

COMING UP:

- March 20: Regional Science Fair
- March 31: Interim 5/final elective grades
- April 2- 11: Spring break
- April 10: State science fair

RVGS Newsletter

February-March 2021



Counselor's Corner

Congratulations on surviving another intense yet completely unique Intersession. As we delve deeper into 2nd semester we are working with students to make sure they are as prepared as they can be academically for next year and beyond. We know that this year has been unlike any previous year, and many of our students have struggled to either learn or maintain good time management and study skills. While I have been working with students individually, we know more is needed. Therefore, Mr. Levy and I will be holding sessions on Wednesdays beginning in mid-March to teach and review those important skills. I am still happy as always to work with students individually. If your student needs some help, please reach out and let me know.

Students have already completed registration for their RVGS math and science courses and we are looking ahead to our virtual elective shopping day on March 17th. You will receive more information in days to come as to how that will work for you and your student. One important date this spring that you should go ahead and mark on the calendar is our Senior Dinner which has been scheduled for May 12th. I would love to say that we will be at the Hotel Roanoke as is tradition, but I anticipate it will be a virtual event as it was last year. More information and details will come out after spring break.

As always, if you have any questions or need any assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me.

-Kathy Sebolt

Alumni Support at RVGS

RVGS students have a wide range of diverse interests outside of the typical classroom. We are excited to encourage those interests with the development of a new program at RVGS that would support and fund students to pursue work they are passionate about outside of common structures like science fairs. RVGS Alumni Sachith Gullapalli (RVGS, 2013) has generously donated a substantial sum to help us get this program started. His donation will also be used to match Alumni donations to support the RVGS Foundation and assist with the establishment of this exciting new opportunity.



Sachith recently explained his motivation to support current RVGS students. "I can confidently say that the people I met at RVGS had a defining effect on my worldview and that the opportunities this school afforded me changed the trajectory of my entire life. It can be hard to understand the magnitude of the impact this school has on its students, and in the longer term, the impact its students go on to have in the world. Having attended Gov School, we have a unique perspective to share on this, and a concomitant responsibility to address the very real and important issues of equity and access that plague our education system and society at large."

RVGS is so grateful for the support of our Alumni network and the opportunity to offer current students a new outlet for their creative and philanthropic endeavors. We hope to have more information available in the spring.

Message from the Director

It's hard to believe that we managed to pull off Intersession in the middle of the pandemic! Yet again our school community pulled together to persevere through the challenges of this school year, and I couldn't be more proud of the determination our students and staff demonstrated in the face of adversity.

As we move into the final phase of the school year, we are also turning our eyes to the future. So many aspects of the "new normal" that have emerged over the past 12 months are *not* what we want to be "normal" in the post-pandemic world. Our students have worked to maintain their effort and studies during this difficult time, but we also recognize that current conditions can have undesirable impacts. Some of the greatest benefits of attending RVGS come from the work ethic, time management, and determination that students cultivate in their years as Lab Rats. Through our "2nd Semester Level-Up" initiative, we are seeking to support our students' needs in these areas, as Mrs. Sebolt notes in her column in this newsletter. If you have any questions about this effort, please contact us to learn more. As always, please get in touch if you have any questions or concerns.

Virtual Project Forum

Project Forum looked a little different this year with an all virtual format. Students were able to present their projects to judges in “virtual category rooms” that was moderated by a member of the RVGS faculty. A virtual Open House followed to allow families, friends, and the community to view the student’s presentations. That afternoon, students and their families tuned in to watch a video of the behind-the-scenes activity that took place during Intercession created by RVGS alumni Josh Taibbi. Mr. Levy followed to announce the much-anticipated category and special award winners. Project Forum award winners will have the opportunity to compete at the Western Virginia Region competition to be held on March 20th. Recordings of the video and award ceremony can be found on the RVGS website under “About Us”.



Colors VA Magazine



We know that there are some very special students at RVGS but it is especially nice when a local magazine recognizes it too! Recently, Uyen Tran (RVGS/WF) and Zoie Mills (RVGS/WF) were chosen as Scholars

of the Month for ColorVA Magazine. Both girls were chosen as role models to other young adults in the Roanoke Area due to their dedication to their education and their positive attitudes.

Uyen has become very dedicated to the local NAACP Youth Council. She hopes to inspire other students that they also can be successful and make a difference in their community. Zoie has dedicated herself to her studies with the goal of becoming Valedictorian for her class at William Fleming. She is becoming more involved in community activism and finding her own voice in the community.

Check out their stories at www.colorsvamag.com/scholar-of-the-month

Faculty spotlight: Connor Wade

Mr. Wade may be the newest addition to the Physics department but he is a familiar face to many students at RVGS. Mr. Wade has officially joined the RVGS teaching staff after being a student teacher for the 2019-2020 school year. We recently caught up with him to discuss his path to us!

I grew up in Gainesville Va, it's in the northern part of the state. For my education I graduated from Virginia Tech's physics department in 2018. It was while I was working on my undergraduate degree in physics I had the opportunity to be involved in the physics programs education courses, which got me interested in teaching and is what made me decide that I wanted to be a teacher. Once I graduated from the physics department, I started my master's degree in education. While working on my master's degree I had the opportunity to complete my student teaching portion of my program at RVGS. Once I completed my student teaching I graduated and received my Master's degree in 2020. After graduating I started teaching at RVGS in the fall of 2020.

Outside of RVGS, one of the things I enjoy doing is bike riding!

Please help me in welcoming Connor Wade to the RVGS family!



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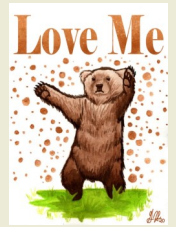


Instagram

Making the Best of It

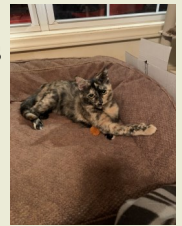
COVID has certainly changed everyone's plans and schedules this year but we thought it would be fun to highlight some of the positive side effects of quarantining.

During the quarantine, I was able to improve my art skills! Previously, I just never had time to draw or paint and was always busy with other extracurricular activities. With all the new free-time, I drew and painted watercolor pieces that I was really passionate about! Now I have officially started my own small business called Georgia Peach Art. I made my own website (georgiapeachart.com) and started my own art Instagram (@georgiapeachart)! I had always loved drawing, but now I can really follow my art dreams and turn my passion into a future job venture. All I needed was a little extra time (and boredom) and a small push! -Georgia Honts



I learned how to make all natural soap from scratch...and made a lot. I also learned to appreciate the incredible mental health benefits of regular yoga practice. -Kathy Sebolt

My positive from covid-19 is my kitten! Without staying home and going nowhere for a few months, I never would've thought to adopt my kitten. I've never been a cat person and neither has my family, but I'm glad I talked to my friend about cats and decided to get one. I did a lot of research and adopted Aurora (Rory for short) over the summer. She was found in a parking lot in North Carolina with her siblings and the family that found her was allergic to cats, so they asked for someone else to foster them on Facebook. My friend's sister's family fostered them until they were about 7 weeks old, and I adopted her in July.—Natalie Davis



In 2020, I found my hobby of designing and creating rings! I even started up a small business on Instagram and have had so much fun with it! -Clara Higgins

The best thing that has happened to me in the past year is my acceptance into MIT. After many years of hard work and doubting myself, being accepted was a dream come true and proved to me that I can achieve anything I want as long as I put my mind to it. -Taylor Dawson

Being able to reflect and find myself to being able to communicate with more people (like obtaining advice from Chemists at DuPont, reading to kids in California, and spending more time talking to friends and family), COVID-19 contributed and most certainly is contributing to, some of the most impactful things that ever happened to me. -Uyen Tran

So I have spent every summer doing so sort of “handyman project”. This past Spring I built my girls a playground since all of the ones around us were closed. -Matthew Browning



I have read many more books than that in the past. Also, my wife and I have been hiking at least one day each weekend, no matter the weather up in Floyd County. We have done hikes from 2 miles to 10 miles in one day. We had to work up to the 10 miler because there was a lot of uphill parts (it was the Rock Castle Gorge trail near Rocky Knob in Floyd County). Even with the snowy or icy weather, we have still been able to hike as long as the roads are clear to get the hiking areas. This past weekend was pretty tough due to the trails being block by downed trees or tree limbs -Don Wages

Behind the Scenes of Intersession

