

The BLUE DEVIL'S Advocate



Richmond High School
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Connecting Through New Technology

By: Cecily McPherson
Coordinating Editor

Just last year the soft clicking of computer keys could not be heard amid the halls of Richmond Community Schools.

The black cases did not hang from students shoulders, slightly swinging as they walked from class to class.

The days exhausted on scheduling computer use in the Media Center and competing over the few carts of notebooks is over. A change has been made.

With the beginning of the school year, each student in grades 3rd-12th were given a laptop that they would transport from home to school, every day.

It was the beginning of a change that would soon radiate through the whole district. A change that the school board had been working towards for the last two years.

How it happened

After the initial passing of the Bond, the School Board held focus meetings where the staff discussed what type of device they could support as an organization.

"It would have to meet the needs of almost every teacher in the district," said Mr. Walmsley, superintendent.

It was agreed that laptops could accomplish this goal most efficiently.

Logistics were a main concern for anyone working to implement this upgrade. Looking at the distract as a whole, and then deciding upon what would be best for every student and every teacher was how the school board made the decision to grant every student their own email address. It was also how they decided what security measures to put into effect as well.

The next step was introducing the laptops to the students, and ultimate-

ly gaining acceptance from parents. "When anything new is launched or you experience something new, there is uncertainty among people who are involved," said Mr. Walmsley.

A majority of the parents were onboard with this improvement, but a small percentage had their doubts. In order to clear up a majority of the questions, the school hosted multiple parent/student sessions where questions involving safety, laptop damage, and other miscellaneous problems were addressed. Getting the approval of the parents brought the district one step further.

In the hands of the students

For the past several years, Richmond has hosted a freshman orientation called "Blue Devils Day" at the High School.

This day was promoted to giving the incoming freshman an idea about what occurs in a normal day at RHS.

It was this tradition that inspired Mr. Walmsley to open this day up to all high schoolers.

On this day each student was to go through a seminar on laptop usage, safety, rules and procedures, and so on. All of these guidelines were put into effect seamlessly in order to avoid the stress of having to spend the first few days of school going over the basics.

"Most students are pretty technologically savvy, so once they get a laptop they are going to start playing around with it, figuring out what they can and cannot do on the laptop," said Mr. Walmsley.

Many problems were worked out through this trial and error procedure. As the students experimented and problems arose, settings were changed, other accesses were allowed, and programs were revised and tweaked.

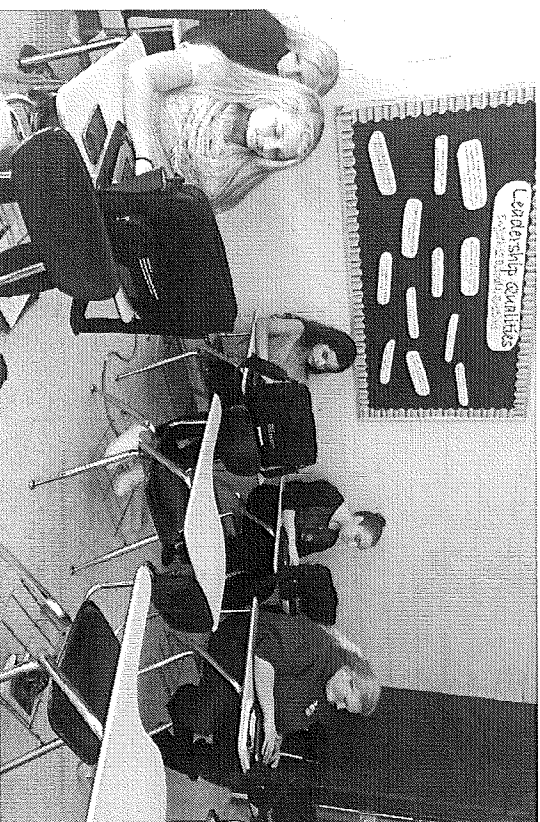
they can still be leaders too," said Mrs. Belf.

Through several different team-building activities, students learned how to interact with and trust other students they just met.

Richmond students were thrown directly out of their comfort zone when put into groups with kids from Almont attending the camp. They were forced to work as a team with one of their competitor school's students.

Mrs. Belf said, "There was one activity where the kids have to walk on this thin line attached to two trees, it's fun to watch them figure out that they need to work as a team to accomplish it."

Not only were the students learning how to become their own lead-



Seniors: Breaun Wainmingham, Kaitlyn Griffith, Leslia Ocegüera, Holly Colombo and Tiffani Clapper use their laptops to work on their essays for *Their Eyes Were Watching God* final book assignment in Mrs. Woodruff's class.

The future

With the world at their fingertips, every student at RCSD was, for the first time ever, allowed access.

"We can go places we were never able to go in a textbook," said Ms. Michon.

The laptops are a source of connection; they allow students all throughout the building to email each other different assignments and ask questions electronically.

They are a resource; without the use of a textbook, paper, and pencil, paper and time is being saved. All the answers lie right within grasp.

They are a step closer to college; the requirement of a laptop in a college setting is becoming more and more prominent. Having laptops applied to a high school setting, and, as Mrs. Michon said, "Provides students with skills they need for college." With a resource such as a com-

puter, facts can be gathered with a few clicks upon a key pad. Time is no longer going to be put into gathering the facts, but solving the full equation.

"Kids nowadays are given all the facts, all the pieces," said Mr. Walmsley. "Now they have to be creative and put it together."

No longer is the basis of discussion simply on the facts. A laptop is a resource that can be used to put the facts into an analytical response. This sort of response, encourages a much deeper level of thinking that will arise at a college environment or even a work atmosphere.

If Mr. Walmsley could ask for anything within the future, it would be that "laptops become textbook and paper."

In a modern world full of expanding technology and endless creativity, the school is getting a head start into what will become the future.

Leadership Camp Gets INTENTS

By: Haley Fortuna
Features Co-Editor

They climbed, pulled, ran, and jumped their way into becoming stronger leaders.

Mrs. Belf, art teacher, and Mrs. Smallwood, Student Government advisor organized a fieldtrip for their students to attend a leadership camp in Tustin, Michigan.

This wasn't Mrs. Belf's first rodeo. She has been a leadership camp counselor for about 10 years. Having gone to the same camp with her past school East Detroit, she knew this camp would be the perfect for her AP art students.

"I wanted my students to learn that even though they are artists and art isn't seen as a leadership hobby,

ers but they were learning how to work with new people and accomplish something.

"I wanted the kids to learn that they have to talk to all different people because that's how the real world is. You don't always get a choice who you want to work with," Mrs. Belf said.

Students participated in all the activities and came out learning exactly what Mrs. Belf wanted them to

Out of many different events, the polar bear dip, rock climbing, paintball and high ropes, the trust walk was Hannah Budd's favorite.

The senior said, "The trust walk in the woods was probably my favorite activity. We all held onto a rope and we had to trust our consular to lead

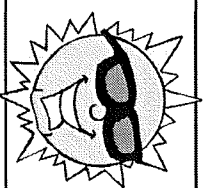
us through the pitch-black woods. It was just so fun and the stars looked so beautiful when we finally finished our walk."

Budd learned how to trust and bond with others through the forest walk.

For Budd, calm activities with her friends were the best part of camp. Others, enjoyed being active on the high ropes course and paintball.

Junior class Co President, Carrie Maro, said, "The high ropes was my best experience at camp because I was able to overcome my fears. I was freaking out." The high ropes gradually get higher and higher.

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This is designed to challenge campers to take it a step further as they progress.

Maro learned how to face her fears, look at things differently, and challenge herself. She hopes to apply these skills to her leadership position in Student Government.

Students weren't the only ones who faced there fears at camp.

At a Student Government meeting, Mrs. Smallwood shared with members that she was terrified of the high ropes course. She shared that it made her look at herself and question if she could really go through with it. In the end, Mrs. Smallwood faced her fears and not only taught her students something but herself as well.

Mrs. Smallwood hopes that the Student Government can take the team building activities from camp and use those skills to build a stronger Student Council.

Mrs. Belf also learned a lot about herself during camp.

"The other camp director couldn't come because he was in the hospital. At the last minute, I found out that I would be in charge all alone. That was really difficult for me," said Mrs. Belf.

The other director ended up okay and Mrs. Belf ended up learning a thing or two about herself.

"It's so crazy because in the classroom I have no problem being a leader but having to think ahead as a camp director was difficult," said Mrs. Belf. "We would be at breakfast and I noticed some kids eating and I realized I hadn't told them when to come back"

By the end, Mrs. Belf had become a pro. She had learned how important it was to think ahead all while teaching students how to be better leaders.

Budd said, "The camp reminded me that I don't have to wait for someone to do something. I can be my own leader."

Students Mine Information During Gem Show

By: Brandon Furtaw
Assistant Sports editor

Are they rocks? Or are they minerals? Ask a student from Mrs. Volpe's Earth Science class and they will know.

In Mrs. Volpe's third year at RHS, she has made her third trip to the Gem Show on October 9. The Gem and Mineral Show is hosted at the Macomb Community College Expo Center.

Although this was Mrs. Volpe's third time going to the show, she saw many different things at this year's show.

"I actually got to see a guy crack open some geodes. I thought that was really cool," said Mrs. Volpe. Geodes are rocks that are very plain on the outside but when split or cut, they reveal elaborate, purple crystals. And though they aren't expensive like diamonds, geodes

can fetch a pretty penny depending on size and quality.

Large amethyst geodes can go for thousands. Baseball sized geodes with non-spectacular quartz or calcite crystals can be purchased for \$4-\$12. Geodes with uncommon minerals that are sold on mineral auction sites range in price from \$30-\$500. Uncracked, golf ball sized geodes, are generally sold for \$2 at shows.

According to Mrs. Volpe, this is her favorite field trip to send her earth science class on because of the opportunities the trip gives for the students to explore the field of geology.

Along with Mrs. Volpe, Freshmen Zach Ray and Noah Rhein also attended the show. When asked about the most interesting aspect of the show, both Ray and Rhein agreed that seeing the geodes being split were super cool.

Ray enjoyed himself on the trip and saw it as an opportunity to learn more about a fun subject outside of the classroom.

"I had a lot of fun learning more about the physical properties of fluorite," said Ray.

Fluorite is an interesting mineral that has many uses including toothpaste and high grade camera lenses. This is an abundant mineral and is very popular in steel, glass, and enamel production.

Rhein enjoyed the show so much that he would go every year if it was closer to Richmond.

Although they enjoyed it, Ray or Rhein are not interested in the field of geology.

"It's a really fun career field but it's not for me", said Rhein.

Despite this, the information these students learned and the sights they saw at the Gem and Mineral show will stick with them for a lifetime.

Building Knowledge: RHS Students Gain Insight During Manufacturing Day Field Trip

By: Brandon Furtaw
Assistant Sports Editor

Michigan, a manufacturing powerhouse, needs people to fulfill jobs more than ever. The illusion around the field of manufacturing is that it has become dirty, low paying, and a non-desirable career.

However, it is exactly the opposite. Manufacturing has blossomed into a very developed, high-paying career field.

On Friday, Oct. 2 RHS students journeyed to Prism Plastics in Chertfield for an hour and a half tour of their facility.

Ms. Till had the opportunity to chaperone the trip and had an excellent time seeing robots and departments of staff do their jobs and elaborate on their field of work.

"This trip opens the eyes of students to jobs they wouldn't expect

were out there," said Ms. Till.

Not only are these jobs out there, they're also open for employment.

In fact, the manufacturing field is so short on people that Macomb County created Manufacturing Day to enlighten students on possibilities of a career in this field.

One student who especially enjoyed himself was junior Joey Hubbard.

"Overall it was a fun day," said Hubbard.

The most interesting thing Hubbard saw at Prism Plastics was the robots and how they communicated with one another.

"Seeing the robots do their tasks was awesome. The way everything worked together and seeing what parts did what jobs was really cool," said Hubbard.

These robots make parts for the safety systems in seatbelts, steering and drivetrain system components,

air/fluid system products, among several other products. The company also produces parts for the industrial and medical fields.

"That day they were making tractor gears for seatbelts," said Hubbard.

Although this was Hubbard's first Manufacturing Day, he wishes the opportunity is available next school year.

When asked about future students attending the trip, Hubbard responded with excitement in his eyes.

"It was an awesome learning experience outside of the class. I wish someone would have recommended this trip to me when I was a freshman," said Hubbard.

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Classes held spring, summer, and fall. See Mr. R. Hubbard for details on upcoming classes.

Room 204