faculty members Erin Glocke and Jacob Topping. Erin will teach the 4th grade. Erin graduated from Penn State earning a degree in Childhood and Early Adolescent Education. Erin is inspired by concentrating her teaching focus on grades 4 and 5 because, she says, "it is at this age where students are now reading for content; wanting to discover and to inquire".

Jacob Topping will be our new music teacher. Jacob

earned his degree in Music Education from Lebanon Valley College in 2015. While Jacob's primary instrument is the trombone, he plays guitar and piano and can teach all instrument groups and has significant experience with dramatic performance. Jacob hopes to bring world music to his classes at Riverside as a way to help our young students appreciate and enjoy other cultures.

We also say "welcome back" to Nathan Gair, an alumnus of Riverside who will be taking on a full time faculty position as well as leadership of our Latin Club. More updates on Nathan and his thoughts about returning to Riverside can be found on page 4.

My June, my beginning, has commenced. With the help of my new colleagues at Riverside, I have immersed myself in learning names, procedures, and facilities. I have observed several classes and participated in events. The best part of this beginning for me will be in August when I can stand on the porch of the house each morning, greeting and welcoming the students and parents of the Riverside community.

Michelle Ralston
Head of School



Michelle looks forward to spending time in classrooms with all of our students, here she is pictured in the Carriage House on Grandparents' Day with her daughter Jenna's son Clint.

Elementary Play Day and Plays

The elementary students had their turn to shine on stage with two well-choreographed and hysterically funny plays, *Pirates* and *Stone Soup*. Directed by Janet Edmondson in her final bow, one could not help but feel her pride and enjoyment in watching our young thespians sing



and dance throughout their entertaining performances.

The Carriage House kids told the classic tale of *Stone Soup*, in which townspeople come together to help

each other create a special and filling meal. Charlie Heinrich-Clark, Rosa Patoine, and Brock Laflamme

marched in proud unison on their journey from house to house in search of kind donations to their big pot of soup. The finale was a perfectly fitting circle



dance in unity.

The 2nd-5th grade production of *Pirates*, as whimsical as it was colorful, had perfectly matched siblings that played the “Color Beard” pirates singing and dancing alongside the “No Beards,” while the “Castaways” begged to join their ranks. Donovan Randall played The King of the High Cs and his brother Colin was his loyal Prince, impressing the audience with their comical timing and vocal skills.

As usual, parent support was plentiful: from costume and prop preparation, to a bit of makeup applied at home. Parents in the audience were proud to see their students shine on this small stage full of students with huge hearts. Such supportive community of parents, perseverant students, and dedicated faculty help make the arts well integrated into Riverside curricula.

Middle School Play Week: *The Lion King*



This year’s production electives and Play Week traditions transformed the Assembly Hall into the Serengeti of East Africa and our middle school students into the majestic creatures of that region. Peter Sahlin directed the students once again with patience and a vision for their extraordinary potential.

When asked how they feel about Play Week, the students’ responses reflect both the effort and pleasure involved. Trevor Lussier, a set builder, says, “the play is a lot of work but really fun.” Phoebe Barrett, a



costumer, mused, “the week is really fun because we get to joke around while getting things done.” This year, the props elective included crafting puppets to represent many of the animals. From giraffe heads that fit on elongated wooden necks to paper gazelles that strided through the air, the audience was wowed. There were also masterfully designed constellations, made of Christmas lights in dark fabric, that helped set the nighttime scenes.

The show opened with the melodic urgings of Ruby Yerkes mastering the character of the shaman, Rakfi as she sang in Swahili.



Katie Lyon, James Lamontagne, Waverly Griffin and Zach Lemieux portrayed the young and old versions of Simba and Nala and took the audience on a journey through the

animal kingdom as they grow up to find their places in the circle of life. The evil Hyena Army of Aurora Gilbert, Austin Sicard, Austin Kapoukranidis, and John Keenan terrified us all. The Ensemble performed as hand drummers, choral singers, waving grasses, and more. We were all humming songs like, “Hakuna Matata,” and “Can You Feel the Love Tonight,” for weeks.

Goodbye Janet...

We are sad to say goodbye to our music teacher Janet Edmondson this spring. With all of her children having moved out of their home, she and her husband Paul expect their next life adventure to take them to the mid-atlantic or southeast, where Janet hopes to continue to teach music courses.

Janet came to Riverside because of its strong local reputation, especially with regard to music and performing arts. “My experience confirmed all that I had heard, including not only support, but genuine enthusiasm for students to be immersed in a rich, challenging musical experience. In fact, my experience and the growth I’ve witnessed in our students have really exceeded any expectations I had.”

Janet taught our students music theory, instrumental lessons, chorus, band, and dramatic musical performance. She has been a flexible member of the faculty team, adapting to schedule and space changes constantly, and joining in our Play Day and Play Week traditions with gusto. Peter Sahlin,

who accompanied the Chorus and co-directed the middle school plays with Janet, explains, “Working with Janet over these past several years has been a joy. Her incredible ear and her sense of what kids could do vocally helped me immensely with casting and with directing the shows we did. It’s hard to believe our time together is over!”

While she was doing such extraordinary work with our students over the last four years, she was simultaneously teaching high school and college level music courses, and conducting the NEK Community Orchestra. Janet looks forward to her next teaching position being in one single school, where she can dive into focused instruction of both ensembles and individuals.

Janet says that Riverside’s legacy with her will be the pride and joy she feels in what she’s seen our students accomplish, not only in musical skill, but in understanding the role that music plays in our lives and cultures.

Alumni News

Class of 2016

Sarah Barrett - Phillips Exeter Academy
Elijah Clarke - St. Johnsbury Academy
Marc Lamontagne - St. Johnsbury Academy
Zack Lemieux - St. Johnsbury Academy
Meredith Nicol - Lyndon Institute
Piper Rolfe - St. Johnsbury Academy
Abby Searles - Cabot High School



THE CLASS OF 2016

Class of 2012

Carolyn Berlack - Westminster College
Rose Breen - University of Vermont
Finley Cobb - University of Richmond
Rilan Cobb (Riverside '11) - University of Vermont
Armen Emery - Lyndon State College
Erin O'Farrell - Bates College
Michaela Peters - University of Tampa
Cyrstal Smolag - Lyndon State College
Matt Wilson - Gap Year
Jasmine Young - Lyndon State College



Erin O'Farrell '12 was this year's Valedictorian at Lyndon Institute.

Polly Walton Yerkes '86 agreed to join our Board of Trustees this spring. We look forward to her stewardship from both the alumni and parent perspective. Polly and Jamie Yerkes '85 children Ruby (8th grade) and Gus (5th grade) will be joined at Riverside by their younger sister Lila in Kindergarten this fall.

Nathan Gair '02, after filling in as a long-term substitute this spring, has become a full-time Riverside faculty member. He will be teaching Latin, Ancient History, and Spanish. He says that "Riverside has been very important to me and my family, including both of my sisters, **Molly '04** and **Nora '09**. The students here get a well rounded education, and I look forward to helping with the language components of that."



Laurie Boswell celebrated Burke Mountain Academy's graduation with Riverside alumni: **Chase Dwyer '12**, **Matt Wilson '12**, and **Moriah Wilson '10**.



Since graduating from Riverside he attended St. Johnsbury Academy and Dartmouth College, and worked in political campaigns and local public health organizations.

Nathan notes that some things at Riverside are just as they were when he was a student: the house; the heron; the Latin motto; Suzanne Tanner teaching art; carnivals and field trips; graduation; the high value placed on mutual respect; and the safe space that is created for students to be themselves. The differences are the increased grade levels (which demands greater responsibility of the older students and support of the community); Spanish instead of French; and classrooms in the Barn and Granary instead of the downstairs of the house. He also



enjoyed learning about and taking full part in the newer Play Week tradition.

Nathan also looks forward to taking a lead in the recently established Latin Club; “It’s fun traveling off to events, celebrating Rome, and competing over the facts of grammar, history, mythology, etc. This summer’s National Convention is going to be an awesome trip with three of our rising 8th graders and the opportunity to work with Roy and the LI team as well as meeting other schools’ groups and teachers.”

Ben Price ‘07 completed his degree in December, and has just recently moved out to Coeur D’Alene, Idaho, where he will be working for the U.S. Forest Service. He spent the past couple of summers fighting forest fires in Oregon, and grew to love the west coast. He says he thinks of Riverside often.

John Bailey ‘08 graduated from the University of New Hampshire with a double major in Psychology and Justice and a minor in Forensic Sciences. This year he interned with the Harvard University Police, working on emergency action policy and this summer he’ll be interning with the Grafton County Attorney’s office. Next year he’ll be applying to law school.

Rohan Racine ‘08 graduated cum laude from Tufts University with a degree in chemistry and economics. He is preparing to take MCATs this summer in hopes of attending medical school soon.

Cyrus Ready-Campbell ‘08 will continue at Stanford University, having recently switched majors from computer science to English and history at the end of his Junior year. He’s writing for a San Francisco-based magazine called 7x7 this summer.

Ava Schein ‘08 graduated cum laude from Barnard College at Columbia



University. Ava is going to study human rights law beginning this summer at Cardozo School of Law at Yeshiva University in New York.



Faculty Update

Cornelia Rose Rath was born on January 27 to Dave and Nelia Dwyer Rath. “Cora” has already been warmly welcomed into her Riverside family as

she spent a number of school days with us in the spring and has been cared for by many helpful faculty, parents, and students.

Spring Field Trip: Lexington - Boston - Concord

One can feel the anticipation building among the students in the weeks prior to the trip! Surely all the alumni remember the excitement of exploring a new city, the slight nerves of staying in a hotel away from mom and for two nights, the hours spent in Advisory researching destinations of class adventures and dinners out, and the constant wondering about carpool and room assignments. This year's trip was carefully timed and planned by Amalia Harris while Nelia was on leave with her new daughter. She took on the task with energy and flexibility, providing a fabulous learning and bonding experience for the students and the chaperones alike.

The trip was bookended on Wednesday and Friday with experiences at the Minute Man National Park in Lexington (where Riversiders were impressively recruited as soldiers into the revolutionary army with full rifle training) and a beautiful tour of Walden Pond in Concord (where our students were asked to contemplate the natural beauty of the pond and the intense experiences of Henry David Thoreau).

The whole school ventured onto the subway and into the city on Thursday, and the students say they will never forget their visit to the Mapparium at the Mary Baker Eddy Library. As they entered the hall, they found themselves completely surrounded by a globe. The students were awestruck by the geographical art, the unique beauty of the stained glass, as well as its testimony to geopolitical changes that have occurred in the 90 years since its installation. Also startling and eerily entertaining were the acoustics. The sphere creates unusual sound effects as the glass walls do not absorb sound, but instead reflect it; upon entry all were instructed not to yell and to be conscious of one's volume. Conversations from opposite ends of the bridge were as clear as if the speakers were standing next to you. Coupled with the brilliant colors and delicate nature of the structure, Riversiders enjoyed a unique learning experience that will be impossible to forget!

The rest of the day was spent in the class trips to such marvels as the Museum of Science and Aquarium, and a wandering through of Harvard Square, coupled with the hours of memories made while splashing in fountains, lunching on the Common, embracing the warmth of spring, and lounging on the hotel lawn.

4-5th graders Henry Griffin, CJ Hunt, and Colter Thibaudeau looked cool on the ride down to Massachusetts.



5-6th grade girls cooled off in a city fountain.



The entire school was recruited into the revolutionary army during a program called "Rebels, Redcoats, and Homespun Heroes" at Minute Man National Park in Concord.



4th grader CJ Hunt and 6th grader Luke McCormack engaged in explorations at the Boston Museum of Science.



6th grader Trevor Lussier imagined himself as Henry David Thoreau while visiting Walden Pond in Lexington.



Students contemplated Thoreau's experience at the presumed site of his secluded cabin.



7th graders Austin Kapoukranidis and Lucas Patoine and 6th graders Phoebe Barrett and Zoe Heinrich-McMullen successfully navigated the subway system to their various destinations.



Elementary Day Trip - Montshire Museum

Mrs. Toney, Allee, Sarah, and a number of volunteer parent chaperones ushered our K-3rd graders down to the Montshire Museum in Norwich, Vermont, while older students were in Massachusetts. Renowned for its engaging science exhibits, the museum easily entertained our groups for two hours of pure, self-led exploration. After an outdoor lunch break, the K-1st graders participated in a lesson about light and reflection and the 2-3rd graders explored buoyancy in a program called “Sink and Float.”



Kindergarten boys Ivan Dovholuk, Gabe Adams, and Brock Laflamme steered water in new directions with the moveable bricks in the fountain.



2nd grader Izzy Butler shows off the bubble she created.

Preschool Update

The Riverside Preschool is preparing for an exciting year serving children ages 3, 4 and 5. The program will be held in what was the art and music room in the Barn, and those programs will move to a yurt building to be placed near the Granary. The yurt will enjoy a great deal of natural light, and will include heat, electricity, and hot water.

Although we originally thought to create a new building to house the preschool program, on further reflection, we felt that the new program was better integrated into Riverside by having it within one of our existing buildings. As the preschool program grows, we will be considering its needs as part of strategic planning for Riverside.

The preschool room has gotten a deep cleaning and a fresh coat of paint, and Preschool Director Heidi Andrews is already setting up the space with a warm and inviting atmosphere for children and families. A section of an interior wall has been opened up into the vestibule area to allow the preschoolers easy access to their cubby and bathroom area, while allowing the preschool teachers to supervise them. Heidi and our assistant teacher Dianah Hale are working diligently to design and create a room that will be exciting for children. There will be a dramatic play area, writing center, block center, science center, art center, and library center.

We also have constructed a fenced-in outdoor play area just outside the lower level of the Barn. This area will include natural logs for balancing, a sand hill with a slide built in, a willow house for playing, and an outdoor art easel.

The exterior colors of the Arts Yurt will match the other buildings on campus.



Upcoming Events - Please Join Us!

8th Grade Day August 29, 8 am-1pm
New Family Orientation August 29, 6-8 pm
Fall Fresh Start & Family BBQ September 9, 3-6 pm
Fall Field Trip at Copper Cannon ... September 14-16
Fall Festival & Yard Sale October 1



Riverside's 35th graduation looked and sounded much the same as its first: students processed to sing Gaudeamus, spoke about their

experiences, and earned awards in a variety of endeavors. This year's speaker was former Latin teacher Roy Starling, who articulated life lessons from four of his favorite classical myths. The seven members of the class of 2016 were presented with diplomas signed by interim Head of School Kim Butler and incoming Board President Carol Moore.

