

The Best of Times



RSD Middle School Quarterly Report of News, Highlights and Events

June, 2010

Rochester School for the Deaf

Volume 4, Issue 4

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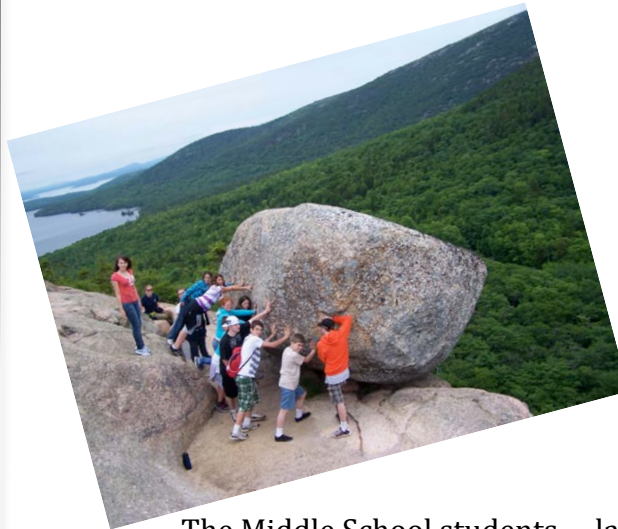
Summer School:

July 12th – August 20th

First Day of School:

September 8, 2010

The Middle School's "Maine" Event



The Middle School students culminated their Adventures in Education unit of study by traveling to Mount Desert Island and Bar Harbor, Maine. Immediately under the tutelage of the staff at the Acadia Oceanographic Institute (AIO), students took part in tidal pool studies where they studied organisms and researched them for presentations to their peers. They later observed the geology of Mount Desert Island and attempted to push an erratic boulder off a cliff. No success there!

Squid dissection was the objective in the afternoon that first day. Students got by any queasiness they might have felt and handled the activity well, observing the anatomy of the squid and later removing the "pen" backbone of the squid. They then began writing their names using its ink! Students

later found themselves searching for green crabs, sea stars, urchins, cucumbers and other creatures in Seal Harbor to build their own salt-water aquarium at the institute.

On day two, students went on a hike of Cadillac Mountain, learning the history and the fun facts on the mountain as well as neighboring Bar Harbor. Later, they went on a whale watch where they observed Minke Whales, harbor and gray seals, as well as puffins. On day three, the students went on a salt marsh study, where students in one area of the marsh used a seine net to collect marine life such as pipefish, crabs and scud. The students in another section of the salt marsh collected soil samples and analyzed the sulfur content in the soil. After the salt marsh, the students had the afternoon off, lounging and frolicking in the sun and water at Echo Lake Beach.

(cont. on page 2)

A Day at the Beach



While most of the Middle School headed off to Maine, a few brave souls stayed behind for a week of learning and exploring here in Rochester. Some students took field trips to the George Eastman House and Susan B. Anthony's home. On Friday, they joined the high school on a trip to Charlotte Beach. Though they enjoyed the peace and quiet for a week, they welcomed their classmates back with open arms.

Students Study Ocean Life

(Cont. from page 1)

Next was a night hike on Lower Hadlock Lake, where the students sat down with staff at AIO and RSD to play *"Two Truths and a Lie"*. Then they hiked all the way around the lake and returned back to their digs at AIO for a restful night's sleep to prepare for the next day's adventures. In a survey of Somes Sound (the only true fjord on the eastern seaboard), the students conducted various tests on the sound's ecological and environmental health such as dissolved oxygen studies, color tests, top and bottom water vitality, ph tests, and temperature and salinity (to name a few).

The sights included ospreys, eagles, and black seals as well as the "cottages" of the millionaires who helped to make Mount Desert Island the great vacationing paradise it is. On the next day, students did a Sand Beach survey where they



measured the slope of the beach towards the shore. These studies are helpful in determining degradation of the beach as well as the health of the shoreline. The following day found the students conducting intertidal transects where they looked at the life collected in specific areas along a plane on a rocky shore to determine the plethora of living organisms deposited on the rocks. Midday, the students were given an update on the situation with the oil spill in the Gulf region and what they could do to prevent that kind of accident from happening again. The students then went shopping in Bar Harbor and finally on a sunset stroll on Cadillac Mountain where the sun's setting was glorious. They left AIO with the greatest of memories and armed with greater knowledge of the seas than ever before.

Life and Death

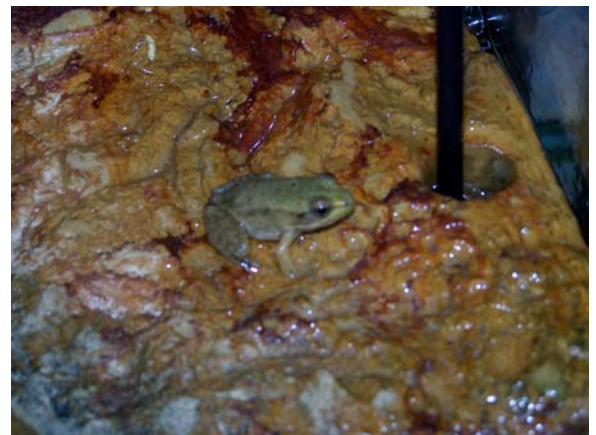
Students in the Middle School witnessed “birth” and metamorphosis first hand this spring. They incubated and hatched chicken eggs and housed tadpoles in the science classroom aquarium.

Fertilized eggs were ordered from a company in Iowa and shipped overnight to RSD. The eggs were placed in an incubator and each class “adopted” three eggs. Students waited in anticipation for the 21-day incubation period until hatch day. During the three-week period, the eggs were candled (placed in front of a bright light) in order to see the size of the developing chick embryo. Of the twelve initial eggs, seven hatched on their own and two were helped out by concerned staff. Unfortunately, one of those two chicks did not survive past 4 days. Students enjoyed watching the newly hatched chicks grow and develop their feathers and “personalities”. The chicks were different breeds so it was interesting to see what evolved. One would grow a plume of feathers on its head and two of the chicks had feathered feet. After approximately four weeks, we said goodbye to the chicks as they made their way to Ms. Lester’s farm. Fortunately, she will keep us well informed as to their growth and progress.

In addition, the Science classroom unexpectedly acquired two types of tadpoles. Four (frog) tadpoles were found in an outdoor pond, coming out of the mud where they were buried over the winter. Of those four, three had



already developed front legs. The other tadpoles were found on AV’s pool cover. They were black and much smaller. The students were able to watch as three of the four larger tadpoles metamorphosed to frogs. Unfortunately, one of them didn’t make it. Such is the cycle of life!



Last Week Activities!

The Rochester School for the Deaf Middle School Team

English Language Arts

Catherine Kipp
Laurie Kettle-Rivera
Kim Kotel

FACS

Pamela McInerney

Library

Margaret Jennings

Mathematics

Heather Mooney

Physical Education

Mary Cook
Scott Lipitz
Carah Taylor

Science

Carla Bonaldi

ASL/English Education

Barbara DiGiovanni
Ron Rood

Social Studies

Gene DiVincenzo

Speech/Communications

Cathie Coppola
Christine Fitzgerald
Jen Gentzke
Susan Noam
Melissa Mason

Technology in Education

Kathy Tarello

Visual Arts

Scott Gentzke

Support Services

Jen Cranch
Patrick Sullivan
Joe Yonda

Classroom Partners

Nancy Cantabene
Jodi Forrest
Kathie Holzwarth
Brenda Lester
Vicki Nordquist

Director, Elementary and Middle School Programs

Denise Stappenbeck

Administrative Support

Gabriella Melia

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and last name with
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Academic Bowl

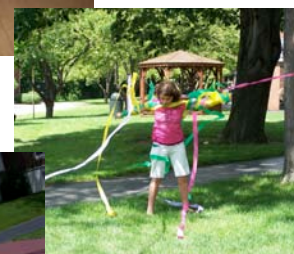
Our annual Academic Bowl took place on the morning of June 24th with three teams raring to show off their knowledge of this past year's lessons. Teachers from all classes submitted questions and teams competed in a fierce battle for the ultimate academic honor: Academic Bowl Champions! The winning team for the 2009-2010 school year included Richard Daniels, Brianna DiGiovanni, David Mayes, Ryan Clark-Sulkey, and Marlena Rauber. Way to go, Smarties!



8th Graders at Awards Reception

Minute to Win It

Middle School students had a blast mirroring challenges from the popular TV show "Minute to Win It" during our annual Field Day on Wednesday, June 23rd. To say they had fun (and we had fun watching) would be an understatement! Some of the challenges included: *Peanut Butter Ping Pong*, *Penny Hose*, *Paper Dragon*, and *Card Ninja*. At the end of the afternoon, our champion was Madilyn Smith! Congratulations! And thanks to PE teacher, Scott Lipitz, who planned and executed the event!



Awards Ceremony

Parents, teachers, and students came together to honor the students' efforts and successes in the classroom this year. The Awards Ceremony, which took place on June 24th was the culmination of a wonderful school year. The ceremony was emceed by our very own delightfully entertaining Vicki Nordquist. Several students received accolades for their outstanding performance and/or steady improvement in various subject areas. In particular, students moving up to the high school next year were acknowledged. Good luck to Timothy Artinian, Ryan Clark-Sulkey, Richard Daniels, Anthony DiGiovanni, Caelin Herzog, Allison Higgins, David Mayes, Madilyn Smith and Kerry Thomas!