

COMING UP:

4/11—Senior Sunset
4/12—Shelly Challenge
4/21—No school
5/9—Senior breakfast
5/12—Senior Dinner
5/19-20—9th-11th grade exams

RVGS Newsletter



Spring 2025

Counselor's Corner

Greetings! Much has happened since my last Counselor's Corner. We are well into second semester and can see the light of summer break in the not too distant future! There are many exciting things happening between now and our end of year exams. The spring Ultimate Frisbee tournament takes place the week of April 7th! Each player donates \$5 to play and all the money goes to Feeding America!

Seniors have three big events coming up: Senior Sunrise on Friday, April 11th; Senior Breakfast on Friday, May 9th; and Senior Dinner at Hotel Roanoke on Monday, May 12th. We want to celebrate our seniors and let them know that we will also miss them greatly.

Thank you again to all the parents who have donated snacks and drinks for our students. They are a hungry and growing group, and we all appreciate your kindness and support!

As always, if I can help you or your student in any way, please don't hesitate to reach out.

-Kathy Sebolt

Spirit of Intercession

Many students look forward to the January intersession for the opportunity to conduct a research project within their elective class, but it can be a difficult time for many. Students often encounter multiple trials and obstacles while conducting their research. This was a favorite time of the year for Mr. Steve Smith. He loved leading his students to challenge themselves and overcome any barriers to completing their projects.



This year, we are excited to introduce the "Spirit of Intercession" Award as a meaningful way to honor Mr. Smith who embodied the core values of hard work, determination, and commitment to his students and their research. Through his tireless efforts, he made an indelible impact on the lives of those he taught. This award serves as a small but important gesture of appreciation in the memory of his years of service to RVGS. For each elective class, peers voted for the student that best exemplified Mr. Smith's passion. Criteria was based on effort, determination, and dedication to doing a great job during intersession.

We are pleased to announce that this will be an annual award to honor Mr. Smith's memory within his RVGS family.



Message from the Director

With the start of April, we are entering the final phase of the school year at RVGS. Among other things, that means we have moved through the majority of the 'science fair season', with the last two major fairs just around the corner. RVGS is being represented by 22 projects at the Virginia State Science & Engineering Fair in Charlottesville on 4/5, and we have 3 projects competing at the International Science & Engineering Fair next month. We are proud of those students for their accomplishments and wish them well at these competitions.

Normally, I would take some time to discuss some other events at RVGS, but instead I would like to devote some space to reflect on Steve Smith's passing and his contributions to RVGS. Losing Mr. Smith suddenly and unexpectedly was a substantial shock to our staff, students, and community. Amid that pain and loss, I am incredibly proud of the way our school community pulled together to support each other. Steve was one of a kind in a number of ways, but what always stood out to me the most was his deep commitment to his work as a teacher. Many teachers are passionate and hardworking, but there was something unique in the way he approved his work with students. From classroom instruction in chemistry to mentoring research projects to support fellow teachers in brainstorming or lab preparation, Mr. Smith's love for RVGS and the school community was profound. He will be deeply missed.

As always, please don't hesitate to reach out to me with any questions or concerns.

RVGS Unified Partners

Special Olympics Unified Sports combines people with intellectual and physical disabilities (athletes) and those without disabilities (partners) on sports teams for training and competition. The goal of the RVGS Unified partners is to increase inclusion in the community and uses sports to help break down barriers.



The RVGS Unified Partners club continued to grow this year. The club saw an addition of student volunteers and added soccer and cheerleading to their existing basketball program. Highlights of the program are the basketball tournaments held at Roanoke College and Virginia Tech. Teams participate in a traditional lighting of the Olympic torch ceremony and compete against other teams in the NRV. This year's cheerleading squad added an extra element of excitement to the games.

If you are interested in participating in the Unified Partners club, reach out to Caleb Wang or Jack Janiga.



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(www.facebook.com/RVGSLabRats)
and Instagram (@rvgslabrats)



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Govie Gala

The Govie Gala, one of the most anticipated events at RVGS, has returned! The Seniors voted for a theme of "Holiday Movies" and the entire student body embraced it with typical RVGS creativity. The lecture hall was decorated with tinsel and lights with a Christmas tree and presents to complete the look. While some students opted for their holiday best, others came as Elf, Clark Griswall (and Cousin Eddie) and even the famous lamp from "A Christmas Story". Students enjoyed the music and light show provided by RSP Entertainment (RVGS class of 2000 alumnus DJ RoyBoy). A highlight of the evening was the crowning of the RVGS Royalty. This year Sadie Panko and Augie Biviano were chosen to wear the highly coveted crowns.

Students were asked for a donation of \$5 or 5 canned goods for admission. Including the gingerbread house competition, RVGS was able to collect \$877 and 84 pounds of food items that was donated to Feeding America to benefit local families. This will provide 1,824 meals to area families.

Special thanks to the Govie Gala Decorating committee. They did an amazing job!





Altech Regional Competition

Altech invited RVGS students to innovatively solve real-world problems while benefiting our community. During the competition, student teams worked to identify a problem facing their school or community and propose a solution using Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM).

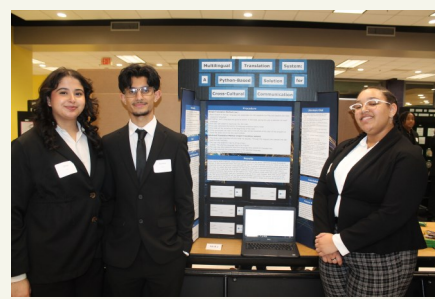
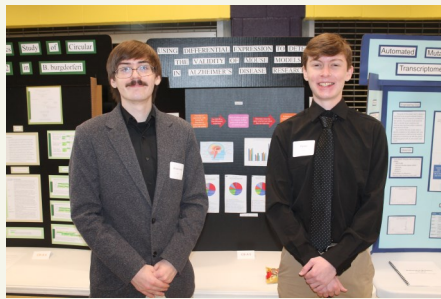
RVGS had 3 teams of students participate in the challenge with the team of Emma Baldwin, Dorothy Myers, Gabrielle Romeo and Parneet Gill winning an award. For the Altec Challenge their group wanted to create an outdoor learning environment for the students at RVGS. The plan began by researching the pro/cons of outdoor learning, its origins, what should be included in an outdoor space, and the potential impacts for RVGS. For the latter RVGS students and teachers were surveyed about their thoughts, and from these surveys the team received primarily positive feedback. Dorothy Myers designed a 3D model of the space using SketchUp. The model gave the group insight into the layout of included items, spacing requirements, and understanding of needed materials. The team presented their work to a panel of judges at Hotel Roanoke and were awarded 3rd place and a plaque to display at RVGS.



Great job girls!

Project Forum

This year's Project Forum may have been delayed but was worth the wait. Difficult weather conditions in January caused project Forum to be rescheduled a week to February 8th. The additional time allowed Freshmen to develop their research skills by conducting research concentrating on animal and plant sciences or microbiology. Other students concentrated on researching their elective subjects in robots, programming, biomedical engineering, and psychology. The more experienced researchers conducted independent research at RVGS or at area labs including VTCRI and Virginia Tech. Winning projects will compete at several area science fairs including Roanoke County, Roanoke City, Central Virginia Regional and the Western Virginia Regional science fairs. Project Forum also marked the end of the "official" Annual Appeal fundraiser. A special thank you to all the families, friends, and community supporters of RVGS who made this possible. Project Forum's overwhelming success was due to the incredibly hard work of the many judges, volunteers and of course RVGS faculty. Thanks to all who donated their time and expertise.



Behind the Scenes

