

R.K. Finn Times

Vol. 3 Issue #1

Fifth Grade

Spring 2021

Garden Interest Grows at Ryan Road Students work cooperatively to create edible classroom



Absolutely Radishing: The students at Ryan Road grow radishes, lettuce, tomatoes, potatoes, corn, raspberries, pumpkins, and so much more in the school garden!

Finn Ryan Road School kindergarten teachers (who also was my kindergarten teacher), was one of the founders of the garden.

Ms. Egitto has a long history of gardening. She says, “I started teaching about gardening when I was a second grade teacher at a school in New York City in 199,” she says. “We started a garden in a small patch of dirt in front of our school. We planted tomatoes, peppers, potatoes, lettuce, peas, and many flowers.”

Every grade spends time in the garden. Kindergarteners at Ryan Road get to garden too! “The kindergarteners planted peas and potatoes,” she said. “We also weed the paths and sand the wood for the new garden beds.”

Are you curious about how the garden was made? Ms. Egitto said, “I wanted to start a garden at Ryan

By Sky Van Stee

Every fall and spring, in the garden at R.K. Finn Ryan Road School, Ms. Hope gathers the students for an awesome experience! Ms. Hope is the school garden teacher from Grow Food Northampton. The stu-

dents do things like: planting, harvesting and eating the food they grow! A few days ago, the fifth graders weeding the garden and they found a lot of worms. Every grade works in the garden every two weeks.

Ms. Egitto, one of the R.K.

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Transformer Fire Causes Power Outage

Hundreds are left without electricity at Ryan Road; prompts sudden closing

By Gavin Earle

On April 6, 2021, a power outage happened at Ryan Road School. Some fifth graders were in P.E. and were about to go outside for snack then we heard a loud “THUD!” We all rushed to see what happened and we saw that a

tree fell on a power line. Then Mr. Y came into the gym and Ms. Minton, the P.E. teacher, yelled to Mr. Y, “We aren’t having snack out here!” Then we heard a sizzling sound and saw that

...continues on page 16



Covid Cancels Field Day

A look back at one of Ryan Road's favorite traditions



We may not have field day this year, but Ms. Minton organized a special Play40 Day, when students can enjoy activities with classmates in a safe way.

By Samantha C. Pensivy

Field day at Robert K. Finn Ryan Road Elementary School is something that happens every year. Because of the pandemic, we can't have a field day this year.

But let's take a look at what field day was like in the past. We have field day to celebrate another great school year. Field day is on a Friday in June.

Many teachers and parents take very important roles in field day. Without them field day would not be possible.

I asked Sara Simmons, a fourth grade teacher here at R.K. Finn, what her perspective on field day was. I asked her how field day works with their schedule." Field day works with my schedule because it's only a few hours of my day and I schedule super

important things around it. I also think field day is really important because it is a special day that kids remember."

I asked Taila Garretson, a fifth-grade student at R.K. Finn why she thought it was important: "Field day is important because kids need part of a day off from school. It's also nice to see teachers, parents, and students having fun."

Parents and teachers take up a big role in field day. Parents volunteer to come to the school and help on field day. Without them, there might not be a day that all students remember. Instructors such as Rebecca Minton the P.E. teacher, do lots to help out on field day. When I asked her what she does to help out on field day, she replied, "I plan the whole day, and make sure all the teachers know where their classes should be. I also keep time, to make sure we rotate so that everyone gets to experience each zone."

One of the best stations at field day are the water slide and obstacle course. According to Mrs. Madden, they come from Party Patrol in Southampton. But there are many other great stations like pin making, kickball, a sensory table, sponge toss, shaving balloons and much more! These are all the great things about field day!

Slip and Slide is Highlight of Play40

Fun games, water balloons entertain the masses



Students Keep Calm, Carry On

School staff lead students through stressful situation

By Brandon Culver

At R.K. Finn Ryan Road School on Tuesday, April 6, 2021, in the forest next to the gym, a tree fell on a wire and it caused the transformer to explode. This caused an early dismissal for the whole school.

Our 5th grade class was in music. We heard an explosion and half of the lights went off. We were all scared. Mrs. O'Connell said, "Stay calm." Everybody was scared.

So our awesome teacher, Mrs. Sidoti, got us and we grabbed our snacks and went outside. We were going to our regular spot to eat when we had to stop. We heard that a tree fell on to a wire and made a transformer explode from our cafeteria manager, Barbara. So we ate our snacks in the tents on the black top instead.

Next, we went inside to the classroom and Mrs. Madden came and told us that we have an early dismissal because there was no power. She also told us that we were safe and only had to go



Fifth graders Lionel, Brandon and Gavin all witnessed the transformer explosion that impacted our school in April. It was the first time they had to leave school due to a power outage.

home because we had no power. So we grabbed our bags and went to the field to read for a bit. We saw the electrical workers that were already fixing the pole. Then we waited for our parents and we went home.

I asked the best R.K. Finn Ryan Road principal, Sarah Madden how she felt. She told me, "The electric company came and fixed it. I was so busy making sure everyone was doing fine and com-

municating with teachers about the plan for the day, that I never even spoke with anyone from the electric company, but I was grateful. It is nice that different people have such different talents. I would never want to get up on a pole and fix electrical equipment, but there are many people who are really good at this work and help many people get their power back.

I feel lucky that the school didn't catch on fire and that no one hurt.

Long-Term Volunteer Returns to School

Even a global pandemic couldn't keep Mr. Gerard away



Schools in our community have reopened, but only to staff and students. That means our beloved volunteers are not able to be in our school right now. But that didn't stop Mr. Gerard! He still brings fun and joy to our school by volunteering outside during recess, where some of his responsibilities include tag guard, game referee and fun-time consultant!



First Graders Exceed Expectations

Students adapt to in-person learning after remote classes

By Layla G. Packard

Teaching kids is hard, but teachers around the world never thought it would be this hard. Take a look at these R.K. Finn Ryan Road first grade teacher's opinions on online learning.

Bridget Pelis and Diana Ramsden are first grade teachers at R.K. Finn Ryan Road School in Northampton, MA. Before the year started both teachers were worried. "I was worried about how I was going to engage first graders online, but they surpassed my expectations!" Mrs. Pelis stated.

"It has been very challenging and extremely busy," stated Mrs. Ramsden. "It takes a lot of time to prepare a recorded lesson and prepare all the packets to go home."

Mrs. Pelis said that she had to show the first graders how to use the new



Mrs. Pelis and Mrs. Ramsden are proud of how hard their first graders worked this year.

technology. "I was worried that it would be difficult for them to understand. It took time to teach them how to use the technology," she said. "We tried to make learning fun and engaging, which helped," Mrs. Pelis added.

Both Mrs. Pelis and Mrs. Ramsden

said that they prefer teaching their students in person. "Definitely teaching in-person is the most enjoyable," said Mrs. Ramsden. "Hands down, in person!" added Mrs. Pelis.

This year and the last has been very hard for students and teachers but these teachers and many more are doing a great job!

From Online Zoom to the Classroom

Our reporter shares his pandemic learning experience



Most students in fifth grade agree with our reporter: Learning in person together is better! Pictured above, Mr. Y. goes over the day's schedule with his students.

By Najel Jones

This past year was very strange because of COVID-19. School was canceled and we had to do our lessons at home and on Zoom.

At the start of the year at R.K. Finn Ryan Road, the fifth grade had Mr. K. as their teacher. He was fun,

happy, and a great teacher to work with. He was never mad and he cared about everybody. After him, the fifth grade got Mrs. Sidoti, who was also super fun to work with. Fifth grade also has Mr. Y., who teaches math and science.

I was so confused at first with whose class I was supposed to be in. The instructions were really hard to understand. But after a while my mom helped me, and after that it was so clear. After a while, I could do it! Joining

the right zoom, muting, and unmuting was hard but I got used to it.

It was so hard to concentrate because I always wanted to go over and get a snack but I couldn't because I was on Zoom. The lessons were hard. The good thing about online learning was that because I was at home I got to relax a bit more. The bad thing about online learning was I got distracted really easily. Sometimes I would play video games. I also missed my friends and just having fun with them, a lot.

After many months, I finally was back in hybrid. It was pretty fun but at the same time it was awkward. Mostly because of social anxiety, but after one to three days it all felt normal again. School was different though, because of the rules. We kept masks on all the time and keeping six feet away from each other was hard.

Finally, we went back to normal five days a week. It is pretty fun. It definitely helped me focus more and I am glad to be back.



Back to School, Later than Expected

After a long year learning at home, students and staff are relieved to return to in-person school

By Victoria Kulwich

After a long year of hybrid and remote learning, most people are relieved to finally be back at Ryan Road in-person full time. On April 5, 2021, 90 percent of kids went back to in-person at Ryan Road. 236 students have been enrolled at Ryan Road School for the year of 2020-2021.

2020 was a confusing year for students and staff at the R.K Finn Elementary School. Teachers had to learn a new program, called Zoom, to hold classes and connect with students online. After a few months being all remote, the hybrid model started. Hybrid was for kids who wanted to go back in-person. They would go in-person for half of the week, and stay remote for the rest.

In-person full time started on April 5, 2021 at Ryan Road. Specials were spaced out to be safe, and classrooms were modified to fit social distancing standards. Sanitizing hands when leaving or entering a classroom became a priority, as it slows down the spread of germs.

People have enjoyed being able to see their friends and teachers again, as well as to socializing with others. I recently spoke to Eliza LaCroix, a fifth-grade student at Ryan Road School, about how she liked hybrid learning. “It was a bit confusing at first, going back and forth between everything with the strange schedules and extra time outside,” she said. Some students are still in remote learning, but most have gone into in-person schooling full time as hybrid is no longer an option

I also spoke to Ms. Keillor, an office manager at the school, and asked about how people liked hybrid learning. “I think hybrid was a challenge that everyone, students and teachers, met with grace and patience,” says Ms. Keillor. “Change is not always easy, and learning to teach in a new fashion is incredibly hard. It was what we were able to do to make the most out of some very difficult situations,” Ms. Keillor added.

Jenny Denley, a fifth grader who has stayed in remote learning, said that remote learning is definitely different than in-person learning. “I personally like online schooling, but some people don’t



Mrs. Sidoti’s fifth grade class and Mrs. Natale’s second grade class — pictured above with a socially distant seating arrangement — started remotely, then moved to the hybrid model and then, finally, to in person. Students and staff were flexible and patient with all of the changes and adjustments.

learn well over the Internet, so some peoples’ grades drop,” she said. “But overall, I enjoy it.”

Schooling has been difficult this year, but the Ryan Road community found a way to get through it together as a team, to make sure students got the education and help they needed to get through this pandemic.



The Teacher's Point of View on Pandemic

Ms. Cleary is grateful to return to in-person learning

By Hunter Blais

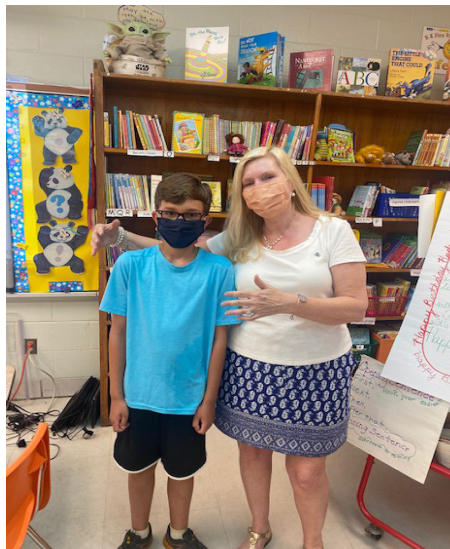
This story starts in a town called Northampton, at a school called R.K. Finn Ryan Road School. Here, there is a third grade teacher named Mrs. Cleary. I interviewed Mrs. Cleary about her experience teaching during the pandemic.

What was your reaction last spring when we got closed down?

"I will never forget that day, Friday March 13th. At first we all thought that it was temporary and that we would all be back together. None of us imagined that we would not be opening school for the rest of the year!"

What was it like?

"Teaching online was the most challenging teaching I have ever done. I spent hours and hours planning each day so that the curriculum was interesting and fun enough for my third graders to love learning like they do when they are in person!"



Pictured above, Hunter and Ms. Cleary in her third-grade classroom.

What was the worst part?

"I think the worst part was that my third graders couldn't do fun things in pairs or in small groups. Some examples are probably fun things you enjoyed in third grade like partner reading in the classroom library on bean bag chairs or in the hallway, reading, writing to each other

and giving editing ideas, playing math games and doing science experiments. Breakout rooms just weren't the same."

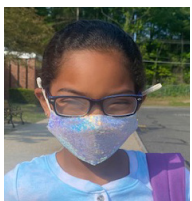
What was the best part?

"One nice part of teaching online was getting to know my student's families really well (including their adorable pets). I am lucky that my students have such wonderful, supportive and caring families. I spent five days a week in their homes with them on Zoom."

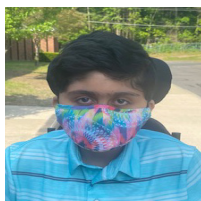
What is it like teaching in person during a pandemic?

"First of all I was so, so, so happy to finally see my third graders in person after so many months of remote learning. Even though it is a challenge for everyone to stay socially distanced and wearing masks is not easy, we are having so much fun being together and I am very thankful for that. With that being said, until I was fully vaccinated it was quite worrisome because I worried about everyone's safety. Now that all of the adults are fully vaccinated I feel so much relief."

This year's hottest fashion trend: Face masks!



Aaliyah 3C



Azaan 4D



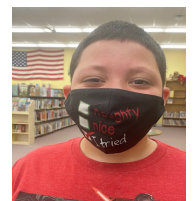
Sofia 2N



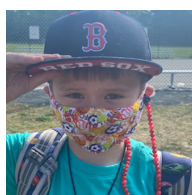
Jaelynn 1R



Isabelle 5S



J.J. 3C



Lucas 3C



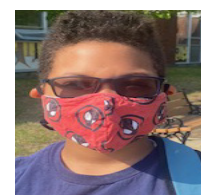
Colby 3C



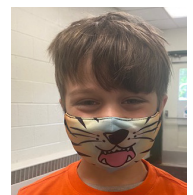
Kazto 1R



Hannah 1R



Gina 3C



Nolan 1P



School Nurses Play Pivotal Role

Nurses keep students safe and provide expert guidance

By Spencer Warner

During the COVID-19 pandemic, school nurses have played a huge role in keeping children all over the world healthy and safe.

Nurse Lisa Safron is the director of Health, Safety, and Equity Programs at Northampton Public Schools. There have been many challenges during the pandemic and the nurses have been having to work around them. She said, “The lack of under-

“School nurses have played a huge role in keeping children all over the world healthy and safe.”



Ryan Road nurses Sarah Denno and Karen Schiaffo, pictured above, helped keep the students healthy during this very challenging COVID health crisis.

standing about Sars-CoV-2, the virus which causes COVID-19, resulted in many, many protocols and guidance that changed repeatedly. For me, that has been the biggest challenge and at times the most up-setting challenge.”

They have also had to follow all the COVID-19 protocols and have been needing to be aware of them. Nurse Lisa said, “Being aware of the protocols and guidelines from the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, The Center for Disease Control, the Department of Early and Secondary Education, and our local Public Health Department has certainly kept us busy.”

They have had to follow all of the protocols. Pro-

ocols are rules that we have to follow to keep everyone safe. Nurse Lisa said, “We have learned that mitigation strategies such as physical distancing, hand hygiene, mask wearing, proper ventilation and contact tracing have proved to be effective tools in decreasing the spread of COVID-19.” In other words what we have to do to keep safe is social distance, wear a mask and keep away

from people with the virus.

In our interview I asked “Were you ever scared during the pandemic?” Her response was, “I would say that I had many worries, but not fear.”

Overall Nurse Lisa and nurses all over the world have played a huge part in keeping children safe during the COVID-19 pandemic. Thank you nurses!

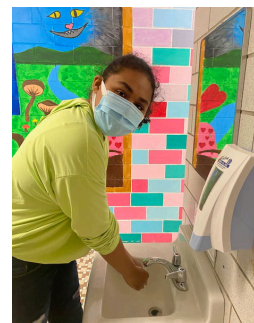
What Now?

By Janaiyah Alindato-Gonzalez and Anaiah Hayde

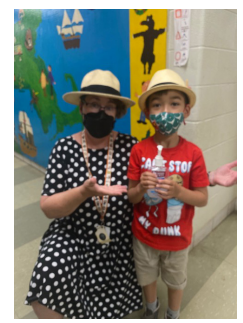
Covid restrictions may be lifting, but what does that mean for students in elementary school? We asked Nurse Sarah Denno for the inside scoop. Until younger kids can get vaccinated, Nurse Denno says that students should continue doing what we have been doing all year. “Over the summer, kids should continue wearing masks, washing hands and keeping a safe distance from each other.”



Bentley Burnham shows us proper mask-wearing.



Janaiyah says washing our hands is very important.



Kazto and Mrs. Liu remind us to sanitize our hands.



P.E. MVP Ms. Minton Keep Kids Active

How a mom and mentor inspired Ms. Minton's career



P.E. teacher Ms. Minton, pictured above with Talia, Lionel and London, says she will miss the fifth graders when they graduate and move on to JFK Middle School.

By Talia Garretson

Rebecca Minton is the amazing Physical Education teacher here at Ryan Road Elementary School, in Florence, Mass.

Many kids love P.E. because it is a time to play games and to get your energy out. Minton is incredibly talented and loves teaching here. "My favorite thing about teaching is watching a student learn a new skill and then the moment it finally "clicks" and they are able to do it," she explained.

Have you ever wondered how she organizes her activities for each class that she teaches? In her interview she said that her goal is to keep kids moving and active. She tries to come up with new fun games and activities.

Minton started teaching here since February 2013. I asked her why she became a P.E. teacher: "My mom is an elementary school teacher and growing up I always wanted to be just like her. I love sports and played so many

when I was younger. One of my all time favorite teachers in high school was my Physical Education teacher, who I looked up to. It just kind of clicked: I got to be like my mom and become a teacher but also got to add in my love for sports and being active," she answered.

Student Hunter Blais said that he really enjoys P.E. and he thinks that Ms. Minton is an awesome teacher. He enjoys P.E. a lot more than working in class. Samantha Pensivy added, "Dodge ball is one of my favorite activities. I've always enjoyed P.E."

Fifth Grade student London Burton agreed with Samantha. "Dodge ball is one of my favorites. I also miss playing capture the flag, but we can't play safely because of Covid."

Sky Van Stee said, "P.E. has gotten better and better over the years mostly because of archery."

We are so lucky to have her as our P.E. teacher here at Robert K. Finn Ryan Road Elementary School!

The Journey to a Career in P.E.

By London Burton

At R.K. Finn Ryan Road School in Florence, MA, there is a P. E. teacher named Rebecca Minton.

You might be wondering why and how Ms. Minton she became a P.E. teacher. I asked her and here is what she said: "I knew I wanted to be a Physical Education teacher when I was in high school. I went to Springfield College where I took classes and learned how to do what I do now. I always want-

ed to be a teacher and I love sports so P.E. combines my love of two things."

I also asked some of her favorite activities. "I love teaching archery, basketball skills, and sportsmanship!"

Another question I asked is what it was like during the pandemic. Here is what she said: "It has been both rewarding and extremely difficult. Rewarding because I was able to really dive deep into

some of the content, like the components of fitness, and we could play fun games that helped you review the components, like Jeopardy and Wheel of Fitness! It was difficult because my job is to have my students moving their bodies and some students weren't able to do that because of their set up at home. I am so glad we are back in person!"

The reason I wanted to interview Ms Minton is I've always liked P. E. She is a great teacher.



Archery Program Hits the Bullseye

Students learn to master the challenging sport of archery

By Alexa Peters

Archery is a good skill to learn at R.K. Finn Ryan Road Elementary School in Florence, Mass. Rebecca Minton, the fantastic Physical Education (P.E.) teacher at our school, has been teaching this skill to the students of our school for years!

What is archery?

“Archery is when you shoot an arrow at a target using a bow and an arrow and some sort of target. Targets could be either an animal, a target, or some sort of fruit. At R.K. Finn Ryan Road School you will never be using animals as a target.”

How do we stay safe?

“In archery at Ryan Road there are lines of three students, or sometimes a couple more. Only one person can shoot at a time and everyone has to be silent so you and



Students have the opportunity to learn archery in P.E. when they are in fourth grade. Fifth grader Alexa Peters, pictured above, shows the proper way to hold arrows.

others don't mess up. You have a target and you can only shoot the arrow at the target. If you aim the bow or attempt to shoot somebody, you will be sent to the

principal's office.”

How do we shoot the bow?

“When it is your turn to shoot the target the people behind you have to be 3 feet away from you. When you are holding the bow with the arrow, you hold the arrow between two fingers. One student, Alexa Peters, a 4th grader, shot a cantaloupe with the bow and arrow some time in November, 2020.”

How did she do it, is what you might be wondering? When you are lining up the bow with the arrow you want to close one eye and look at the target. When you have it aimed right at the center of the target you want to move it up about 1 or 2 inches. Then you let go of the arrow. You probably won't make it the first or second time because you have to get used to the bow, but the third time you might make it if you're used to the bow.

I hope you enjoy archery when you get to fourth grade!

Game Changer: P.E. during a Pandemic

Teachers work hard to adapt classes for all students

By Lionel Claybaugh

In September of 2020, R.K. Finn Ryan Road School P.E. teacher, Ms Minton, was doing a hard job. She was doing her P.E. classes over Zoom. Can you imagine how it would feel if you were in her shoes? She said it was interesting but difficult. It was also important to Ms. Minton to keep the student's bodies moving. Many children were not exercising due to the pandemic.

Teaching P.E. on zoom was a challenge for Ms. Minton. She explained some students had differ-



ent house rules and some were not at home. Some were in the car and at parent's offices. It was also hard to keep third to fifth graders interested because they knew what P.E. was like before the pandemic. “It was really hard coming up with creative ways to keep the higher grades interested,” said Ms. Minton.

Many people might not know teaching over Zoom is exhausting. “It was a lot,” Ms. Minton said. “I had six classes a day. Luckily, in the morning I have some time in between classes that allowed me to take a little break from the screen. It

was really exhausting doing the classes over Zoom.”

One of the activities that she did was a game with cards with numbers on it. The card would have an activity or exercise under it. Examples of those exercises were: toy soldiers, burpees, bicycles, push-ups, sit-ups and jumping jacks. There was another game that was like Wheel of Fortune but with list of exercises to do. These games were the ways Ms. Minton used to get kids exercising

It is really hard to teach physical education classes; not all people can do the job. It was especially hard to do because of the pandemic. Ms Minton did a great job coming up with ways to teach P.E. during the pandemic.



The Fascinating History of Ryan Road

Native American swampland becomes beloved school

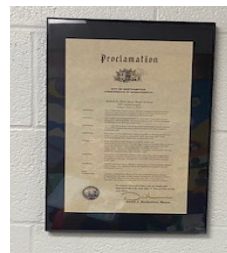
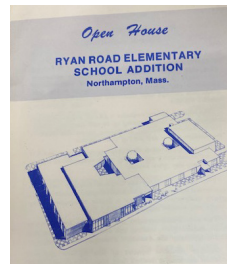
By Clayton Cummings, Anaiah Hayde and Janaiyah Alindato-Gonzalez

Did you know that the school in Northampton, MA, R. K. Finn Ryan Road, used to be a farm?

We were curious about the school and its history so we researched it. We contacted the Northampton Historical Society and asked them questions about the history of R.K. Finn Ryan Road. We got information back from the Northampton Historical Society. The co-director named Laurie Sanders researched the history and emailed the information to us.

Native Americans, known as the Nonotuck tribe, lived in the Northampton area for thousands of years. The word Nonotuck means “the midst of the river.” The Nonotuck were also often called the Norwottuck. According to Laurie Sanders, we don’t have much information on how the Nonotuck lived their lives.

Long before 1966, when the school was built, the land belonged to Hattie Barlett. Hattie’s father had passed on the land to her in 1927. The area the school was built on used to have many



Pictured, from top left: Mrs. Smiarowski’s kindergarten class from years ago; an original school brochure; breaking ground for the playground in the 1900s; the school proclamation; and the school’s first principal, and school’s namesake, R. K. Finn.

wetlands and forests. Wildlife depended on this to survive. The school was built over 15,000 year old gravel that traveled from water melting off glaciers from the ice age.

In 1966 the land was donated to Northampton. “In 1970, the Northampton Planning board gave them the okay to build 200 homes on ninety acres between Ryan Road and Burt’s Pit Road. At that point, Burt’s Pit Road was still

dirt, but it was paved when the homes were built,” Laurie Sanders said.

The swamp was filled in and a school was built in 1966. “This is one of the reasons that sometimes a large pool of water collects in the low spot near the playground & ball field,” Sanders said. Sometimes geese or ducks will gather in this area. So if you’re driving by Northampton take a peek at this strange and interesting location.

Weeping Willow Adds Beauty to Landscape

This special tree would make look great at Ryan Road school!

By Isabelle Braidman

The weeping willow tree is an amazing example of nature’s beauty. There are many ways the weeping willow is special. Here are a few of them.

According to www.thisoldhouse.com the following things are true: “A weeping willow tree needs full sun to partial shade.”

If you were looking at weeping willows at a glance you might notice what they look like. “Weeping willows have

wide circular crowns, small trunks, and elongated loosely hanging branches.”

Weeping willows also have beautiful leaves. “Their leaves are greenish-yellow on the top and a slightly paler green on the bottom. They’re generally between three and six inches long and up to half inch wide.”



Weeping willows have amazing flowers. “Their flowers are pale green or yellow and soft, puffy and fluffy. They’re usually only between one and two inches long.”

Weeping willows have plain bark. “The bark is usually a brownish-gray color with grooves in it.”

Weeping willows have extraordinary twigs. “The twigs have soft even surfaces. They are usually deep yellowish-green or light brownish-yellow and narrow. The top parts of the twigs are sometimes reddish-brown.”

That is why weeping willows are special.



ATVs Provide Four-Wheeling Fun

A beginner's guide to an awesome four-season hobby

By Connor Emerson
Have you heard of ATVs? It's an all terrain vehicle. It is also an awesome activity that you can do anywhere off road or on your own property during spring, summer and fall. Maybe even winter, if you have snow tires.

Turning
It's not safe to turn fast. Sometimes, you have to take your time with it, if in a tight spot. Sometimes, you turn perfectly. But you can't take sharp turns, or the quad could flip, or at least lift up a few wheels, and that's not good. If you turn decently fast, lean into it, or if you want to do drifts, turn slightly and

lean. When you're about to finish the drift turn fast. Sometimes with leaning, you might have to lean off of the four wheeler.

Speed
Most four wheelers can go 35 mph. Some can go faster. If you're in first gear it's impossible to go that speed. If you want to go faster, switch gears. If you're in first gear and you want to go faster, there should be something that looks like a peddle on the left side of the quad where your foot is. Put your foot under that and lift it up with your foot. If you hear a clicking sound, you did it.



If you want to go slower, press down on that pedal. If you hear is a clicking sound, then you are back in first gear. Sometimes, there are five gears and sometimes there are only three gears. There is usually no gear switching on the smaller quads. If you have a free space to go fast, fourth gear is the best. But slow down if you don't have a lot of space because it's easy to crash!

Tires
There are two types of tires:


They are soft and hard. The soft tires can be easier off road. If you run over a rock, the rock kind of bounces off the tire and you won't even feel it. The hard tires you can feel that rock. The hard tires would let you go slightly faster because they are lighter and filled more with air.

Riding Equipment
When you ride a four wheeler you should wear a helmet. But that's obvious. Also goggles are good and useful because sometimes dust gets in your eyes and it hurts. Gloves don't really help but they are good to not get your hands dirty.

Video Games Provide Fun Distraction

By Finnegan Newman, T-Jay Dixon and Nathan Bajaj

Looking for a new game to play? We interviewed all our classmates and chose the top five games. Roblox is an online game platform that has millions of players and is growing by the second. You can play millions of user created games or you can customize your character. The graphics are really simple and aren't hard on the eyes either. There is something for everyone on Roblox. It's almost impossible to choose what to play on Roblox, so we will suggest some of the greatest games. Plane Crazy is our personal favorite. Experiment with different ideas as you make planes. Give yourself challenges like building a boat or making something spin faster than the

GLOSSARY 

NPC: non-playable character

RPG: role play game

Boss: A stronger enemy

Metroidvania: A subgenre action/adventure games

speed of light. It never gets boring and if you get stuck, watch a YouTube tutorial! If that is not your type of game, then you can probably find another fun game to play on Roblox. Minecraft is a very popular survival/online game that will leave you craving for more. There is so much you can do! Build a house on creative, beat the ender-dragon in survival mode, or play online with friends: it's your decision! If you get Minecraft java edition, then you should join hypixel. Terraria is a 2D action/survival game that's good for people who are new to the

survival genre. This game is filled with content as you explore various unique areas. Build amazing houses for almost thirty NPCs. There are almost 4,000 different items to craft or collect. With about thirty bosses with cool different powers to fight, you'll be sitting at the edge of your seat craving more. Hollow Knight is a 2D Metroidvania where you exploring the world hollow nest, beating bosses and getting charms and abilities to help you explore. The beautiful hand drawn graphics, amazing music, and hard gameplay will leave you dying for more. Finally, Legend of Zelda is an action/adventure masterpiece. It truly shines with its amazing story and fun battle mechanics. You can collect different weapons as you explore the land of Hyrule gathering power to defeat Ganon who has taken over the castle. These are some of our favorite video games and we hope you like some of them, too.



Dinosaur Discovered in Lobby

Ze the Dinosaur makes their debut at Ryan Road

By Eliza LaCroix

On a regular day at Ryan Road Elementary school, something not so regular happened. A father and his two girls, the Hoeckh family, dropped off a big, robotic dinosaur. The staff was very excited. It was a gift to the school because the Hoeckh girls were so happy in their time spent at Ryan Road.

According to Mrs. Madden, the Ryan Road principal, while trying to think up a name, someone suggested Ze. It was a good suggestion, because they also had decided on they/them pronouns. It will help everyone to remember to practice using them.

Ze is mottled green and brown, and appears to be a triceratops. They have cute, stubby cream colored horns, as well as nails. Ze also has adorable, dark brown eyes and a bright pink tongue. Last, but not least, the dinosaur has a special lanyard around his neck with their name and pronouns. They are big enough for an adult to sit on him. There are even some pictures of the Phys. Ed. teacher Ms. Minton on him in the lobby slideshow.

On Ze's back, there are some switches. If



Fifth graders Carly Niedzwiecki (left) and Eliza LaCroix (right) spend some time in the school lobby with Ze the dinosaur. Make sure you say hello to them!

pressed, he can do a few different things. Ze can roar and open and close their eyes. They can also be put to sleep if you rub their chin. "It's really quite cute, and the younger students are amazed by this," says Principal Madden.

All and all, Ze the nonbinary dinosaur, sits forever in the lobby greeting staff and students and making everyone who walks by smile. They are a good addition to our school!

Sojourner Truth Continues to Inspire

Abolitionist and women's rights advocate lived locally

By Rowen Hashim

This is the story of Sojourner Truth, an unspoken hero who briefly lived in our very own community.

Sojourner Truth was born enslaved under the given name of Isabella Baumfree, although she was definitely not free. Sojourner had 12 siblings, all sold to different plantations. They never got to see each other again.

She got sold at the age of 9 for \$100. Sojourner only spoke Dutch. Luckily, the slave owners also spoke Dutch. Later on, she got sold for \$150 to someone who only spoke English. Sojourner was constantly beaten for not understanding her owner's orders.

Once Isabelle was a woman, another Master, named Dumont, promised to free her in one year. But he broke his promise. So she



Sojourner Truth arrived in Florence, Massachusetts in 1843 and joined a community dedicated to equality and justice.

freed herself. She brought her youngest daughter, Sophia, with her.

Dumont found her, but a kind family paid money for her freedom. A few

years later, she learned that her son, Peter, was sold. Sojourner Truth demanded him back. She was finally able to get Peter back, with the help of lawyers.

Sojourner became a powerful preacher who traveled across the nation, giving inspirational speeches. Then she moved to Florence, Massachusetts. She joined a group where women were equal to men. She taught people about segregation and slavery: The total truth. Some people thought she was a man because she was so brave! But that just goes to show how genders were not equal at all.



Rowling Faces Fierce Backlash

Can you still enjoy an author's books, even if you don't agree with their personal opinions and thoughts?

By Patrick Dabrowski

You may not have heard about this controversy, but there has been bad blood between J.K. Rowling and the transgender community for the past few months. One thing that triggered this was that J.K. Rowling liked a comment on twitter saying that trans women are just men in dresses and vice versa.

Now, many people are calling J.K. Rowling a TERF: An acronym that means Trans-Exclusionary Radical Feminist). J.K. Rowling says that people telling trans women that they can be as much of a woman as she is makes her feel like less of a woman.

A fourth-grade teacher at the school, R.K. Finn Ryan Road, Ms. Simmons says, "I do know that I deeply disagree with her comments regarding people who are trans." She also says, "...but I do not believe that people who watch Harry Potter or read the series are transphobic."

Fifth grader Brandon Culver at R.K.

Finn Ryan Road says that, "I do believe J.K. Rowling is transphobic." He also agrees with Ms. Simmons that people that do read J.K. Rowling books are not transphobic.

Grandfather and retired police officer John O'Leary says, "I believe that people who judge other people because of their opinion are just bullies." He also says that, "Even if I might disagree with what she thinks I'm not gonna hate her. She is entitled to her opinion and I'd die for her to say it." That means that he thinks people's freedom of speech is very important in society. He also said "I do not believe people that read the J.K.



J.K. Rowling's controversial transphobic comments inspire lively debate and exchange of opinions among teachers, students and a grandfather.

Fifth-grade student Lionel Claybaugh says that, "J.K. Rowling is not transphobic but it's just very rude towards the community." Another student, Rowen Hashim, says: "I do believe J.K. Rowling is transphobic." She also said, "I don't believe people that read J.K. Rowling books are transphobic."

Rowling books are transphobic." It seems so that many people think that people that read the Harry Potter are not transphobic but I do see many differences. Some people are saying that J.K. Rowling is not transphobic but she is rude. This concludes my article. Thanks for reading.



Thank you to all of our fifth grade caregivers. We would not have made it through this challenging year without your patience, kindness and support. It truly "takes a village" and we are honored to be a part of this wonderful community.
*Sincerely,
The Fifth Grade Team*

Comics, Games and Art



comic by Talia Garretson and Samantha Pensivy



Art by Alexa Peters

R.K. Finn Times Staff

Spring 2021

Janaiyah Alindato-Gonzalez; Nathan Bajaj; Hunter Blais; Isabelle Braidman; London Burton; Lionel Claybaugh; Brandon Culver; Clayton Cummins; Patrick Dabrowski; James Dixon; Aiden Dupuis; Gavin Earle; Connor Emerson; Talis Garretson; Rowen Hashim; Anaiah Hayde; Najel Jones; Victoria Kulwich; Eliza LaCroix; Hunter Miller; Razvan Neculaes-Holt; Finnegan Newman; Carly Niedzwiecki; Layla Packard; Samantha Pensivy; Alexa Peters; Abdiel Rosado Diaz; Sky Van Stee; Spencer Warner

Comics, Games and Art



comic by Carly R. Niedzwiecki



Jokes!



Why did the teachers wear sunglasses to school?

Because their students were so bright!

Why isn't there a clock in the library?

Because it tocks too much.

Why do math books always look so sad?

They are full of problems.



Where do pencils go on vacation?

Pencil-vania.

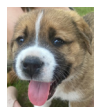
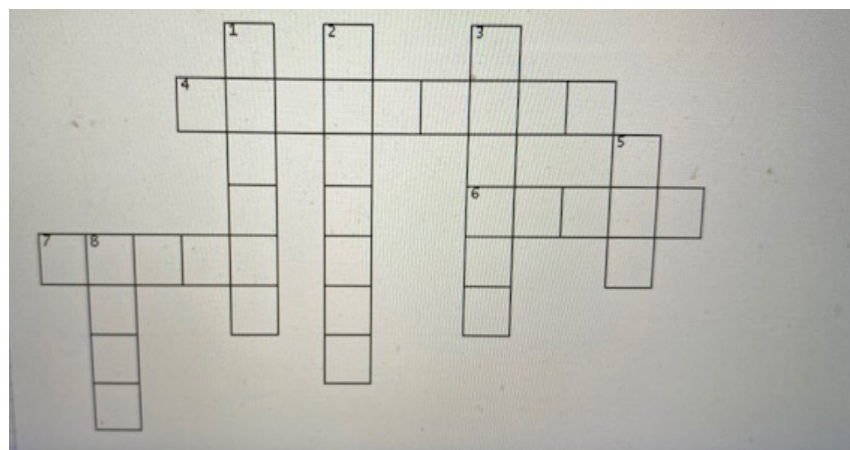
DOWN

1. What is the last name of our principal?
2. Fourth grade teacher
3. What day do kindergartners usually spend time in the woods?
5. What school do students attend after Ryan Road?
8. What is Ryan Road's animal mascot?

ACROSS

4. What room do you eat your lunch in?
6. Third grade teacher
7. What time is school dismissed?

Crossword Puzzle



Secrets of the Teachers' Lounge

Our investigative reporter goes behind the scenes of Ryan Road's biggest mystery: The teachers' lounge

By Carly Rose Niedzwiecki

Have you ever seen the teachers' lounge before? Well, if you have never been in the teachers' lounge before, Carly Rose Niedzwiecki will be telling you all about what is inside this mysterious room. Keep reading if you want to know more.

When I walked into the teachers' lounge I noticed a kitchen with a sink, two microwaves and a coffee machine. Also, there was an oven. They also had this cool thing called an Ellison Die cutter, which is used for making shapes. Kindergarten ESP Jill Johnson was using it to make a shamrock (four-leaf clover) and it was really awesome.

Staff member Mr. St. George explained what lunch was like in the teachers' lounge before COVID-19. He said, "Before Covid-19 the teachers' lounge was also the place where most of the teachers had lunch, but just like our students, we've had to adjust and spread out a bit to stay safe." Mr. St. George also mentioned that he was looking forward to getting back to nor-



The lounge at Ryan Road school features a microwave, several coffee makers, a refrigerator, as well as special equipment like a copy machine. Sometimes Mrs. Madden brings treats for the staff and puts them on the round table. There is also a small book lending library, because the staff at Ryan Road loves to read!

mal school.

I interviewed Ms. Ellis, the ELL teacher, about what she liked about the teacher's lounge and she answered: "Sometimes Mrs Madden puts candy in a small bowl because the teachers were working so hard this year, because of the pandem-

ic." Also, Mrs. Sidoti said: "I go to the teachers lounge everyday to get candy. Mrs. Madden spoils us! I also use the teachers' lounge often to make photocopies."

That is your inside look at Ryan Road school's teachers' lounge. And no, there is no hot tub!

...continued from page 1

Road because of the amazing experiences that I had with my students gardening when I was teaching at school in New York. At Ryan Road School, we had plenty of space for a school garden. I wrote an NEF grant and started the garden around 2006. We planted lots of vegetables and a heart-shaped strawberry patch." NEF stands for Northampton Education Foundation and they raise money for Northampton Schools.

...continued from page 1

power line burning... BOOM! The power line exploded! Then we went through the school to the other side of the school to have our snack. When we were having snack we saw the fire trucks coming to the school.



Transformers: More than meets the eye.

After snack, we went back into Mr. Y.'s classroom. Half of the school had power and the other half did not. Then Mrs. Madden, our principal, said that we were all getting an early dismissal because all the power went

out, and not because it was unsafe to be in school.

After school, I couldn't even ride my bike home because the bike rack was really close to where the power line exploded. Because of that, it wasn't safe

for us to go over to get our bikes. Some kids had to have playdates with their friends because their parents could not pick them up right away. It was a very exciting day at Ryan Road School.