



Pathways

A weekly collection of information, thoughts, reflections, and accolades for the Reading Public Schools Community

May 27, 2018

Volume 4, Number 36

Upcoming Dates

- May 28 – Memorial Day – Schools & Offices Closed
- May 29 – (5:00 p.m.) RMHS Senior Boat Cruise & All-Night Party
- May 30 – (7:00 p.m.) Reading Scholarship Foundation Night in the Endslo PAC
- May 31 – (7:00 p.m.) Baccalaureate Service (Unitarian Church)
- June 1 – (7:00 a.m.) RMHS Senior Class Day in the Endslo PAC
- June 3 – (1:00 p.m.) Graduation in the Hawkes Field House
- June 4 – (7:00 p.m.) School Committee Meeting in the Superintendent's Conference Room
- June 5 – (7:30 p.m.) RISE PTN Meeting
- June 11 – (1:00 p.m.) Grades 5 & 8 Move-Up Day
- June 20 – Last Day of School; (11:00 a.m. Release Prek - 12

Unifying Our Community

Unity Project Solidifies A Message of Unity and Hope

They came from English classes, Financial Literacy, Health, Chemistry, Geometry, and too many others to name. All week students, teachers, administrators, guidance counselors, and community members gathered at the Unity Project, a large public art installation located on the front lawn of Reading Memorial High School. They were participating in a community art project designed to highlight all the ways that we are the same, even amidst our differences.

In June of 2016, UNITY, an interactive public art project, was created as a response to the divisiveness and negative rhetoric in American politics. Created to raise consciousness about the labels we give ourselves and others and explore how those labels both support and limit building interconnected, interesting communities. UNITY is a larger-than-life structure that helps us celebrate our uniqueness and strengthens our ties to each other. The project consists of 32 posts, each with identifiers such as, "I'm a parent; I speak English as a second language; I identify as LGBTQ," etc. Participants tie colorful yarn to posts that reflect their identities. Their yarn intertwines with others' to create a web of interconnectedness. In the end, we see that we are all connected by something, and it's our diversity that builds a strong and vibrant community.



Tuesday May 21st, students and staff gathered outside the high school to officially open the Unity Project. Senior Student Council Officers Lilly Kurker, Molly Keane, and Cat Neville spoke of their hope for healing and a greater sense of unity in our school, town, and country:

“When Mrs. Richardson brought the idea of the Unity Project to we Student Council officers, we jumped at the opportunity. It is everything that the Student Council stands for, to unite all people no matter their beliefs to work together. Although we are graduating we have hope for the future of Reading Memorial High School with the belief that this project will bring students, teachers, administrators, and the community together.

Over the past year we have witnessed many divides politically, socially, and culturally, not only in our country but also in our town. With this in mind, we as a community need to come together and be reminded that we need to embrace, celebrate, and understand these differences. With the simple act of connecting yarn, The Unity Project helps convey the idea that although we are different, that we are all connected. The yarn represents our school, our town, and the world we reside in, and the colorful web it will create will show our unified community. The Unity project will help us symbolize and celebrate diversity.

We are proud to be apart of the Unity project as our last senior contribution to Reading Memorial High school. We know this sense of community will not be limited to the end of this year. We believe that it’s possible for this Unity project to be the start of a discussion about how exactly to embrace differences, not a concluding message. Especially with the guidance of our current advisors, more events like this are sure to come.”

Students and staff alike were moved and inspired by these words, as well as a reading of Maya Angelou’s poem “The Human Family” by Olivia Bullock. The Reading Memorial High School Select Chorus provided a fitting finale with a powerful, emotional performance of “You Will Be Found” from *Dear Evan Hansen*, the story of a high school senior who struggles with paralyzing social anxiety. The Unity project has brought smiles, great conversations, and some genuine reflection among students and staff alike, and is a powerful reminder that we are all much more alike than different from each other.



Kudos and Accolades

- Congratulations to softball, baseball and girls & boys lacrosse on recent wins.
- Good luck to girls & boys lacrosse and boys tennis in the upcoming MIAA tournament.
- Congratulations to all the students and staff recognized at the Scholastic Awards Night.
- To the Coolidge Middle School Staff and Administration for their outstanding efforts during last week's evacuation.

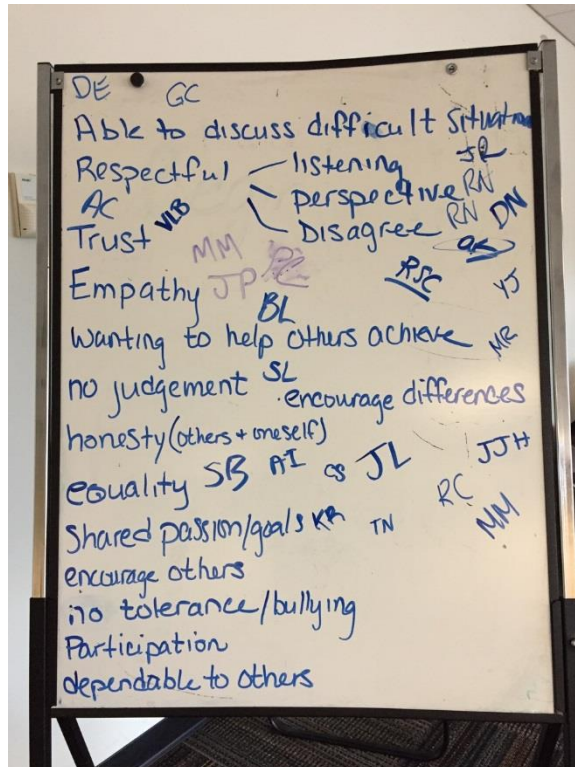


Upstander Training at RMHS

An Upstander Training Pilot Program was held on April 30th, 2018 with 28+ Reading Memorial High School Students who had been selected by their teachers. This training was led by Reading Embraces Diversity members Lori Hodin and Linda Snow Dockser, Language Arts teachers Zachary Broken Rope and Leia Richardson, Health and Wellness Teacher Michelle Hopkinson, and Lincoln Sudbury Regional High School MVP Student Leader, Sabrina Hollander.

This Program invited students to work together to develop an understanding and strategies that will empower them to respond to situations as Upstanders, while setting an example in the school that others will want to follow. An Upstander is: A person who speaks or acts in support of an individual or cause; particularly someone who intervenes on behalf of a person being attacked or bullied (Oxford Dictionary)

This Training is part of a larger effort to empower students to be the positive change in their world – it includes and builds on other RMHS initiatives including presentations by Dr. Anna Ornstein, Child Psychiatrist and Holocaust Survivor; The Unity Program (unityproject.net); and Mentors In Violence Prevention Program (MVP). The students who participated in this Upstander Program are also joining the Rockets Peer Leadership Council (RPLC) newly formed this year with the Game Changer training (<http://www.mass.gov/ago/about-the-ago/ago-grants/game-change.html>) of another 30 RMHS. The RPLC's goal is to engage students in nurturing a positive culture in the school. The RPLC was initiated by Athletic Director Tom Zaya and Reading Coalition Against Substance Abuse Director Erica McNamara, who are being joined by a growing number of teachers including Michelle Hopkinson, John Fiore, RMHS History Teacher and coach, and Resource Officer Brian Lewis.



Scholastic Awards Night Honors Reading Students and Teachers

Last Tuesday evening, Reading Memorial High School held its annual Scholastic Awards Night which featured the Spring National Honor Society Induction and the Century Club Induction. In addition, several staff members, both past and present, were honored by students who were being inducted into the National Honor Society as having an impact on their lives. Congratulations to the following current or former staff members who received recognition:

Jessica Bailey
 Kelly Bedingfield
 Giulio Binaghi
 Dave Blanchard
 Zac Broken Rope

Quote of the Week . . .



Raise your words, not your voice. It is rain that grows flowers, not thunder.

Jalaluddin Rumi

Lynn Clarke
Christina Clawson
Jennalee Coyne
Kate Crosby
Natalie Cunha
Connie DeBenedetto
Laurie Smith
Amy Fedele
Emeline Festa
John Fiore
Kevin Gerstner
Kara Gleason
Kent Hatton
Susan Hooper
Michelle Hopkinson
Danielle Jones
Kristin Killian
Sarah Lentz
Alexandra Lynch
Brian McVety
Andrew Norton
Connie Quackenbush
Leia Richardson
Amy Ropple
Jeffrey Ryan
Chuck Strout
Allyson Williams

As part of the evening, RMHS English Department Chair Audra Williams gave an outstanding inspirational Faculty Address. Special thanks goes to National Honor Society Advisors Jessica Bailey and Heather Lombardo and Director of Guidance Lynna Williams for coordinating the event.



National Honor Society Inductees

Disney Tweet of the Week



"Oh yes, the past can hurt. But the way I see it, you can either run from it or learn from it."

-- Rafiki (The Lion King)



RMHS Jazz Band Playing Before the Ceremony

Middle School Jazz Band Receives Gold Medal

Congratulations to the Reading Middle Schools Jazz band under the direction of Ms. Holly Gallant for receiving a gold medal at the Massachusetts Association for Jazz Education festival on 5/8. The festival took place at Reading Memorial High School. 12 jazz ensembles received an evaluation from educators and received immediate feedback from clinicians after their performance.



Row 1: Ms. Holly Gallant, Johnston Littlefield, Elizabeth Strack, Alex Bica, Weston Lewin, Genevieve Gray, Ethan Norton, Julia Finberg, Benjamin Mini, Evan Kerr, Owen Magoon, Chad Moore, Sean Douglass, Cameron Roscillo, Ethan Forse

Important Websites

RPS District Website
www.reading.k12.ma.us

Interface Health Services
<https://interface.williamjames.edu/community/reading>

Need help finding mental health care?



The Town of Reading has contracted with a unique **HELPLINE** service staffed by licensed clinicians that can help children, teens, & adults in Reading become connected with mental health care. Get provider matches that meet your specific needs, accepts your insurance & has available appointments.

Call 1-888-244-6843 (toll free) • M-F • 9am-5pm
<https://interface.williamjames.edu/>

Row 2: Christian Alfieri, Tommy Joyce, Norah Foley, Owen Abruzzese, Evelyn Howell, Natalie Ho, Sachin Patel

Row 3: Zach Nichols, Kevin Kinney, Aidan Vinciguerra, Erik Roberts, Nick Steenbruggen, Akshay Rao, Bryan Lin, Andrew Cabral, Derek Marshall, Miguel Martin

Awards for Outstanding Musicianship went to Weston Lewin, Kevin Kinney and Benjamin Mini, with Weston Lewin winning the Most Valuable Player award.

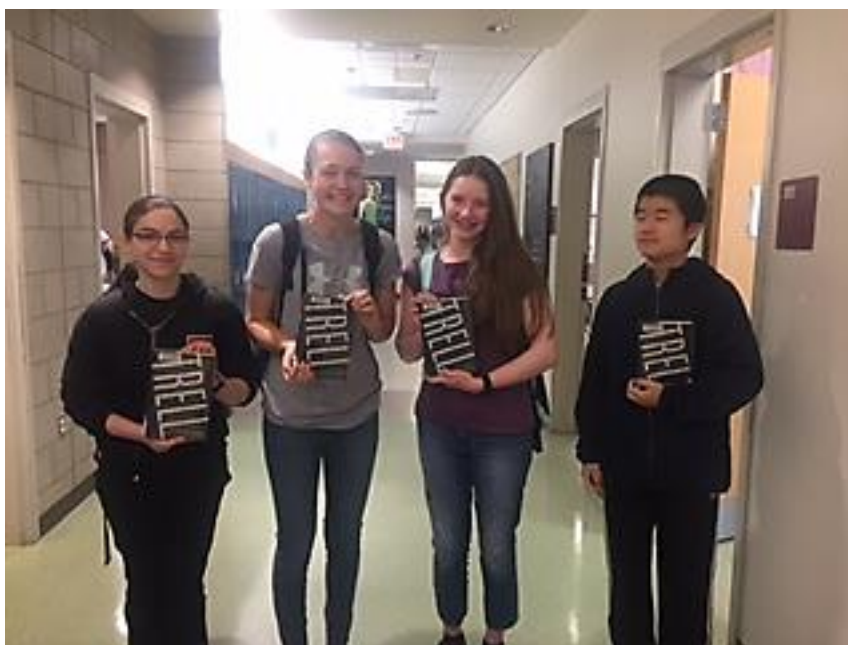
Reading Public Schools Happenings

RMHS Book Club Hosts Author Dick Lehr

The RMHS Book Club recently hosted author Dick Lehr for a discussion and talk focused on his book *Trell*. A Professor of Journalism at Boston University and a former Boston Globe investigative reporter, Mr. Lehr is a renowned author of many books including *Black Mass: Whitey Bulger, the FBI, and a Devil's Deal*, which has been made into a feature film, and *Trell*, his first young adult novel.

Some highlights of the discussion with Mr. Lehr included: a greater understanding of what investigative journalism is; Mr. Lehr's admittance that learning journalism and fact-based writing didn't come easy for him but was learned through lots of practice and editing; that journalism is important because of its power to remedy societal problems including wrongful convictions; and that Mr. Lehr really loves the research aspect of his job, a comment which evoked chuckles from a number of book club members who are in the midst of their long-term history research projects.

The Book Club is grateful for its strong partnership with the Reading Public Library teen librarians Susan Beauregard and Renee Smith who helped to arrange Mr. Lehr's visit.



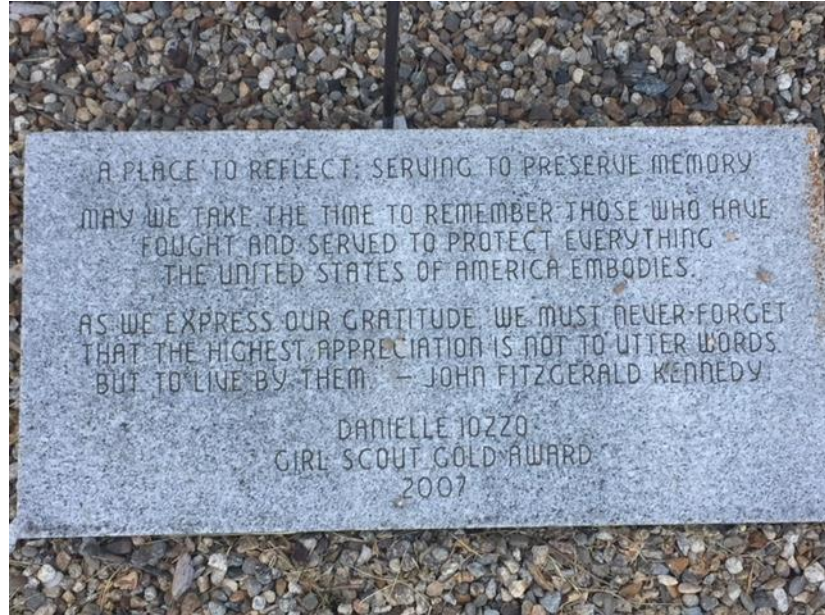
Members of RMHS Book Club Holding Copies of *Trell*

Contact Us

The Pathways newsletter is published weekly for the Reading Public School Community. If you have anything that you would like to share, please email your info to John Doherty at: john.doherty@reading.k12.ma.us

Reflection Garden

In 2007, Danielle Iozzo, daughter of Killam Paraeducator Denise Iozzo, created a reflection garden outside of RISE for her Girl Scout Gold Award Project in memory of those who have fought and served to protect everything the United States of America embodies. Each year during Memorial Day Weekend, Denise plants flowers at that garden to preserve that memory. Below is the garden and the plaque that is placed in that garden. Special thanks to Denise and Danielle for keeping that memory alive.



Stepping Stones...

- Our thoughts go out to **Network Administrator Julian Carr** who lost a loved one recently.
- Our thoughts go out to Coolidge teacher **Jim Henerberry** who lost a loved one recently.
- We welcome the following new staff to the Reading Public Schools:
 - ✓ Emma Saltsman, Substitute, District
- We have posted a new position. If interested, please visit <https://reading.tedk12.com/hire/index.aspx> to view the job detail

Blazing Trails...

"Raynham Principal Spends Day on Roof for Fundraiser." Despite being afraid of heights, LaLiberte Elementary School Principal Dennis Bray from Bridgewater-Raynham Public Schools held up his end of the bet after students raised \$39,000 at their recent fundraiser. [Read More](#)

"Massachusetts Program Places Students in STEM Internships." Opening the door for students to pursue careers in science, technology, engineering and math starts in the classroom, but shouldn't end there. That's why the Greater Lowell Workforce Development Board has been working with the state's Executive Office of Education to offer internships with STEM businesses to high school students. A roundtable discussion was held at Tewksbury Memorial High School Thursday with Secretary of Education Jim Peyser, educators, students and employers. [Read More](#)

"Norwell Students Embrace 'Calm Classroom' Concept." Students and teachers in Norwell, Massachusetts, are reporting positive outcomes since a Calm Classroom program was adopted across all grades. Under the program, students learn relaxation techniques to practice in the classroom. [Read More](#)

"Math Needs To Be Taught As Interconnected Ideas." New Hampshire Author Jessica Lahey, in an op-ed in the Washington Post, wrote, "In large part because of the advent of No Child Left Behind, state standards and the testing necessary to measure states' progress," math education became teaching "many topics in each grade but at a superficial level." By teaching "a series of skills served up in bits and pieces but never as part of a unified, mathematical whole," educators "failed to give American children math sense, a natural and instinctive dexterity with numbers." Jo Boaler, professor of mathematics education at Stanford University, said, "The highest achieving kids in the world are the ones who see math as a big web of interconnected ideas, and the lowest achieving students in the world are the kids who take a memorization approach to math." Lahey concludes that "successful math education" requires "adults who know what questions to ask and who have the skills to help children discover their own solutions." [Read More](#)

"England: Data Show Uptick in Need for Mental Health Support." Data from children's charity NSPCC show about 18,870 children in England younger than age 11 were referred for mental health support during the 2017-18 school year, up more than a third from the 2014-15 school year. "More pupils are suffering from mental health issues and there is much more awareness in schools for spotting potential problems and intervening early to get support," said Sarah Hannafin, senior policy adviser at the National Association of Head Teachers. [Read More](#)

Have a Great Week!