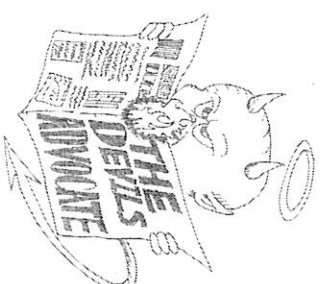


The BLUE DEVILS



Check out the football article on page 4!

Volume 14, Issue 1

Advocate Richmond High School

35320 Division Road

NEW YEAR, NEW LOOK

By: Jenna Stafford
Feature Co-Editor

Every student loves the feeling of returning to school sporting a new backpack stuffed with sharpened pencils and fresh notebooks. For students at Richmond Community Schools, though, they didn't return with just new school supplies—their classrooms had some new improvements as well.

Students in the elementary, middle, and high school saw their classrooms improved.

All three schools received new desks and chairs. These desks are shaped like trapezoids, with bins underneath for storage and hooks on the side for laptop straps.

The unique shape of these desks allows them to be placed in pods, where students can work and discuss with each other.

The chairs, even though a seemingly minor improvement, were important as well. All the schools, particularly the middle school, were hard-pressed to find seating for students in past years.

"The middle school was in the most desperate need of chairs," said superintendent Brian Walmsley. "We had classrooms using folding chairs."

The new chairs are stackable and size adjustable, so as enrollment changes, the chairs' location can be

changed accordingly, explained Mr. Walmsley.

In addition to desks and chairs, all three schools saw new signage around the interior and exterior.

The American's with Disabilities association, or ADA, made an audit to RHS last year. The organization found several areas that the school needed to improve to be equally accessible to handicap students, staff, or visitors.

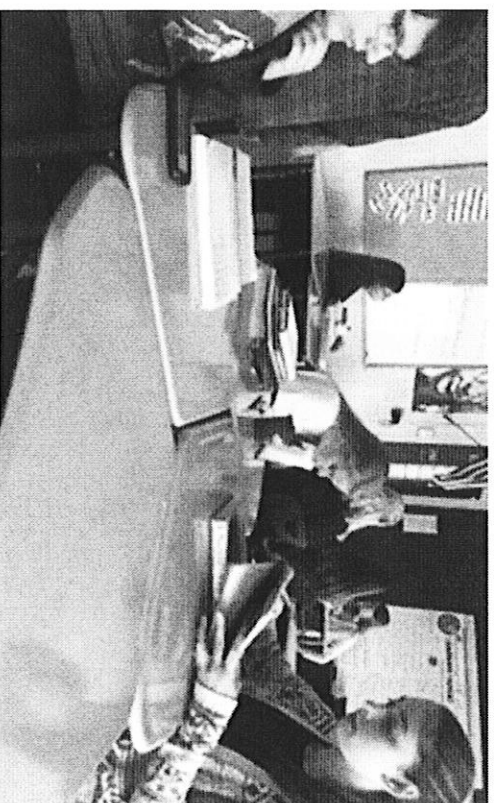
The improvements include mandating braille be present on all interior signs. Classrooms must have enough space to be accessible to those who are wheelchair bound.

Bathroom piping present underneath sinks must be insulated, so that nobody is burnt by dripping water or hot pipes.

Will L. Lee Elementary students saw new cabinetry in their classrooms, including new cubbies for 2nd through 4th graders. They now have a place to keep their things, rather than just a hook for coats.

Outside the elementary school, posts were lined across grass areas that are typically parked on during sporting events. Parking on these areas not only obstructs vision for children attempting to cross the street, but it also damages the roots of surrounding trees, causing them to die out.

RMS students were introduced to new items as well. Incoming middle



Students Katelyn Hill, Amanda Gorr, and Olivia Iskra utilize the new desks during psychology class.

schoolers received a brand-new 5th grade locker bay. The school also received security benefits as all locks on the doors were re-keyed with technology that makes them unable to be duplicated.

RHS received new safety technology as well. All classroom doors are to remain shut and locked. To keep students from being locked out of rooms, magnet strips are placed over the locks.

The doors can still be pulled open, but the handles can't be twisted down. In case of an emergency, administrators can pull the magnets

off the doors and they will be locked instantly.

The RHS sports teams will also benefit from some new improvements. The Ben Boldt Stadium was gifted a brand new sound system. Both boys and girls basketball teams got new team rooms within the gym locker rooms.

So, is there anything else new coming for Richmond schools? Mr. Walmsley said, "My vision is to work with a culinary arts program."

Richmond staff and students are eager to utilize their improvements.

Yaek's on the road to success—and it's all free

By: Alyssa Call
News Co-Editor

It all started with a pamphlet in the mail.

During the past summer, junior Madi Yaek aside from taking part in soccer, running, and being the Drum Major of her high school band, decided to take a big step in planning out her future.

Yaek, after receiving a college pamphlet, hesitantly decided to apply to MIT, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and their scholarship program, with the hopes of earning a scholarship for their online classes.

Online classes started on June 28 and she did not make the final decision to apply until early June said Yaek.

She was not sure if she wanted to apply because of the high odds that she would not be accepted and because if she did not receive a scholarship, she would not be able to afford the classes, which range around \$600 each.

Yaek said, "With the number of kids' reading into the program, I didn't think there would be a way I would get in."

It's a good thing she applied. Just a few days before classes started, a nervous Yaek received the good news from her mom.

"I originally didn't think I would get picked [for a scholarship]. My mom told me the news and I thought she was lying or that it was a cruel joke," said Yaek.

She was one of 50 students picked from the 3,000 scholarship applicants.

But the even better news: She was one of the top 25 students picked, which meant she could take classes for free.

This was a relief to Yaek, who manages a 4.0 GPA and strives day in and day out in school.

Yaek said, "Getting the scholarship definitely woke me up to the fact that it was possible to go to a school with that kind of reputation. I didn't think I would ever be able to get into a school like that."

When it comes to applying for the scholarship program, anyone in any grade can apply. However, there is a certain criteria that needs to be followed to get accepted.

Yaek had to write an essay about her field of interest and classes she was hoping to take through the college, which were thermodynamics, quantum mechanics and intro theoretical and particle physics – one of Yaek's favorite subjects to study.

She also had to send in her high school grades and transcripts to be reviewed by MIT.

After that, Yaek's rank was determined by her essay and application. And her rank was good enough to ensure her free tuition for this year's online classes she planned on taking.

Yaek said the scholarship would not carry over for next year and that she would have to reapply each year to receive a scholarship again.

Having already applied and received a scholarship once, she would be placed on a higher priority in the college's eyes if she was to

apply again next year.

Yaek's drive for physics

Yaek's love for science and math has driven her to consider a career in physics, which she hopes to pursue at MIT due to her love for the college and the professors.

Yaek said, "The professors that I worked with are from the physics classes I took and I really liked them."

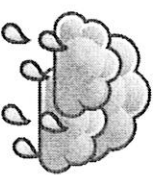
Classes were taught just like any other online college classes. There were weekly tasks, note taking via power points, and skype sessions with professors in Geneva, Switzerland, which is where the Large Hardon Collider is located.

The Large Hardon Collider is a facility that studies particles. Hence, Yaek – an avid theoretical and particle physic lover – was not content with simply skyping the professors.

She wanted to be a part of the study process.
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Rainy
High: 61
Low: 48



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Homecoming Week's a "Whirlwind" at RHS

By: Sydney Black
Staff Writer

Being a freshman can be a crazy and exciting time – but how would it feel to be on the Homecoming court?

Freshmen Taryn Sieja and Robert Halligan were both nominated by the freshman class to be Homecoming prince and princess, both felt excited to be on court.

"I was just excited for all the things that came with it, like the game, the parade, and the pep assembly," said Sieja.

Halligan was surprised to find out he was on court.

"It was just unexpected. I was in Mrs. Smallwood's class when I found out," Halligan said.

Being in class when this happened, they both had a different perspective on the announcement.

"I was in Mrs. Gabridge's class and I was finishing my work and then they started to announce the names for court. I heard my name, and I was shocked," began Sieja.

"People said stuff like 'congratulations' and they didn't really say anything else."

Both Halligan and Sieja thought it was an honor that they were nominated. Being chosen to be on court was a big deal to both of them. To Halligan, people said things like "good job" and they also congratulated him.

"It's an honor—because I got voted by my whole grade to be on the court," said Halligan.

Sieja felt that being on court was great. "The dance was fun. The parade was fun because you get to see everyone and the game was fun because we got to walk on the field," said Sieja.

Both Sieja and Halligan were happy to hang out with their friends.

At the pep assembly, Halligan and Sieja both participated in games that were made up in order to get the crowd excited.

Halligan was unable to participate in the pep assembly games because he hurt his arm – therefore, his good friend Luke Davis played for him. But, Halligan thought the games were fun to watch.

Halligan said, "I couldn't really do anything because of my arm, but it was a good time."

When Sieja got to the assembly, she didn't know what to think. Her mixture of emotions made her excited.

"I liked the games the court played and I really liked watching the dance class because it was funny. My favorite game we played was the tug-of-war," Sieja said.

For the two court members, they both thought that spirit week in the high school was totally different from the middle school.

"I liked seeing everyone participate in it and dressing up everyday. I dressed up everyday too. Monday, I wore emerald, I wore a green jacket. Tuesday, which was twin day, I twinned with Anna Mae Hayden. Wednesday I just wore mis-

matched socks because it was mismatch day. Thursday I wore my Lions shirt and Friday I painted my face and wore blue devil apparel," said Sieja. She also thought that spirit week was fun.

Halligan saw high school spirit week as just another normal week – and it kind of made him laugh.

"It was funny to see what people wore," Halligan said. "I only dressed up two days, which was Thursday and Friday. It was all fun though."

And how is their freshman year treating them?

Sieja feels a lot more free now that she's in high school, along with Halligan. They both feel good about their classes and teachers as well.

Sieja said, "It's crazy. You feel a lot more free, I guess the word is. It's fun though. It's fun because there's a lot more to do in the high school."

Halligan is happy with how things are going so far.

"Everything is going pretty well this year. All my classes are going good. I'm keeping my grades up. For the amount of sports I played I did good," stated Halligan.

The Theme

Every homecoming has a theme. This year, the theme was "There's No Place Like Homecoming," so the theme was The Wizard of Oz. Autumn Warn and Haley Fortuna were two juniors who decided on the theme. To find the theme, Warn and Fortuna saw the idea on Pinterest and just followed



Freshman homecoming king and queen—Taryn Sieja and Robert Halligan—smile for the camera as they enjoy their first homecoming.

through with it.

"It was a good theme with a catchy phrase," said Warn.

Fortuna said they saw the theme and neither of them had seen it before so they just ran with it.

"Autumn and I make a good team because we both talk to everyone so we can get a bunch of different opinions and perspectives to make decisions that'll keep most students happy," Fortuna said.

Before the original theme, outer space was an option, but they thought that people would enjoy the Wizard of Oz theme more.

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With Song And Dance, Young Americans Take The Stage

By: Lauren Duché
Advertising Editor

The opportunity of a life time. The Young Americans travel across the nation to host a life-altering performing arts workshop. Their next stop? Richmond High School.

The Young Americans are a non-profit international organization of college performers who travel across the country to high schools to influence and inspire aspiring singers, actors and dancers to pursue a career in the arts.

The workshop occurred on October 13, 14, and 15, and over 65 RHS students attended.

The Young Americans all go to the Young Americans Performing Arts College. It's a two-year program where kids from across the globe get to travel America and teach kids K-12 about performing arts.

Senior Noah Schroeder, who attended the workshop, said, "I love to act, so this opportunity gave me the ability to improve my acting and singing, meet new people and get new insight on what I have to improve upon."

Schroeder is very active in performing arts. He takes part in choir, is on the dance team, and has been in over 10 shows, so this workshop was right up his ally.

"As soon as I heard about it, I jumped at the opportunity. I had never done anything like this and I knew I wouldn't get this opportunity again before college. It's my senior

year, so I just wanted to go out and have fun. If I improved it'd be a bonus," he said.

After this experience, Schroeder plans on going to their other Michigan workshop location in St. Clair and potentially even attend the Young American College.

"It was easily the best three days of my life and if I have the chance to go back I want to. I had every intention of going to Macomb for college but after this, I want to try to go to the Young American College and be a Young American. If I can help someone as much as they helped me it would be a dream come true," he said.

Although improving the performance skills is important, it is clear that the overarching goal of the program is much larger than just hitting the high notes.

Young American Mo said, "This was to get kids out of their comfort zone, highlight their talents and build confidence all while having a lot of fun doing what you love. Of course we want every kid to improve, but we want them to improve in the most positive and fun environment imaginable."

And they did just that.

Emma Brockett, a senior and member of choir, said, "At first I was scared to do it. Performing in front of all of those people? No way. But after some convincing I decided to just do it. It's not like I had anything to lose."

Nothing to lose and everything to

gain. Even though it was intimidating at first, Brockett had the time of her life.

"I've never really tried acting before I've usually just sang. I was never really confident in my abilities as a singer and definitely wasn't as an actor but this past weekend all the fear washed away. I was having so much fun I didn't even notice I was in front of a gymnasium filled with people. If I could do it again, I would."

The performance incorporated all of the Young Americans and all of the students. For the first hour, the Young Americans performed and for second hour all of the students came out. Every student was able to sing, dance, and act at least one time throughout the course of a two hour period.

A lot of workshops for performing arts usually have a particular focus. Only acting or only singing, but the Young Americans combine it all into one.

Choir teacher, Ms. Neumann, was a key component in getting the Young Americans to come here.

"I learned about them a couple of years ago from a choir parent who saw them perform. She brought them to my attention and then it became my goal to get them to come to Richmond," she said.

It was a long process, however. When Ms. Neumann called the director, there was a three-year waiting list.

"The wait was a little discourag-

ing. I was waiting for them to come in since my first year teaching here. When they finally came I realized it was defiantly worth the wait," she said.

Good things are worth waiting for, and that is what Ms. Neuman's students discovered.

Junior Haley Fortuna said, "I went to the U of M vocal arts camp and it was a lot of fun so I figured I would go to the Young Americans camp and it exceeded all of my expectations. I loved the variety of the camp, students were able to explore all theatrical and musical endeavors."

The workshop wasn't limited to RHS either. Students from all over metro Detroit of all ages came to do the workshop as well.

"The Young Americans came from all over the world and it brought more diversity, culture, and life to the event," Fortuna said.

The amount of ethnicity each person brought to the table opened RHS students' eyes to new ideas and concepts.

"We live in such a small town it seems like everybody knows everybody. With that being said, it was really neat to meet all of these different people and see how each culture interacted with each other. The best part about all of this was that it didn't matter where you came from, whether it was Japan or Great Britain, we all shared a common interest: an intense love for the arts," Fortuna said.