

THE GLOBE

Small School. Big World.

Student Newsletter of Berkshire Waldorf High School

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“We’re Running Out of Time!”

Katie Rumin, Class of 2021



Mattie Vandiver and Sadie Curtis, Class of 2021, lead the protest in Great Barrington

“HOW DARE YOU! You have stolen my dreams and my childhood with your empty words.” In the footsteps of the young Swedish climate activist Greta Thunberg and concerned about the growing climate crisis and the inaction of world leaders, Berkshire Waldorf High School students went to Great Barrington this past September in order to participate in a climate strike as part of the worldwide movement, #FridaysforFuture, started by Thunberg. They joined other area schools and local adult activist organizations. Our students were led by Mattie Vandiver and Sadie Curtis, Class of 2021 (the seniors were away that week, studying tide pool zoology on Hermit Island, Maine). Andrea Panaritis, alumni parent and advisor to our Students in Action (SIA) group, accompanied them.

According to Sadie Curtis, the protest started with some of the adults leading singing, and then there were speeches by some of the students. Then, at some point, a student from Simon’s Rock began to lead people into the streets, blocking traffic on Main Street

for 10-15 minutes. This made some of the motorists happy, but some of the other motorists got annoyed. The police arrived and two protestors were arrested. Several students got angry at the officers, giving them obscene gestures. (Thankfully, none of these students were from our school.)

“It was really powerful and got people talking, which is what we need, but I don’t think it directly helped anything, because it just made more people annoyed,” said Sadie Curtis, Class of 2021. “[A more] organized [form of] civil disobedience would work better.”

Julia Colodny, Class of 2021, agrees that it could have been better organized. “It also raised awareness,” she said. “Overall it could have been more effective if it was done in a different way.”



Protesting in Stockbridge

Responding to the anger felt during this protest, the students met with Andrea Panaritis the day after to discuss how the Great Barrington protest went and how to make protests more effective in the future.

Our students decided to stage a peaceful protest the next Friday in front of the Stockbridge Library, which I was able to be part of. We walked down to the Stockbridge Library and stood on

the wall next to the library with our signs, chanting and ringing bells in order to raise awareness of the issue, we were serious, but peaceful (that is, we did not disrupt traffic or anything). The police were also there, but they just protected us. And our protest seemed to get its point across: many people who walked and drove by called out or honked, giving us their support.

As Greta Thunberg said, “I want you to act as if the house is on fire, because it is.” It is important that we raise awareness for this issue through these protests, but also to do our part in helping the world be a more beautiful place by choosing recycling or composting instead of overloading the trash. I am looking forward to participating in more of these protests in order to raise awareness of this issue. ★

The Play’s the Thing

Talia Pott, Class of 2020

WHAT HAPPENS when it’s all over? Four years of magic, four years of memories, four years of exciting stories, and the festival is done.

Some of my favorite memories of high school come from Shakespeare & Company’s Fall Festival of Shakespeare. I have laughed, I have cried, and I have made lifelong bonds with students both in this school and from other schools through the program.

So what is the Fall Festival of Shakespeare? Founded 31 years ago by Kevin Coleman, the Festival is, essentially a rock concert of Shakespeare. It is a process of learning and performing plays over nine weeks, meeting four times throughout the process with approximately 300 students from other high schools for common classes. The program culminates with the festival itself, a marathon of ten house-rocking

Shakespeare productions, in which all the students sit on benches in the pit and act like a Shakespearean audience: booing, cheering, hissing, and roaring.

The Class of 2020 has now graduated from the program. We leave behind a unique program to nourish your soul.

Fall Fest has allowed me to grow while giving me memories that I will carry with me for the rest of my life. ★



Talia Pott (center) as Antipholus of Ephesus in "Comedy of Errors," November 2019

Back Off! She Knows Eurythmy!

Katie Rumin, Class of 2021

IN EARLY DECEMBER, the junior class learned that we would have eurythmy for our next arts block, and there was a groan and a burst of uncomfortable laughter. Eurythmy, a form of movement that I would describe as a mix between full-body sign language, Alexander Technique, and a visual form of chamber music, is often taught in Waldorf schools, and just the mention of the word made some students cringe as they had flashbacks to their pre-high-school eurythmy experiences of shrieking teachers and inexplicable exercises that involved strange dancelike motions with a pianist playing in the background and some vague mentions of vowels and how they were related to beams of light, the human evolutionary sequence, and the depths of the soul. Others were nervous for the

class, not even knowing what eurythmy was but seeing the reaction of those who had already been through it before.



Juniors at Pulse. Ahhhhhh...

So, on Thursday, December 5, Mr. Sagarin bundled all of us onto the bus after lunch and drove us to Berkshire Pulse. We ran up the steep stairs and were greeted at the door by a warm, smiling Stella Elliston, who led us into the room and gave us all eurythmy shoes (imagine flimsy canvas ballet shoes) and diaries. We then sat in the corners of the room and did stream-of-consciousness journaling for ten minutes. After that, Mrs. Elliston led us in a rhythmic exercise designed to wake us up. It involved walking four steps in and four steps out in 4/4 time while clapping on the first beat in the first measure, second beat in second measure, third beat in third measure, and fourth beat in fourth measure. And it got more complex from there.

Next, she led us in an exercise which she called "getting in tune" with oneself. It started as something like a stretch one would do in a yoga or physical education class, where you bend over and touch your toes, and then come up, vertebra by vertebra. When we straightened up we were asked to put our arms straight out in front of us in a relaxed way in the shape of a V, which corresponded to the "Ah" vowel sound. The final step of this exercise was to put our arms in a circle in front of us; this corresponded to the "O" vowel sound and to our sense of self. According to Mrs. Elliston, when she works with autistic adults they can struggle to do that because they have a different sense of self.

I was familiar with these kinds of exercises from my earlier Waldorf days, and I liked the way she explained more of what she did than any other eurythmy teacher I have had.

Students seemed to be a lot more impressed with the class than they originally thought they would be. "It's not as bad as I thought," said Mattie Vandiver, who seemed concerned about eurythmy before we actually had the class. It was good to have Mrs. Elliston explain what she was having us do--it definitely helped to dispel the superstitions and whispers! Who knows what we'll do next... ★



Stop Slut-Shaming Now

Chelsea Mathieu, Class of 2023

THE DEFINITION OF A SLUT is "a woman who has many casual sexual partners." Recently, there has been a rumor going around our school that "all the girls at this school are sluts." Slut-shaming is the practice of punishing or making character judgments about people, usually women and girls, based on their sexual activities. Those assumptions may be based on what they wear, what their bodies look like, or even rumors about them.

In a nationally representative 2011 survey, the American Association of University Women (AAUW), a non-profit organization that advances equity for women and girls through advocacy, education, and research, found that slut-shaming is one of the most common forms of sexual harassment that middle and high schoolers face. A third of all students experience having "someone's

unwelcome sexual comments, jokes, or gestures to or about [them].” The survey found that in a school environment about 46% of girls and 22% of boys experienced some form of sexual harassment. Shira Tarrant, a Cal State Long Beach professor who researches gender and sexual politics said: “It’s designed to insult women who have sexual agencies or experiences or want sexual pleasure.”

Slut-shaming can affect a student’s school experience, overall grades, and tests. According to the AAUW, “middle and high school students who had been sexually harassed or slut-shamed didn’t want to go to school, felt sick, had a hard time studying and staying focused, faced trouble sleeping, got in trouble at school, stop playing sports and other activities, and even stayed home from school for long periods of time.”

**“The entire
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Slut-shaming is also closely related to rape culture, which is defined as “a society or environment whose prevailing social attitudes have the effect of normalizing or trivializing sexual assault and abuse.” Slut-shaming provokes the idea that the victim is at fault because society feels that girls should avoid wearing certain types of clothing because boys might be distracted or uncomfortable. The idea that women are somehow responsible for the reaction of men, or that men are in some way unable to control themselves, leads to blaming the victim after they have been sexually assaulted or harassed. According to Tarrant, “the message being sent is that boys can’t help themselves ...now that’s a really dangerous one to send.” Often society asks the victim what they were wearing or about their sexual history. These questions suggest that the victim attracted that attacker by wearing

revealing clothing or by having past sexual contact with other people.

While I am writing this article about slut-shaming, sexual harassment, and rape, I’m in no way attacking the boys at our school. This essay is intended purely to get the point across that slut-shaming should be taken seriously and that it affects our community. This isn’t just a “boy population degrading the girl population” issue. Girls can be just as vile to each other. I am writing this article to tell you all that this has to stop. The entire school community needs to stand together and raise each other up. When we see others being slut-shamed, we need to speak out and voice that it is not right to say these things. Society needs to change. We do not have to abide by the rules that society pushes on our generation. Our community needs to change so everyone feels happy and safe in our environment.

Mahatma Gandhi famously said, “You must be the change you want to see in the world.” In other words, although life changes are inevitable, we as a people can also initiate personal change so we can rise to the challenge of becoming bigger and better people as a result. ★

The Better Side of Errors

Faye Ross, Class of 2022

HERE IS THE BUZZ about a comedy about mistakes: Shakespeare & Company helped our students perform Shakespeare’s “The Comedy of Errors” in mid-November as part of the annual Fall Festival of Shakespeare. Our directors, Lezlie Lee and Zoe Wohlfeld, worked with a wonderful group of actors and techies. “We are able to be vulnerable,” said Talia Pott, Class of 2020, an actor in the play. “We can delve into our emotions while exploring the text of one of the most influential playwrights of all time.”

The group also took part in optional common classes, which consisted of mock sword fights, dancing, stage tech, and physical comedy. There are ten participating schools, each of which put on a different play over four days between November 21 and 24. Mr. Sagarin, Faculty Chair, said, “Comedy

of Errors’ was the most energetic play the school has ever done, full of non-stop action.” There are many possibilities when a group cooperates and works together. ★

Studying Ancient Creatures

Liam R. Nelson, Class of 2023

THE ROCKS BENEATH OUR FEET are full of the remnants of extinct life that we haven’t yet discovered. But this past October, in the Intro to Paleontology miniblock, students from the freshman and junior classes learned about the intriguing ancient species that have been discovered by paleontologists over the years. Our teacher was Lee Magadini, who is a biologist but who has a great interest in earth science.



Enjoying the Beneski Natural History Museum

We studied the long extinct life that once roamed the earth: the dinosaurs, the first mammals, ancient microorganisms, and many more. We also learned about the mass-extinction of the dinosaurs likely caused by a 7-mile asteroid crashing into the Gulf of Mexico 66 million years ago. We studied how the earth creates and affects fossils. We learned how ecosystems were affected by these events and how modern people are affecting them as well.

We also went to the Beneski Natural History Museum at Amherst College and saw many fossils there, including seashells, jellyfish (a rare one!), woolly mammoths, petrified wood, and dinosaur footprints.

As our final project, we each had to write an essay about the ancestry of an animal of our choice. I chose to do the archaeopteryx, which was related to modern birds. The essay was tough, but the lessons were a lot of fun. ★

Students vs. Modern Art

Chelsea Mathieu, Class of 2023

ON HALLOWEEN, as part of our mini-block in Modern Art History, thirteen 9th and 11th graders accompanied Mr. Sagarin to MASS MoCA to see the work of living artists.



Into the Light, James Turrell

One of the most famous works in MASS MoCA is James Turrell's *Into the Light* which will be on display until around 2025. James Turrell began using light as a sculpture medium. He painted the windows of his studio to seal off natural light and experiment with the art of projection. His practice with light has been shaped by the ongoing change. He shaped the walls and he changed the way people engaged with the environment.



Students under Spencer Finch's *Cosmic Latte*

Another work of art from MASS MoCA was Spencer Finch's *Cosmic Latte* which is on view until 2020.

Cosmic Latte features more than 150 specially fabricated LED fixtures suspended from the ceiling over an expanse of the 80-foot long gallery. The constellation of LEDs are arranged in the gently arching shape of the Milky Way as it is observed in the Northern Hemisphere in March. The work's title, *Cosmic Latte*, refers to the name of the average color of the universe, which in 2009 was determined to be more beige than what has been traditionally thought of as blue.



Us (detail), Jarvis Rockwell

Jarvis Rockwell's *Us* is artwork that uses toys that the artist has collected for years. He now uses the toys and figures to create this piece of artwork which show playfulness and imagination, but beyond that is a more complex reason behind the art. The exhibition's title suggests, for Rockwell these figures stand in as avatars for ourselves "alternatives to us whom we can interact with" which act out the fantasies, beliefs, and values that shape our understanding of the world. In his own words, "We build what we are, what we think, and what we live." Rockwell uses the term Maya, to understand the way we attach illusions to the visible world. Rockwell defines the term in relation to his practice as: "The power of a god or demon to transform a concept into an element of the sensible world; the transitory manifold appearance of the sensible world, which obscures the undifferentiated spiritual reality from which it originates; the illusory appearance of the sensible world." ★

We're Booked!

Talia Pott, Class of 2020

CARDBOARD, PAPER, THREAD, and glue: those are the materials needed to bind a book. During a mini-block, the Senior Class took a trip down memory lane to the newly-renamed Berkshire Waldorf School (formerly the Great Barrington Rudolf Steiner School). We worked in the Handwork Room under the keen eye of Krista Palmer, handwork teacher, who taught us how to measure, fold, cut, stitch, and glue with extreme precision in order to construct blank books. We now know how complex hardback books are, and appreciate their craftsmanship. Working with Mrs. Palmer and visiting the elementary school evoked memories and lively conversation, especially for the half of the class who are alumni of that school. ★



Books bound by Class of 2020

★★★

**Happy Holidays
from the Globe Staff:**

- ★ Chelsea Mathieu, 2023
- ★ Liam Nelson, 2023
- ★ Talia Pott, 2020
- ★ Faye Ross, 2022
- ★ Katie Rumin, 2021

Advisor: Stephen Sagarin



Berkshire Waldorf
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