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An Accomplished Team Leader

By Madelyn Pomeroy

This school year Grove Street has a new team leader. Ellada Siliski has replaced Carolyn Ravenna, who retired last June after being team leader for six years.

Prior to her new position, Mrs. Siliski worked as a Social Studies teacher for 14 years at Rutland High School. She started at Grove Street last year on a hybrid schedule with the main campus, splitting her day between the two buildings. Currently Mrs. Siliski teaches Civics and Economics, World History, US History, and Art. As team leader, she manages our entire program.

When asked about the new job transition, Mrs. Siliski said, "I'm excited to be working at Grove Street. Being team leader is a challenging job with many responsibilities and few resources. But the strength and beauty of working here is the teamwork and collective mission. Not only do we want students to graduate but, more importantly, to experience success and accomplishment. We want students to build a sense of responsibility so they become productive adults in the community."

Mrs. Siliski grew up in Baku, Azerbaijan, when it was still part of the Soviet Union. When she was 13 years old, the Soviet Union dissolved and Azerbaijan became an independent nation. Education was regarded as highly important, and Mrs. Siliski was committed to her studies. She received a full academic scholarship to study law at one of the leading law schools, Baku State University. After earning her bachelor's degree, she completed her master's degree in Criminal Law.

During this time, she also met her future husband, Chris Siliski, who was working in Azerbaijan as a Country Director for a USAID-funded organization that focused on civic and economic development.

After holding a variety of jobs as a lawyer, Mrs. Siliski left for London in 2003 to live with her sister. "I wanted to learn English so I could work for oil companies moving to Azerbaijan. Also I wanted to experience an independent life and western culture."

Chris proposed to her in London, so after 3 ½ years she moved with him to Rutland. Mrs. Siliski became a Social Studies teacher because she always loved history and thought she would enjoy working at a local high school. "I wanted to have the same schedule as my husband," she said. "Also, it allows me to visit my parents in Azerbaijan, which is very important."

Outside of school, Mrs. Siliski enjoys exploring the outdoors with Chris and staying active. "We hike, walk, kayak, swim and play tennis," she said. "I also enjoy traveling and experiencing new cultures. I love to cook and host guests in our home."

Mrs. Siliski's diverse background has helped prepare her as a team leader in many ways, giving her a wide variety of knowledge to pull from. We are incredibly excited for Mrs. Siliski to start her journey here at Grove Street.



Ellada Siliski



Baku, Azerbaijan

Deforestation and its effect on Global Warming

By Xavier Szydlowski



Mike Stannard, STC Instructor

Deforestation impacts global warming, along with nature and our wildlife. Scientists generally believe global warming influences events such as floods, droughts, major wildfires, and seasonal heat waves.

According to a Senior Scientist at Ecosystem Center and Marine Biological Laboratory, cutting down or burning forests releases the carbon that is stored in the trees and soil, and prevents them from absorbing more CO₂ in the future. Since 1850, about 30% of all CO₂ emissions have come from deforestation.

Removing trees deprives the forest of portions of its canopy, which blocks the sun's rays during the day and retains heat at night. This disruption leads to more extreme temperature swings that can be harmful to plants and animals.

Here in Vermont I have noticed many different environmental changes. For example this past summer we experienced devastating floods, increased humidity, and high levels of wildfire smoke from Canada. Just this past July, we had a rare countywide tornado warning. I have also noticed that in winter the snow seems to melt at a faster rate.

Mike Stannard, former Earth Science teacher at Rutland High School and current Instructor in Natural Resources and Forestry at Stafford Technical Center, has also noticed these differences. He said, "The historic wet weather last summer put many multi-million-dollar timber harvesting operations into bankruptcy because there were only a few days in the three seasons that the forest floor was dry enough to work on and these businesses couldn't make the payments on super specialized expensive equipment or employee wages and benefits."

Stannard's extensive family history of logging provides a unique perspective. His grandfather grew up in the Champlain Valley and began logging at the age of 10 in 1920. He recalls switching his team of draft horses from the wagon to the sleigh each year on November 1 and back to the wagon again on April 1. This would not be remotely possible in 2023. There often is not "frost" or frozen ground until much later and it is often interrupted by thawing throughout the winter.

According to Stannard, the spring, summer and fall seasons are even more unpredictable, and often keep sound forest and fire management, and logging from happening due to extended and surprise mud seasons. Stannard said, "Mud season used to be the only time that forestry could not take place in our woods. Now bigger storms, increased rainfall and surprise winter thaws have made working in Vermont's forests very difficult."

Mike Ellis, who teaches Chemistry at Rutland High school and does maple sugaring, has also seen signs of global warming. He said, "We have started to get sap runs earlier in the year. We used to have our first runs in March and now we have to generally start mid-February."

He has also noticed a difference in bird populations. He said, "I've noticed the partridge levels declining and there have been more predatory birds."

Since deforestation has many effects on many different aspects of life, we should genuinely be concerned about it. We should work more actively to find solutions to this global emergency.



Mike Ellis, Chemistry Teacher

Animals in the City

By Abby Whiting

Have you noticed the rise of animal sightings in Rutland? If so, you are not alone.

I have seen more animal sightings this past year, mostly skunks, foxes, and bears. Also I have seen possums, rats, and squirrels. While not particularly a big problem for small animals that are nice, I worry about mean animals like skunks and possums. Also I worry about black bears because they scare me and can be harmful to pets.

I'm not the only one who has noticed a growing number of animals in the city. Conrad Tuerk, a teacher at Grove Street, has also noticed the same thing. He said, "I have seen more bunnies this year, along with squirrels. Last fall we saw a Bobcat in our compost pile. Seeing the Bobcat was unique, but there are too many bunnies."

But not everyone agrees. Alexi Reed, a Junior at Grove Street, said, "My animal sightings are pretty much the same as last year. I don't really care what animals are near me, I just hope I don't run into dangerous ones."

There may be several reasons why more animals are coming to Rutland. Most notably we are encroaching on their spaces by building homes in rural areas, and expanding to their natural habitats. Also our behavior is attracting more animals. People feed them, and interact with them, and even in some instances try to provoke the animals for a reaction.

This problem I saw firsthand after my neighbors did not properly secure their compost pile. As a result, they had a horrible rat infestation and had to re-do their entire kitchen.

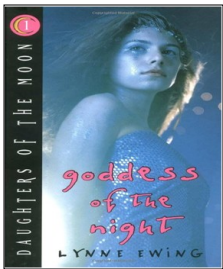
People and animals are developing an unhealthy relationship. When people feed animals, the animals keep returning because they know food will be there. This typically attracts little animals like bunnies or squirrels, which in turn attracts bigger animals that are coming to eat the smaller ones, or eat something else.

Possible solutions to this problem are to secure trash bins, and move bird feeders inside or, better yet, not have them at all. Wild animals are meant to be wild, and should stay wild even after we encroach on them.



Becoming a Better Reader

By Lena Flanders



Currently, at Grove Street, I am reading a book *The Goddess of Night* by Lynne Ewing. This is the first book in a series called *The Daughters Of The Moon*. It is about a girl who can go invisible and her best friend goes missing. There are relationship problems as well. This book is a mystery and romance, and I like the mystery because it will lead to something good.

I chose this book for my English 4 semester class at Grove Street. In this class, students can choose their own books and complete weekly reading logs. I like choosing a book because it is my type of book. Some of them are non-fiction, but my favorites are mystery, romance, and comedy. Though I enjoy reading books teachers assign us, they do not draw me in as much as my own independent reading book. All students should get to choose what they want to read because they will actually read. Teachers will have better success by letting kids pick their own books instead of giving them books to read.

I like the class reading logs because I enjoy reading and writing the summaries, but my favorite part is defining the words I have trouble understanding. Also I enjoy connecting a quote from the book to me and the world. These reading logs have been a godsend for me.

In conclusion, being able to choose our own books for the reading logs is the best. I am happy I get to do this for my last year of high school. It is my favorite assignment every week. Completing the logs will help me become a better reader in the future.

The Cortina Inn: A Positive Perspective

By Skylar Coburn



The Cortina Inn is one of the main hotels in Rutland to house people who are experiencing a housing crisis. Currently there are 132 rooms that are funded by state vouchers. Within these rooms are 170 adults and 81 children. Whereas the Quality Inn has 59 rooms with 72 adults and 25 children. The limit on how many people stay in one room is four. If there are more than four people the state will most likely grant a second voucher for another room.

Often, when people think of the Cortina Inn they think of drugs, however this is not entirely true. Yes, there are some people living there who struggle with addiction, but most do not. Many people living there work daily,

whether helping with maintenance, cleaning around the hotel, or having a job of their own. I have lived at the Cortina Inn for almost a year now and not everyone there is a bad person.

Speaking from experience, a more common issue than drugs is abuse toward animals, and a lack of respect for others. People living there are allowed to have different kinds of animals, though most own cats and dogs. Some people who live at the Cortina Inn are very immature and often seem to worry too much about relationships and drama.

This type of environment can be draining on some. My brother, Andrew, said, "I am constantly around people who do nothing with their lives. It can be demotivating. There are not a lot of positives about being here besides a bed to sleep on and a roof over my head."

Though I am aware of the Cortina Inn's problems, I try my best to look at things from a positive perspective. Many of the residents are friendly and look out for one another. There is a sense of community.

Despite the positives, the Cortina Inn does need improvement, starting with kicking out drug users. A daycare could also be opened in one of the rooms off the lobby, which would give parents the opportunity to get a job or just relax. It would also ensure that younger kids are being taken care of and supervised.

Say "Yes" to Energy Drinks

By Abby Whiting

Why did the Energy Drink go to school? Because it wanted to get amped up for the pop quiz! But in all seriousness, there is a growing trend with students across the country drinking energy drinks.

According to statistics from the National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health, 66.4% of men between the ages of 18 and 34 consume the most energy drinks, and almost one-third of teens between the ages of 12 and 17 drink them regularly. Women drink them less often at 41.8%.

The United States is the dominant market for energy drinks, having 31% of the market share. There is a wide gap between the U.S. and the United Kingdom by a staggering 42%.

While these numbers may seem high, the statistics at Grove Street Campus are actually higher. According to a recent survey, 81% of students drink energy drinks, though several students do not drink them frequently. The statistics also show they prefer Red Bull at 52%. This large percentage is followed by Monster at 28%.

According to most students, they drink energy drinks for the energy they provide and their taste. Mary Tetreault, a senior at Grove Street, drinks them for more than just energy. She said, "When I am upset I drink an energy drink to give me energy, and to bring me joy. Energy drinks make me feel alive. I drink two a day, every day."

When asked how many grams of sugar are in a can of Monster, Mary said 27 grams, which is the exact amount of grams in one can.

While Mary enjoys Energy Drinks, she also acknowledges the negative side effects. "Drinking them gives me bladder problems," she said. "One time my pee was lime green after drinking Monster all day."

Other students at Grove Street reported negative side effects as well. These included messed up sleep patterns, stomach aches, panic attacks, shaky hands, and loss of appetite.

All in all, many students believe energy drinks are worth it despite the negative side effects. If all foods and drinks are potentially harmful, why be deprived of something enjoyable?



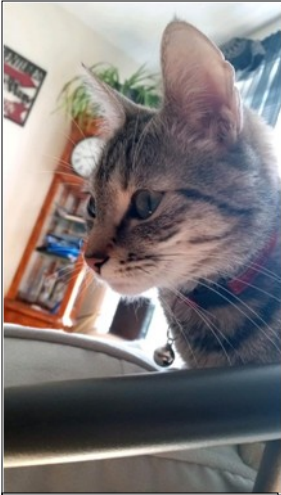
Mary Tetreault



27 grams of sugar

Maple and Arson: Opposites Attract

By Kade Bissette



Arson

Every cat has their own personality, and are each viewed differently by different people. A cat's breed may also determine their personality toward certain people. Good examples of cats with opposite personalities are my cats Maple and Arson. Maple is around three years old, and is actually my mother's cat. Maple is a mix of Maine Coon and Tortoiseshell, and is very independent and sassy toward everyone except my mom. My mom calls her bipolar. Sometimes when there are other people around, she will not even allow my mom to touch her.

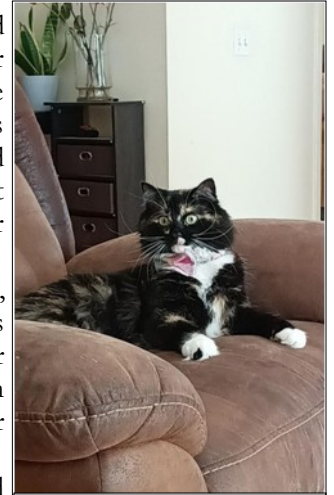
My aunt says Maple is more of a one-person cat. She said, "Maple is loyal to that person and cranky to other people unless it's convenient for her." Maple dislikes people unless they have food for her or if she feels sociable. My friend calls Maple scary. Maple seems mean and scary if people have never met her before or never seen her nicer side.

On the other hand, Arson is very sweet and loveable toward anyone she meets, but sometimes is very shy. Arson is a short-haired Tabby, and is about two years old. My mom said, "she's needy and

doesn't believe in personal space." Arson really likes affection and will not leave people alone until they give it to her.

My aunt says Arson is a loveable cat, and is more of a lover than a fighter. She is definitely a social cat. Instead of being threatened by people or Maple, Arson just deals with stuff by ignoring it and getting on with the rest of her day. My friend calls her calm. Arson likes to relax and cuddle with people and find her own ways to keep herself content without getting into trouble. But at times she can be extremely hyper, and will stay hyper for hours.

It only took two to three days for Arson and Maple to get along with each other. They are currently best friends, even if they have completely different personalities.



Maple

Days are always Sweet at Grove

By Abby Whiting

The Candy situation at Grove Street is sweet. Candy can be found in every room, where a dish is filled with all sorts of candy. The candy dishes are always available at Grove Street, and nobody has seen them empty.

Jamie Holt, a current Paraeducator who began this program in 1989, started bringing in candy five years later in 1994. Jamie says that she brings in candy "because I feel sometimes a piece of candy is what someone needs to refocus and, quite honestly, if someone has candy in their mouth they are less likely to talk."

Makiya Jackson, a senior at Grove Street, agrees with Jamie. She said, "Jamie brings in candy because she is a sweet and nice person. She wants to see us happy. The candy makes our environment more positive and makes it so people are more quiet."

Jamie chooses the candy by student requests, and is open to suggestions from students. For example, a student at Grove Street recently wanted Jolly Ranchers so she asked Jamie and the following Monday morning there were Jolly Ranchers in the dishes.

This student's request was not out of the blue. In a recent survey at Grove Street, Jolly Ranchers tied for second place, with Twix and Reese's Peanut Butter Cups, as everyone's favorite candy. The overall winner was Kit Kats with nine votes.

Though Kit Kats achieved first place for students' favorite candy, students still wanted other options. They voted most for Skittles, Sour Patch Kids, and Smarties.

Students' days at Grove Street are always sweet, never sour, with candy.



The History of Grove

By Madelyn Pomeroy



Entrance to the former RHS-Howe Center Campus

Grove Street Campus is part of Rutland High School's alternative education program, which was started in 1989 by Jamie Holt and Greg McClallen. Jaime said, "The program was initially started due to the high drop-out rate in the high school. The superintendent came to me and another colleague, and asked us to research and start an alternative program."

The program, according to Jamie, began much smaller in a storefront downtown with only three staff members and eight students. Many people may have preconceived notions about alternative education, and believe it is "easier" than traditional education. Jamie does not agree with this idea. "Different is not less than," she said. "Students who take an alternative path should be celebrated for their perseverance."

Over the years, the program has grown, but a majority of the practices within the school have stayed the same. One of the biggest differences between Grove Street and the Main RHS campus is the size. Currently Grove Street has between 35-40 students while the main campus has over 800 students.

Students and staff both enjoy the small size, as it allows them to work more closely together. Laurie Bullock, who has worked at Grove Street for five years, said, "I love being able to work with students in small groups, and knowing that they want to be here for their education. Since a majority of the work students do is self-motivated, kids must have a drive to succeed to do well here."

Many students enjoy the combination of independence and instruction, which provides structure and a sense of accomplishment and belonging. Junior Alukah Owens said, "I like the independence and responsibility that come with it. I still have responsibilities, but the freedom to do it on my own time."

Artie Dickson, a senior at Grove Street, enjoys the more intimate setting. "Grove Street is more of a community where we get to know one another. It's easier to connect with people and be sociable," he said. "Grove Street has also allowed me to become more productive with my schoolwork. When I first arrived at Grove Street, I realized it was more like a workplace than school. I felt respected and my time was valued."

According to Ellada Siliski, team leader at Grove Street, a critical component for the program's success is the application process. "Students have been interviewed by the team to make sure Grove Street meets their special needs to be successful," Ellada said. "This careful selection process helps us as a team and gives students a sense of ownership and motivation."

This program was designed for kids who want to learn and thrive with their education, and it provides a wonderful alternative space for them to do this.



Entrance to our present RHS-Grove Street Campus

Class of 2024

Advice from our January Graduates

"Don't take Grove Street for granted. Do your work on time, complete your contracts, and it will go great. Stay positive and be grateful Grove accepted you."

Jasmine Ashley-Selleck

"Keep your head up and you can accomplish anything. Try your hardest and you will do great but don't overwork yourself. Stay focused on your goals. Don't give up."

Miranda Bertrand

"Opportunities like Grove Street don't just fall from the sky. Be grateful you have these wonderful people to help and genuinely care about you. You can tell that the Grove Street staff really love their jobs, and they have given me hope to get my life started again. Don't let yourself fall behind. Use this program to your advantage and you'll be just fine."

Sarah Eiland

"Walk in with an open mind, be ready for new experiences, and ready to make a change and be changed. Most of all, always complete your work, which will get you far in life."

Lena Flanders

"Focus on yourself and your work. You always have time in the future to have fun."

Jordan Ghio

"Work the program. This is an awesome place to get lots of work done. You're almost there as this is the first step to the rest of your lives."

Camryn Gilbert

"When coming to Grove Street Campus, keep a positive attitude and don't take your time here for granted. Stay focused and get your work done. Don't put yourself around people who are going to distract you."

Makiya Jackson

"Keep your head down, focus on your schoolwork and you'll make it. Also stay out of drama that will cause you to fight anyone. Finally, make sure you call school if you're not going to be here."

Connor Lemons

Class of 2024

Advice from our January Graduates

"Don't forget that Grove Street is a privilege not a right, and treat it as such. Be mature, do your work and use your time wisely. Make connections. The teachers are not only amazing educators, but also good people who care about their students. Utilize them as a support system. Enjoy your time here and be thankful for the experience."

Madelyn Pomeroy

"Be on time for school and get your work done."

Hayden Pillon

"Stop and think before speaking and acting."

Mason Porter

"Be devoted to what you're doing with no second guessing yourself. Don't let yourself or people knock your grind because we all go through pain, just in different ways."

Charles Rheume

"The teachers are here to help. Just ask"

Joseph Riley

"Work hard every day with almost infinite help from the teachers, so don't just put your head down. Don't die of sweat and stress on tests. Respect the teachers even when they show a little attitude because in the long run they'll like you more, which helps a lot. Don't spend 30 minutes in the bathroom. It's annoying."

Lucas Roucoulet

"Stick to it, stay focused and finish your contracts. Time goes by a lot faster here than somewhere else. Take this chance to achieve. You've got this. Put in the work to graduate because it is beyond worth it. If you need help, ask for it and don't sit on your confusion. The teachers are here to help and love to do so when asked. You are not alone. The people here will support you. Take this chance and go with it.."

Xavier Szydlowski

"Keep your head down and get your stuff done and get out. Once you're out early you will have time for other things, like work. Make the most of your time here."

Kaden Wilder

Campus Chatter

What are you most thankful for and why?

By Taylor St. Amour



"I am most thankful for Grove Street because I got another chance to graduate with my class."

Mya Barber

"I am most thankful for my parents because I wouldn't be here today without them."

Kim Bishop



"I am most thankful for my boyfriend's family because they make me feel like an actual person."

Liz Concepcion

"I am most thankful for able-bodiedness. I'm glad I can use my body however I want. I would hate to have any portion of my body paralyzed."

Gavin Barmore



Moving Up in the World Through Girl Scouts

By Lena Flanders

Many people may think Girl Scouts are just about selling cookies and candy, but we are so much more. I have been in the local Girl Scout community for over ten years, and I love it. We do fun projects like gardening, painting, and building dog parks. My favorite project was two years ago when we made boxes with blankets, dog food and pet toys for the Humane Society. Projects like these teach communication skills, how to work together, and what job we want in the future.

I mainly joined Girl Scouts to help me make more friends and improve my communication skills. More than making friends, though, it has allowed me to learn about my community and how to make it better. We get to do fun trips and have sleepovers in amazing places such as the Boston Science Museum.

My Mother, Erin Mayo (AKA Big Mama), has been in the Girl Scout community for over ten years. She became a co-leader because after nine years of volunteering with my troop, her previous co-leader moved away so in order for our troop to continue we needed a co-leader.

Erin enjoys her new role. She said, "I like being a co-leader because I am able to help teach and shape our future female leaders of tomorrow. I love everything about being a co-leader. It has helped me become a better overall leader, and has made me an excellent communicator, negotiator, mentor, and friend."

Erin believes more parents should get involved in Girl Scouts. "There are so many ways parents can help their girls move up in the world," Erin said. "They just have to give it a chance."

Girl Scouts has changed my life, and I wish more girls could experience it. Schools can also help by promoting the Girl Scout community. Younger siblings are welcome as long as they are between the ages of five to eighteen. Girl Scouts can make a difference by getting kids off the streets and making them more productive.



School-to-Work

Babysitting

By Jasmine Ashley-Selleck

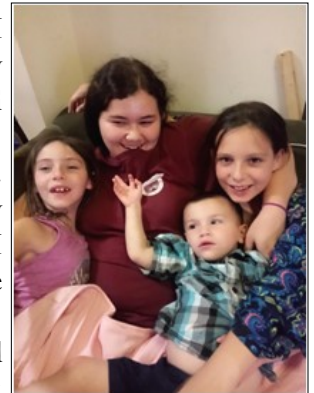
Most people think babysitting is fun and easy but this is not always the truth. I babysit my three siblings on Saturdays and Sundays, and sometimes on weekdays. My siblings are five, 12, and 10 years old. Their names are Marcus, Natalie, and Ryleigh. Based on my personal experiences, babysitting is often stressful and not always fun.

When I babysit, my siblings tend not to listen to me, which really stresses me out. Babysitting them is difficult because they have not had the best home life so they misbehave. Unfortunately I cannot tell my mom how to raise her younger children but I can try to teach them how to act properly so they know right from wrong later down the road.

Also, babysitting can be sad because saying goodbye to the children I have created a bond with is difficult. Watching my siblings grow up has been very tough because they are getting older, which means I will not be watching them as much as I do now. They are also hurt by it because I am growing up and will be going to college soon so I will not be around as much as I am now. This can also be hard because sometimes unfortunate events cause kids to be taken from their homes. Even when they get older I can still keep in touch with them but it will be different.

Finally, babysitting makes it hard for me to hang out with friends. I struggle making plans with my friends because 99.9% of the time I am babysitting. When I do make plans with my friends I often end up canceling because I have to babysit. Parents should not rely on the older child so much because they are the parents and the older child should not be playing the parent.

Do not get me wrong. Babysitting is not all that bad. It can help create bonds with younger children. Also it can help prepare for a future involving my own children. Lastly if I am having a bad day their laughter and happiness can put me in a better mood.



Movie Night

Responsibilities of Young Adults More than Just School

By Skyler Coburn

School can be stressful. This is true no matter what is going on in students' personal lives. When trying to juggle school, work, and personal responsibilities, teens are not asking for a break; instead they could use some understanding.

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, in July, 55% of young people were employed ([U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics](#)). At Grove Street Campus, 60% of students are employed, whether part-time or full-time. This program highly encourages students to have a job. For a young adult, having a job with responsibilities teaches students rules, expectations, stress management, and how better to manage their time. It allows them to develop a good work ethic.

Nancy Ivey, Home School Coordinator for Rutland High School, believes that some students struggle to balance work and school. She said, "I think for some teens it's great because they can have their own money and can learn to save, but I see some teenagers who just aren't ready to commit to a job yet. They end up calling out a lot, or quit without putting in their two weeks. It can be great to teach responsibility, but I've noticed some work too much or too late or they have a hard time focusing on school. Some kids aren't ready for that much responsibility."

Though I agree with Ms. Ivey, some students need to work for financial reasons. Since there are many teens in the workforce, schools can do more to help them manage all their responsibilities. Like Grove Street, schools can do their best to meet students where they are. They can coordinate weekly academic workloads across classes so students do not get overwhelmed. Teen employment is not going to change anytime soon so schools need to adjust to this simple fact.



Grey's Anatomy a Source of Inspiration

By Jasmine Ashley-Selleck



Doctors Performing Surgery

As a graduating senior, I realize that other seniors may not know what they want to do with their lives after high school. But for me it is different. Believe it or not, I want to be a nurse, and my inspiration comes from the television series *Grey's Anatomy*.

Grey's Anatomy, which airs on ABC, is currently in its nineteenth season. The show is about a group of people who graduate from medical school and work at Seattle Grace Mercy West Hospital. Throughout the show there are many chaotic events that require serious attention because each event is either a life-or-death situation.

This show makes me feel happy, safe, and comfortable. Ever since I was a little girl, I have wanted to be a nurse so the show gives me a sense of what being a nurse or surgeon is like. The episodes can be gory and intense but

the trauma helps build stronger relationships between the nurses and doctors. I also like the show because it is entertaining and not boring like other medical shows.

Grey's Anatomy inspires me to become a nurse because it shows that people can achieve whatever they want if they put in the effort and time. The show also demonstrates that it is best to be honest when somebody makes a mistake. Finally, I enjoy helping others so watching the doctors and nurses save lives makes me want to help others more than I already do. Nurses and doctors are special people, and I am excited to enter the medical field after high school.

Education is Not One-Size-Fits-All

By Skyler Coburn



Public schools such as Rutland High School - Main Campus are not a good fit for everyone. Some struggle with paying attention, staying in class, or attendance. Rutland High School is a large school with many students, and the schedules are not one-size-fits-all. For some students the seventy minute classes are way too long so they struggle to get through them.

To address this issue, RHS has created a few alternative options to offer students. These include Allen Street Campus, Grove Street Campus, Longfellow (tutoring school), and School Within A School and CB classes at the high school. These are great options because they offer flexible schedules that allow students to get jobs and spend less time in school.

Madi Coccia, a junior who attends Longfellow, generally enjoys her situation. "One-on-one tutoring is beneficial because it's easier to focus. I sometimes wish there were more people to socialize with."

Nevaeh Dezaine also enjoys the school within a school program at the high school. "I like my teacher, Mrs. Trevino, and the classroom itself. It provides a quiet space where I can focus." She wishes the program offered more activities and a greater variety of classes. Nevaeh also suggested making a plan for the week to help students get caught up with work.

My experience at Grove Street has also been very positive. Similar to the programs Madi and Nevaeh attend, Grove offers independence and a place to focus. It is a good school that offers different classes and always has a positive environment. The classrooms allow students to socialize with one another, and feel like they are in a school atmosphere. The work is very organized here with weekly contracts that make it difficult to fall behind.

Teenage Mental Health

By Xavier Szydlowski

The topic of teenage mental health has been in the news more frequently. This is a positive development because it has opened the public's eyes to the mental health challenges of young people. According to statistics, the Covid pandemic worsened the country's teenage mental health crisis.

- 55% of our youth experienced emotional abuse at home
11% experienced physical abuse
- 24% reported not having enough food to eat during the pandemic
- 11.5% of youth (over 2.7 million) are experiencing severe major depression.
- 6.34% of youth in the U.S. reported a substance use disorder in the past year.
2.85% = Alcohol 4.85% = Illicit drugs
- 59.8% of youth with major depression did not receive mental health treatment.
- Nationally, only 28% of youth with severe depression receive some consistent treatment.

This national trend has also become more prevalent in Rutland. According to Barrett Hughes, school counselor at Rutland High School, students and youth have had a mental health decline exacerbated by Covid 19.

Barrett believes there are many reasons for the teenage mental health crisis. "Many teens struggle with the lack of meaningful friendships and the skills to maintain relationships," he said. "Also dependence on technology has increased isolation and decreased in-person social skills. Finally there is a fear that everyone has, not just teens, about being vulnerable. This limits us from talking about emotions and prevents us from working through difficult issues."

As a teenager during the pandemic, I know that my mental health, as well as my peers, suffered. Covid started toward the end of my eighth grade, and changed my routine drastically. My motivational skills and willpower to succeed suffered because of the pandemic. It was difficult not seeing my friends and peers everyday. I felt secluded, which is not healthy for a young person who knows only school and friends. Even today, with more freedom, I still have trouble finding the motivation to do things. During quarantine I had to learn to be an adult. Unfortunately I struggled because of the lack of support and care during this time.

Even though we are no longer isolated due to Covid, we must address the mental health issue. Barrett believes that adults need to develop meaningful relationships with youth. He said, "Every student should have at least one go-to, trusted adult in the school environment. Often adults in school get caught up in the academic rigor and forget about the humanness of students and what they may be going through. Adults in school must have regular check-ins with their students to show that they care."

Support, though, cannot be one-sided. Students will not get better without wanting to do so themselves. Barrett has some recommendations to help students better cope with the situation. "Spend some time with friends trying something new," he advised. "Get outside to enjoy nature. Develop an easy exercise routine that can be followed on a regular basis. Learn better social skills to set appropriate and healthy boundaries with family and friends. Reduce screen time, particularly around social media. Develop a practice of gratitude so you can reflect on your day."

I agree with Barrett when it comes to students limiting their time on social media. Social media is excessively toxic to youth mental health. It opens new ways to get bullied, and emotionally beaten and bruised. Also I agree with Barrett about nature. I benefit from nature, and time with my friends. Being outside gives me a sense of freedom and relaxation.

Teenage mental health is extremely important. Some choices and circumstances can affect people for life. They should be given a chance to live better lives as adults.



Leaving Grove Street

By Lena Flanders

As I look forward to graduating from Grove Street in January, I have mixed feelings about leaving school. I am happy because my school time is almost over and I am going to be an adult on my own, trying to figure out what I want to do with my life. Some people may already know what they want to do, like attend college or get a full-time job, but all I know is I want a house and a good job so I can support my family. But how do I get there? Not knowing brings lots of pressure and makes me feel lost.

Grove Street has given me a sense of safety and support. I will miss my friends and teachers who helped me get this far. I will miss the fun assignments and conversations with others. At this point, I wish time could stop for a while so I can do stuff I wanted to do, like getting to know the people around me better and not just those in my inner circle. Students should never take the time they have left for granted. Leaving school will come faster than they think. To me it feels like yesterday when I was starting at Grove Street with Laurie, TJ, Sherry, and Carolyn.

My childhood and high school years sheltered me from starting something new. Now this change scares and excites me, but also reminds me that I am no longer the kid or teenager I used to be. When we are young, we look to our parents for guidance. Soon, though, I will be an adult with responsibilities that scare many people. Making the transition from high school to being on my own is not easy.



Lena, Makiya and Jasmine

Parental Drug Use

By Jasmine Ashley-Selleck

Though most people know drug use in Rutland is bad, many do not have the first-hand experience I have had. Growing up was difficult for me because I watched my mom and dad go through addiction. Although I did not fully understand it when I was young, I always wished it would stop because I saw many changes in my parents. As I became older I started to understand more.

In Kindergarten I lived in a small town, Sudbury, Vermont, and my parents were heavily addicted to pills. Even though my dad was addicted he always made sure I was taken care of. My parents argued often when they were addicts because they either did not have money or were unable to share what they had. As a 5-year-old little girl who only wanted a somewhat decent life, and did not want to hear mom and dad fight 24/7, I felt like I was never heard when I tried to speak.

Unfortunately in 2013, when I was seven years old, we were evicted from our home, and moved to Rutland for a fresh start. My parents were clean until Christmas Eve when we received a phone call saying that my grandpa was in ICU. The next morning, which was Christmas, we had to remove him from life support.

Since my mom took her dad's death extremely hard, she relapsed. My mom would be so sick that sometimes she could not get me up for school. Growing up, I had a mom but at the same time I did not have a mom. My dad remained clean and did everything he could to make sure I had the best childhood possible.

He stayed clean for nine years and then last year he experimented with drugs once again. When I discovered this, I felt like my world fell apart. I always thought my dad would remain clean because he understood what I went through when my mom was an addict.

Fortunately, my mom and dad are now both clean, and I could not be happier. Addicts do not realize who they are hurting when they are using. No matter how difficult my life became, though, I never gave up and always stayed positive.

Drugs are extremely scary. To see my loved ones go through addiction has been traumatizing. One lesson I have learned is never to blame them for being an addict. If you know someone who is an addict, try to help them. Do not just give up on them because sometimes all someone needs is a person who wants to help them.



Operation Santa Paws

By Taylor St. Amour

On Monday and Tuesday, November 20 and 21, The Grove Street campus did not have normal classes. Instead we set up donation boxes for The Rutland Humane Society.

First we made two lists for what The Rutland Humane Society needs. One list contained desperately needed items like dog food and kitten food. The other one was for suggested items such as peanut butter and catnip.

Then we cut the boxes into shapes like dog houses and put them together. After we had the structures built, we decorated and wrapped them in holiday paper, and added ribbon. Then they were placed in various locations throughout the school district. One stayed here at Grove Street, one went to the District Central Office, one to Maintenance, and two went to Rutland High School.

Jamie Holt, one of the founders of Rutland High School's alternative education program in 1989, said the program has participated in holiday fundraisers since 1994. Every year students vote on which organizations to fund, like The Mission, Humane Society and The Food Shelf. Jamie said, "This is a valuable thing to do because it's a time of giving back to our community."

All the students who participated had a good time. Liz Concepcion, a junior at Grove Street, said, "I enjoyed being part of this program because we got to help the animals."

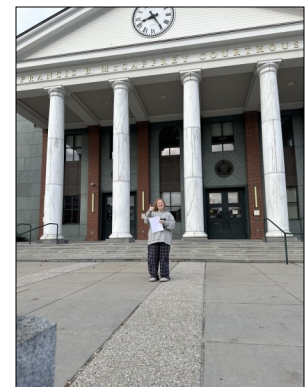
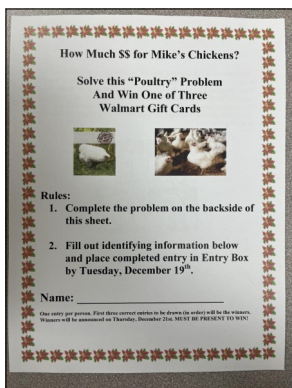
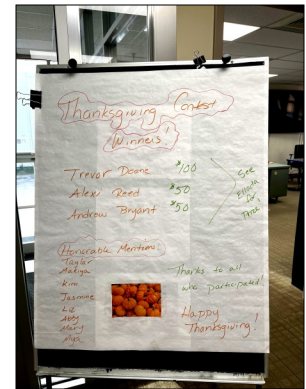
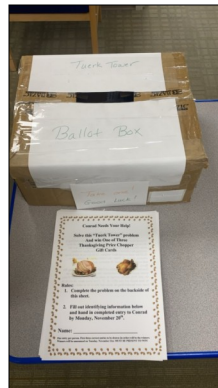
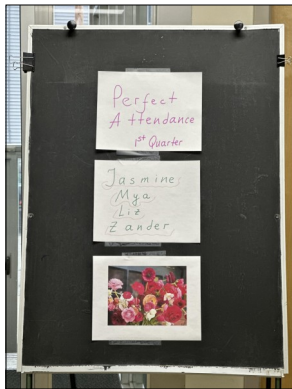
Another junior at Grove Street, Mya Barber, also enjoyed it. She said, "It was different because it was a hands-on project. Rather than going around collecting checks we collected items."

By completing this project the Grove Street students hoped to spread awareness for animals with no homes around the holidays. We look forward to making a difference in the animals' lives and spreading some holiday cheer!



Kianna Reed with Central Office Donations

There's Good Going on at Grove



Rutland City Resources Scavenger Hunt Photos

Our Top Picks!

Tom MacDonald

By Xavier Szydlowski

Tom MacDonald is a 35-year-old Canadian music artist. He says what is on his mind without concern or fear of annoying people, which makes him a very controversial subject to mainstream media and tastes. His music, although controversial, is important and raises many thought-provoking points about society today. He sings about race and gender, and how society is dividing us as people.

I am not exactly the straightest pencil in the box, and though his music is supposed to be very offensive, I genuinely agree with many points he makes in his songs. He addresses big controversial issues within our society and government, yet he is not even from the United States. He believes our media is trying to start a race war and cause blood to fall. Many appreciate him because he has no fear of holding back.

His songs like *The System* and *NO LIVES MATTER* discuss our governmental system, and how genetics define us for no reason. In another song, *Clown World*, he writes, "You worried 'bout leaving a better planet for our kids, How 'bout leaving better kids for our planet."

Tom MacDonald is so controversial that he is self-labeled. No high-end label will sign him, which is okay because he wants to express himself freely. He and his girlfriend create and edit their videos. All their music is self-made and self-published. Putting all their time, money, and effort into music, while still using their voice freely, without fear, is amazing.



Noah Kahn

By Madelyn Pomeroy



Noah Kahan is an American indie folk artist born in 1997 in Strafford, Vermont. He was raised in Hanover, New Hampshire, but returned to Vermont for some time during his adult life.

He has three albums, as well as multiple singles and collaborations with other artists, giving him a wide and diverse portfolio. 'Hurt Somebody,' an EP released by Kahan in 2019, was his first song to attract attention from listeners. Since then he has released his albums "BusyHead," "I Was/I Am," and "Stick Season."

His album, and song with the same title, "Stick Season," gained heavy media attention through TikTok prior to its official release, which truly skyrocketed Kahan into stardom. Since the release of his "Stick Season" album in 2022, Kahan has put out not only an extended version of the album, but multiple re-records with collaborations. Kacey Musgraves, Phoebe Bridgers, Hozier, Gracie Abrams, Lizzie McAlpine, and Post Malone are all artists Kahan has featured on his songs, gaining him even more media attention through association with the well-known and beloved artists.

I discovered his music in early 2022 toward the end of my sophomore year. I so distinctly remember my sister dragging me into our room to play "Sink" for me, and how I immediately fell in love with his music. Kahan has a way of writing in a gentle yet firm way. He does not shy away from things that have happened, but treats them with the care they deserve.

One of the best things about his music is that it relates to different types of people from all walks of life. His lyrics slip themselves into the grooves in my skin and right into my center, with no hope of being able to pick them out. He seamlessly weaves banjo and mandolin, typical bluegrass instruments, into his songs, giving them an upbeat melody that makes everyone want to dance and move.

I had the opportunity to see Kahan perform live this past fall at Saratoga Performing Arts Center (SPAC). It was my first concert, and I was more than a little nervous. The entire experience defied every expectation I had, and now I look forward to the days I can become a concert rat! The crowd was so kind, everyone was happy and connected, all thrilled to be there while experiencing him. Kahan's stage presence is captivating. He is composed and professional on one hand, yet also shares the giddy 7-year-old boy inside him so we all feel his joy as our own!

I recommend not only his music but, if ever given the chance, attend his concert. Even if you do not know his music, I promise you will leave feeling lighter than air with a smile that cannot be erased.

The Art of Poetry

By Kade Bissette



Most people do not like poetry because they might find it boring and useless. I think differently, as I find poetry meaningful and inspiring. Each poet puts deep thought and meaning into their poetry.

A good example of this is *Sonnet 127* by William Shakespeare. This sonnet is based on the beauty and transformation of those with darker skin complexion. Shakespeare considers the past and believes it was easier then to tell who was genuinely beautiful and who was not. Women were more natural and genuine.

This specific piece is meaningful to me because people with darker skin were considered less beautiful back then. With this poem, Shakespeare has shown us a way to turn something negative into something positive. We have gone from disliking people with darker complexions, to accepting them more.

I highly suggest poetry as a way to express our feelings that might be hard to explain verbally. Poetry provides ways to explore our emotions in a creative way, and helps us find ways to feel better when we are feeling a certain way.

Taylor Made

By Taylar St. Amour



Art is something I have always loved. It is a hobby and passion of mine. Ever since I was eight years old, I would draw and do crafts at home.

I moved from drawing to painting during my art classes at RHS. For my first painting in Mrs. Pritchard's class I made the canvas, and based the painting on my best friend Elaina. This sparked a love for painting in me and I have not stopped since. Painting makes me happy because I am able to create something and give people joy.

For this issue, I chose to display *Green Goddess* and *Welcome to the Jungle* because they contrast nicely together. I tried to base them on nature but in an unrealistic way. The cheetah is very colorful and the goddess is green. The media I used was acrylic paint, paint markers and glitter stickers