

THE GLOBE

Small School. Big World.

Student Newsletter of Berkshire Waldorf High School

Volume 17, Number 2

January 2020

A Council on the Uncertain Human Future: How Do We Live Now?

Talia Pott, Class of 2020



Left to right: Paul LeVasseur, Isaac Leblanc (2022), Talia Pott (2020), Ellie Pow (2022), Sadie Curtis (2021), Cora Rydingsword (2020), Julia Colodny (2021), Mattie Vandiver (2021), Pia Whyte (2020), and Walter Wright.

A CLOUD IS GATHERING, a cloud that seemingly no authority will heed. We struggle, we protest, we try to save the world that we love, but, so far, all we get is darkness. What light can break through the clouds of doubt? What light is bright enough to undo the smothering and bring enlightenment to those in power? Given what we know of global warming and climate change, how do we live now? For the last three years, students at Berkshire Waldorf High School have experienced a spark of that light.

For the third year in a row, select students at our school have participated in the *Council on the Uncertain Human Future (CUHF)*. According to its manifesto, CUHF “is an intentional practice through which we acknowledge the climate and ecological breakdown underway, and the socio-political forces driving (and being driven) by it.” Our school is the first Secondary School in the country to participate, having first held a Council in 2017 with retired Clark University Professors Walter Wright and Sarah Buie, and Paul LeVasseur of the School for International Training. According to Cora Rydingsword, Class of 2020, who participated in the first two Councils and is participating in this year’s, the focus is shifting from the political and scientific aspects to the core problem: humans.

This change has nothing to do with the questions asked, but the priorities of those who gather.

The Council process is based on deep listening. We are encouraged not to answer as soon as we have heard a question, but rather to listen to what fellow participants have to say, and only when it is our turn to think of a reply. We are given these guidelines for conversation: Speak authentically. Listen with attention and receptivity. Speak with brevity aware of sharing time with others. Be spontaneous in speaking rather than rehearsing. Observe confidentiality.

We are asked, How do you understand the political and social context in which we gather? What is taking place on the planet and why is it happening? What are the implications of these changes for the Earth and all living beings? How do we choose to conduct ourselves in the face of these grave dangers? Given what we know, how do we live now?

These questions allow us to grapple with what we need to prepare ourselves, as young adults, for meeting the challenges that this crisis presents. As a participant, I am not at liberty to share stories we have told, but, in broad strokes, we share our concerns, our understanding, and our intentions. A third council is scheduled for early 2020, at which we will discuss next steps so we can bring this spark to more people and become a torch in the night. ★

Thanks for the Buns

Faye Ross, Class of 2023

SANTA LUCIA DAY, December 13 each year, is a Swedish holiday that honors the stories told by monks who brought Christianity to Sweden. Second graders from the Waldorf School (formerly Steiner) visited and sang and delivered Santa Lucia buns to everyone in the high school. It was touching, and we are grateful. ★



Second graders in the High School on Santa Lucia Day, December 13

Deck the (Heaton) Halls with... Holiday Carols!

Katie Rumin, Class of 2021



Berkshire Waldorf students sing at Heaton Court on December 18

ON WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 18, a select group of chorus students bundled up in coats and walked across the street to Heaton Court, a local retirement residence, to sing carols and other popular songs as a way to spread some holiday cheer. We were led by Rob Kelly, Chorus director (and arranger and accompanist). Only a small group of students was able to participate in this performance, as there was not enough room for the whole school to fit in Heaton Court. (For those who don't know, our school has a mandatory all-school chorus that is mostly focused on popular music.) When we arrived, we were greeted by a small community hall, which looked more like a living room than anything else, with high ceilings. A small, slightly out-of-tune upright piano was in the corner.

We started to sing, beginning with two tunes from *The Sound of Music*, and the residents were immediately moved. Many of them started to sing along, and some were even moved to tears. We then moved on to the rest of our diverse set, ranging from a choral arrangement of "Silent Night" by Daniel Kantor to "Don't Stop Believin'" by Journey. In addition to the group set, there were instrumental solos by Kendra Bellamy (2023) on piano, Sadie Curtis (2021), also on piano, and Katie Rumin (me) on viola. As an encore, our group performed "Jingle Bells," which we had not prepared at all. Mattie Vandiver (2021), as the only one who knew the words to the second verse, basically had a solo.

The next day in Morning Meeting I was happy to hear the announcement that some of them wrote letters to Mr. Sagarin thanking him for sending us over. One letter called us "forward-thinking young people that Stockbridge is lucky to have." So grateful to have participated in this performance, and hoping this is the beginning of a yearly tradition! ★

We're Off! Early Applicants Accepted

Talia Pott, Class of 2020

WITH THREE of my fellow classmates, I am pleased to announce that the college acceptance season is off to an early and positive start. To date, Hannah Stanard has been accepted at Bennington College, Lucia-Rae Ginsberg has been accepted at Skidmore College (binding), Pia Whyte has been accepted at the University of Vermont and the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, and I have been accepted to Drew University, Simmons University, Sarah Lawrence College, and Eastern University. I know that more students and schools will join this list in the coming months before graduation. We'll keep you posted! ★



Left to Right: Hannah Stanard, Pia Whyte, Lucia-Rae Ginsberg, and Talia Pott

The Heroes Project: Fall Art Show at Stockbridge Library

Liam R. Nelson, Class of 2023

FOR THEIR FALL ARTS BLOCK, the students who did not participate in the Fall Festival of Shakespeare made portraits of people they considered to be their heroes. According to art teacher Dr. Genève Brossard, “Each artwork represents a hero; an individual that the student has chosen, from their own life, human history, or popular culture, whom they consider to be a hero. Some of the qualities that the students have determined as existing in heroes are: empathy, action in the face of fear and resistance, creative innovation, overcoming personal and physical obstacles and thus expanding the understanding and capacities of those around them, resiliency and humor as acts of courage, and actively supporting human connection as an antidote to societal division.”

Some students made collages, some worked in graphite, and others painted in acrylics. Dr. Brossard and Ms. Amy Inglis, our other art teacher, helped us to see any details that we should paint, or helped us choose the right medium. The classes were really fun.

At the end of the block, students wrote artists’ statements explaining who their hero was and why they chose that person, and their artwork was put on display in the Stockbridge Library, located steps away from the school on Main Street. We unveiled our work at an art opening at the Library on Friday, December 13. Parents, teachers, and friends milled around, after hours, eating cookies and cheese and crackers while admiring the work. ★



Katie Rumin, Class of 2021, and viola

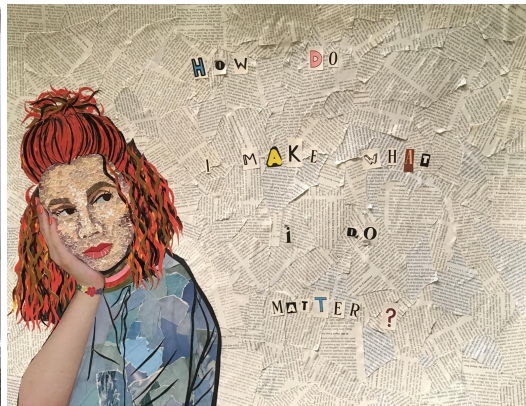
Lullaby: A World Premiere

Chelsea Mathieu, Class of 2023

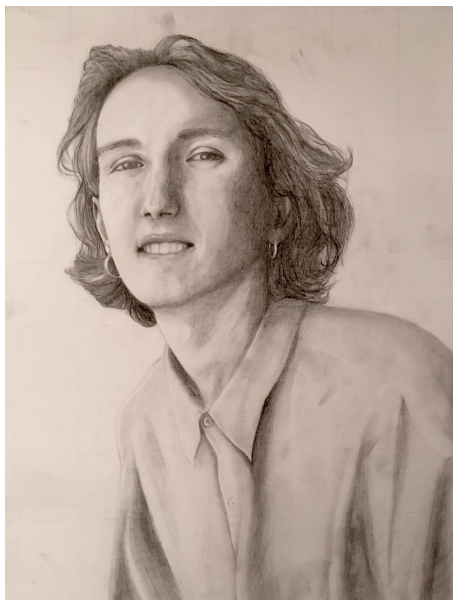
THIS PAST DECEMBER, violist Katie Rumin (Class of 2021) was invited to perform the world premiere of a new piece by local composer Anson Olds with the Berkshire Lyric Chorus. The piece, *Lullaby*, was based on texts from the Lute-Book Lullaby, and was scored for viola, women’s chorus, and piano. The piece was given two performances, one at the Stockbridge Congregational Church, which mostly featured lighter holiday music, and one at St. James Place in Great Barrington which featured more “serious” holiday music. “It was an excellent way to show off our school to the community that has supported us,” said Talia Pott, Class of 2020, who attended both concerts. Congratulations Katie! ★



Geneve Brossard (left) and Amy Inglis at the Opening Reception on Dec. 13



“How Do I Make What I Do Matter?”
Linda Ripley, Class of 2021. Collage



Ezra Gudeon by Iris Gudeon, Class of 2022.



Self-portrait. Simon Hoel, Class of 2020

A Grief Sublime by Beth Robbins



CONGRATULATIONS to English teacher Beth Robbins on publication of her book, *A Grief Sublime*. Here she is at the launch party for the book, with Karen Allen, left, and Alison Larkin, right. See our next issue for a review of the book! ★

Hermit Island: More Fun and Simultaneous Suffering

Talia Pott, Class of 2020

BATTLING THE FLUCTUATING TEMPERATURES, fevers, and the bitter Maine-coast wind, thirteen students and four adults strike their camp on the last day of the trip. Storing food, extinguishing the fire, washing dishes, striking tents. For six days, living on a remote island that is connected by one road to the mainland coast of Maine, they have been studying coastal creatures, singing, dancing, drawing, eating, and suffering from the virus that swept through their camp. They are the Berkshire Waldorf High School class of 2020, and, at last, they are going home.

Perhaps I am being dramatic. Perhaps I am exaggerating, but I have never had more fun while simultaneously suffering. Accompanied by teachers Sarah Blexrud and Elizabeth Orenstein, and parents Alix von Auenmueller and Michael Fernbacher, my classmates and I shared stories, remembered times of yore, and bonded. We bonded at the beach, we bonded in the mudflats, we bonded in the tide pools, we bonded as we suffered through our colds, fevers and some rainy nights. Arising each day at 5:30 a.m., we studied marine biology—in tidal pools at the water's edge and in saltwater tanks in the classroom. We relaxed with students from nine other Waldorf Schools and sat around the fire late into the night. Even now, months later, we still remember the adventure with which we began the final year of our high school journey. ★



Class of 2020 and Ms. Orenstein (right) after a mud flat lab; clams, worms, and lots of mud



Lou Finston-Fox and Miranda Hastings compare notes in the microscope lab



Lucia-Rae Ginsberg and Pia Whyte conduct an inventory of organisms in a tide pool



Costa Rica Service Trip!

Faye Ross, Class of 2022

THIS APRIL, the 10th and 11th grade Spanish students will be going to Costa Rica for 3 weeks as the 2020 edition of our biannual Spanish trip, led by our teacher Profe Julia Nunez and accompanied by Ms. Samantha Stier. We will engage in community service, and also enjoy rappelling, ziplining, swinging, and rafting. This is an immersion and adventure experience. It gives the students a chance to dive into the culture and language of another country.

In order to defray the costs of going on the trip, about \$3500 per student, we are holding various fundraisers leading up to it. Some days we sell food to our schoolmates at lunch, like cookies, brownies, or quesadillas. We are also selling calendar raffle tickets to the greater community. (Please support us!) This is an exciting trip, and we are doing our best to make it as meaningful and memorable as we possibly can. We can't wait! ★

(See our next issue for a report on the trip to Munich—our 9th in 18 years!)



Globe Staff

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

Advisor: Stephen Sagarin



Berkshire Waldorf
High School

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