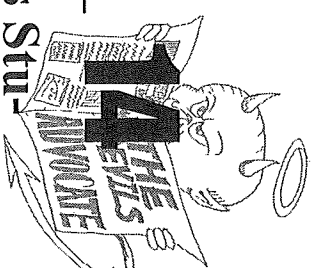
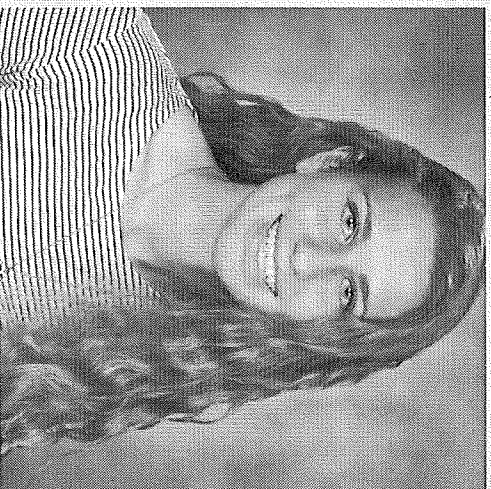


Features



Star Students of the Month



Lauren Maksymuk

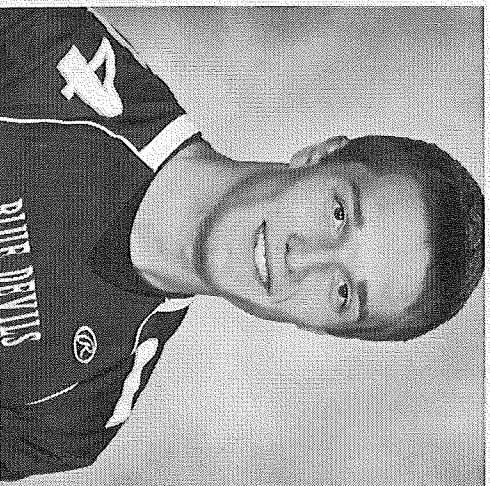
Favorite subject: Art

Favorite activity outside of school: Playing the piano and soccer

Role model: Her mom and dad

Favorite thing about high school: Hanging out with friends

Goals for the future: To be able to visit every state and become a graphic designer



Andrew Hamel

Favorite subject: English

Favorite activity outside of school: Playing football

Role model: His dad

Favorite thing about high school: Making memories with other students and teachers

Goals for the future: To get a football scholarship and a degree in business

“National Reading Month” Encourages Students to Turn the Page

By: Maximilian Leesch
Staff Writer

As students of Mrs. Ranger’s first grade class finish their snacks, they gather and sit by the rocking chair in the corner of the room ‘criss-cross-applesauce.’

One young reader begins his story: “Today is a big day at the track...”

It is now reading month, and first grader Cole is one of the many students in Mrs. Ranger’s class that reads for the class in celebration of ‘March is Reading Month.’

Two students per day read a book of their choosing (with parent approval, of course) in front of their peers as a “Ranger Reader”.

Friendly Dolphins, *Hot Wheels: Thrill Ride*, and a *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtle* story called *Too Much Ooze!* are some of the stories and books a few students have read.

Reading in front of a class is something encouraging for young students, so being a “Ranger Reader” helps them develop a positive attitude towards reading. Mrs. Ranger said in an email, “It gives them a real confidence boost for their reading.”

Not only is Reading Month celebrated in the Lee School, but in the Middle School as well. Sixth grade teacher Mrs. Graham was in charge of the RMS reading activities.

“National Reading Month is something that we always look forward to as the perfect opportunity to reinforce the importance of reading everyday.” Mrs. Graham said in an email.

The theme for this year’s occasion was “Fun in the Sun”, and students actively took part in various reading activities. Students partici-

ated in RMS’s 23rd Annual Read-A-Thon and raised \$750 to purchase new books for the library. Mrs. Graham said, “It is always great to see our teachers and principals reading right along with our students.”

Fifth and sixth grade students were also involved in a new Book Tasting opportunity in which they would sample books and then fill out a menu with their thoughts of the book.

With this, students were able to sample books they may not have previously known about.

“Some ended up signing those books out and were pleasantly surprised to discover a new author or interest,” said Mrs. Graham.

Students in the Middle School have been reading all sorts of material. Remi, a sixth grader, has been reading comic books such as Spiderman and books on Greek mythology (his favorite god being Poseidon). Remi believes that reading has helped him with his school work. “I started getting As and Bs in my classes,” he said.

Brandon, another sixth grader, reads books mostly involving either the military or skateboarding. In fact, he learned how to skateboard from an instructional book found in the RMS library.

Lily has an interest in football, so many of the books she reads are about the sport. She said, “You can use things you learn from books later in life.”

Reading has proven to be essential for the futures of all students, not just here in Richmond. Students across the country read all March long in honor of Dr. Seuss’ birthday on
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Scalpels, Needles and Many Hairy Patients

Junior Ashley Kuzatko volunteers at Howell Veterinary

By: Cecily McPherson
Opinions Co-editor

Tails wag.

Furry bodies scamper.

A connection is created.

For junior Ashley Kuzatko, animals have always been an important part of childhood. Growing up and caring for dogs is a natural instinct for her.

Therefore, when the opportunity for service hours arose, Kuzatko decided to volunteer at Howell Veterinary care center on 31 mile.

“I have always been an animal lover,” said Kuzatko, who has a golden retriever, husky mix named Harley. “I was interested in getting service hours volunteering in an environment where I would be able to care for animals.”

It was only a couple weeks after volunteering, that the clinic offered her a job position. Six months later, Kuzatko is comfortably situated in her fast pace, and very hairy career.

On a typical day, Ashley will help with the boarded animals. This often consists of caring for the “patients” when ill.

“I was trained to draw blood, take x-rays, and clip nails. I like the responsibility,” Kuzatko said. “It’s a lot better than bagging groceries at Kroger!”

Kuzatko said that the clinic is also very easy on hours. Balancing school and dance, Kuzatko hardly has free time.

“I’m lucky,” she said. “The clinic understands my schedule and allows me to pick my

hours. I will usually work about 6 hours a week- two hours a day. This is definitely the biggest perk.”

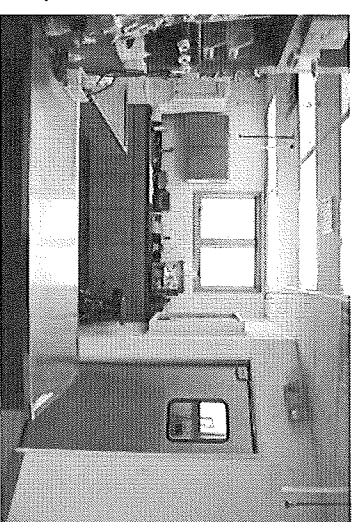
The laid back atmosphere of her work environment makes it an exciting event to look forward to. The “patients” have become her friends, especially the dogs.

Her particular favorite relationship she has built, is with a golden retriever named Rascar. “Golden retrievers have always been my favorite dog breed. They are so energetic and cute,” she said.

Kuzatko, though interested in psychiatry in the future, could not be happier with the skills she has gained from this career.

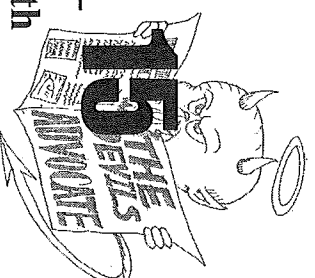
Working in this atmosphere shows superb work ethics. Surely it will also hold a solid spot on her resume.

“My job is cool,” Kuzatko said. “Not many people my age can say that.”



The interior of one of the many rooms that Ashley may find herself working in while volunteering.
Photo Credit: <http://howellanimalhospital.com/location/>

FEATURES



BDA to MSU: Alumnus Gets a Great Lead in Journalism

By: Beau Brockett, Jr.
Co-Features Editor

In the 8 a.m. mists every tranquil Sunday, Brooke Kansier leaves the comfort of her “lovely closer” apartment and takes to the frigid Lansing streets.

Through the breeze and cars, she braves her way to the tan-bricked walls of Michigan State University’s College of Communication Arts and Sciences.

There, she spends the next four hours editing a journal with more circulation than the *Detroit Free Press* and headed by a Pulitzer-Prize-winning journalist. After spending two weeks organizing, interviewing and writing.

As grueling and frightening as it may sound, the Richmond alumnus – now a journalism major – loves it.

In fact, RHS’s own *Blue Devil’s Advocate* largely inspired her passion for the art. Taking a chance and joining the team her junior year as a news editor, Kansier found that her perfectionist nature and interest in writing made jobs, like editing, quite enjoyable. “It really steered me into what I wanted to do,” she said.

Along with the *BDA*, Key Club and NHS also remain strong in her mind. “It’s a cool sense of community,” she said in regards to both extracurricular activities at RHS. “I would recommend that to people. And, it looks good for colleges and is really a good experience.”

And now, five years later, the 2011 graduate finds herself in the School of Journalism and potentially pursuing a minor in Spanish.

Although she reassures that the program is great, aside from its beautiful greenery, architecture and atmosphere, she did not choose MSU over the Universities of Michigan and Chicago for newspaper. She went for her original aspiration: teaching English.

However, she said after testing the career path, “I couldn’t see myself doing it because it was really draining.”

So, she set forth on another interest: photography. But after discovering an art major would be needed, she set sail again...

...And landed in the College of CAS. “I always liked writing,” Kansier said. “That’s part of what drove me to do it.”

While there are a few lectures scattered about her schedule, many of the classes she is taking mirror the intense, hands-on newsroom process, articles and all, that have helped spur her journalistic growth. For instance, as the article due dates dwindled from two weeks to one, short-stated due dates of the newspaper world became easier.

From the classes, Kansier found her well-roundedness in writing techniques – from news stories to features.

The professors were the icing on the cake. “They bring a lot of field experience, so they bring a lot of passion,” she said. They know where the young reporters are coming from and where they will go, making the teaching methods much more efficient than by a professor who merely studied the subject.

One of those professors offered an internship to the largely student-run *Capital News Service*, the online journal she spends those Sunday mornings editing. The *CNS* sends many of its articles across The Mitten and the U.P. to partnership newspapers, like the *Holland Sentinel* and the *Michigan Citizen*.

The freelance publication offered only six positions. Perry Parks, its current instructor, said he looked for people who were committed to hard work, willing to devote heavy time and were serious about the profession, especially within the state. Kansier, naturally, sealed a

Parks found the Blue-Devil-turned-Spartan to be a great writer who was dedicated, asking the right questions and interested in service. “She’s really turning in good stories, which is what we want in a journalist,” he said in a phone interview.

The *CNS* is where Kansier spends most of her former free time; visions of kickboxing with her roommate have long since faded.

Armed with press badges, she and her fellow correspondents have full access to storm Capitol Hill for the latest topics of debate in politics.

Since her entry, seven of her articles have been printed elsewhere throughout Michigan. It commenced with a story on parents’ opinions of online education that published in the *Grand Rapids Business Journal*.

“We get to do our own stories,” Kansier said, “but every Monday we get to do a group interview.” Politicians and activists alike meet to discuss their points of interest. It was one of these interviews that laid the groundwork for one of her prize articles: “Congress may take up state management of gray wolves.”

When a member of The Sierra Club – the largest environmental grassroots organization – arrived one Monday, the mentioning of a war over the canines piqued her interest.

A few days later, she was pawing over research on a proposed bill that would remove federal protection of the lupines from Michigan, Minnesota, Wisconsin and Wyoming.

What she found was an intense debate. While hunters claimed the species had fully recovered from endangerment and now posed a threat to communities, others cried aful, saying a U.P. population of 700 was still too low.

Many notable interviews resulted, including those with State Senator Tom Casperson and Jill Fritz, director of Keep Michigan Wolves Protected.

As she had known from past experience, interviewing is tricky business. “People will tell you what they want to hear and what they want printed,” Kansier said. Many were even found to quote decades-old sources. Thus, research becomes the core for information while the opinionated responses must be carefully applied to the article.

As for contact, phone calls are heavily preferred over emails when personal meetings are not feasible. When emailing, “you just get something really inorganic,” she said. “It sounds like a textbook sometimes.”

Once the ideas are generated, the interviews conducted and the stories typed and edited, the final is put on *CNS*’s site. But for Kansier, the most rewarding experience is seeing her article published in another newspaper.

“There are always things I’ve wanted to change,” she said. On the wolf article in particular, “I talked to too many people, I think.”

Coincidentally, a chance for revising was given. Two weeks later, she published a follow-up that addressed the science of the gray wolf population rather than the politics. With less interviewing and problems, she was happier with the turnout.

So far, her original wolf article has been published in the *Bay Mill News* and both have been published in the *Petoskey News-Review*.

In the context of her many classes and opportunities from high school to college, she gives these words to the aspiring journalist: “Don’t give up on it because it’s really hard. Your first article is the hardest thing, but each week it gets easier. Don’t be afraid to call people; it’s so much easier. And be persistent.”

Where is the busy future MSU 2016 graduate now? Probably off on her latest beat: K-12 education, Common Core and PRA-tests for teachers.

March is Reading Month

Continued from page 14
March 2nd.

Mrs. Graham also holds a Book Club for anyone in the Middle School. This year, 12 students read the novel *Wonder* together and would meet to discuss their thoughts. They would also discuss why the author mentioned certain songs in the novel as well as watch a few videos by the author. “Precepts, which are basically quotes or rules to live by, were also a big part of the book,” added Mrs. Graham. RMS librarian Mrs. Plagens has noticed how students have been eager to read. “They’re very engaged in what they’re doing,” she said.

Mrs. Plagens has seen students read all sorts of books this year, such as *The Guinness Book of World Records*. She has also witnessed students reading different book series by authors like Margaret Haddix (*The Shadow Children*) and Rick Riordan (*Percy Jackson & the Olympians*).

Reading Counts is a program that has been part of RMS for many years and has become an essential part of reading within the school. Students earn points after taking quizzes online about the books they read. “Everything research shows points to the fact that there is a direct correlation between reading and improved academic performance, vocabulary, writing skills and test scores,” said Mrs. Graham.

With all the data and research pointing to success in school, RCSD has proven that reading truly counts. As said by Dr. Seuss, “The more that you read, the more things you will know. The more you learn, the more places you’ll go.”

The students of RMS and Mrs. Ranger’s “Ranger Readers” will be continuing their progress to becoming better readers for the rest of March and beyond, making every word and sentence a valuable element of their education.

First grader Cole is one of the many students who will be reading for years to come, benefiting his future and the overall future of society. He finishes his story: “That was a thrill ride!”

Continued from Page 6

Angelica thought it would be the best thing to do to gain some skill before attempting to draw an entire face. Eventually, she finally got to draw the whole face. She was happy with the results and continued to experiment. “I believe it’s important to see what you are capable of, how far you can go, and where you can go beyond,” she said.

Over time, Angelica had finally perfected the art of drawing faces. Even her Art teacher Mrs. Belf was convinced that Angelica’s drawings could win awards. “Mrs. Belf was really happy with my drawings. She suggested that I should enter my work into the art show.”

And she did. With her success, Angelica gives her advice on what made her the artist she is today: “Performing the same mundane drawing techniques every day might develop your artistic skill in one area, but creeping outside of your boundaries can help develop you in many areas. It’s important to go outside of what you are used to.”

It’s important to not only expand your skill, but to help you find out what you love to draw the most. She said, “That’s what being an artist is all about. Having many skills while doing what you love.”

Or, relishing in her recently won Bill Cote Endowment Scholarship of \$2,400. It’s even more of an honor considering she was chosen as its recipient by the *CNS*, what the College of CAS calls, “one of the most innovative and respected bureaus of its kind on any college campus.”

Where will she be? In the midst of it all. In the field, the action, continuing to write.

What are her dreams? Joining the *Detroit Free Press* or immersing herself in D.C.

She said, “It’s not something you do for money. You go in because you like to write. Everyone’s passionate about it. It’s not an easy job, though.”

To read Brooke Kansier’s articles, go to capitalnews-service.wordpress.com

FEATURES

MARCH 31, 2015