

“Vacation used to be a luxury, however, in today's world, it has become a necessity.”

Unknown

Grey Matters

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A belated Happy Father's Day to all our A-B Dads. Whether you spent the day with family and friends or getting soaked on a golf course (as I did), I hope you enjoyed your special day. Perhaps many of you received an umbrella as a Father's Day gift?

This past Friday evening, almost 350 eighth graders participated in the 8th Grade Graduation Dance. From their first 7th grade social to last Friday's dance, the class of 2012 enjoys celebrations with an enthusiasm like no other; embracing the Hawaiian theme and dancing from the beginning of the night to the end. I continue to be amazed at how much everyone has grown over the last two years and how mature the students look when dressed up for a special occasion like this one. It was a special evening and a wonderful way for the class of 2012 to come together to put closure on their time at RJG and look ahead to high school.

As always, we have a great deal of assistance and support from parents and staff, and our 8th grade dance was no exception. Our Chairpersons, Yaso Aravinthan, Jane Grover, Marcy Hoban, Loretta Mosca, Cathy Biron, Karen Sullivan, Bev Zambarano, Tricia Wilson, and the following parents were extremely helpful with the decorations, balloons, food, donations, and cleanup: Wendy Oltsik, Jackie Lortz, Ann Braden Seigel, Chitra Muralidharan, Weixin Li, Kelly Larson, Ying Li, Rita Grossman, Mong Yu Blancha, Marybeth O'Brien, Ling Chen, Howard Fink, Lisa Gundlach, Ling Chen, Jan Dibona, Sherry Qiu, David Gerratt, Archana Gupta, Carol Dionne, Cynthia Calcagni, Ling Chen, Jan Dibona, Sue Ropiak, Jean Pilecki, Alice Tam, Lulie Munson, Jean Pilecki, Chris Small, Cyndy Overgang, Sandy Connell, Kim Powers.

My sincere thanks go to the RJG staff who chaperoned this event: Susan Heartlein, Mike Balulescu, Liza Huber, Beth Abrams, Carmen Comella, Mary Emmons, Allen Warner, Denise Roadman, George Roadman, John Edmonds, Pat Higgins, Audra Kaplan, Brandy Schmirer, Jennifer Vacca, Tim Nolan, and Mae Shoemaker.

At this time, I would also like to highlight the special talents of Debbie Ahl as this year's Student Council Advisor. With the bar set quite high by her predecessors, this was Debbie's first year as the Student Council Advisor. Together with a fantastic set of class officers, Peter Connell, Ellen Conway, Jerry Fang, and Cameron Robertson Ms. Ahl led the student council through a wonderful year. Her time, energy and hard work was (and is) very much appreciated.

I am excited about the 7th and 8th grade Variety Shows, scheduled for this Tuesday, June 17. As mentioned earlier, this student assembly is a fantastic opportunity for students to demonstrate their special talents to their peers. Much of last week was spent rehearsing and this promises to be quite a show! Given the limited auditorium seating, this show is for RJG students only. I appreciate your understanding.

We are all looking forward to the end of year trips on Wednesday, June 18. Seventh graders will be going to Kimball's Farm in Westford, MA, while 8th graders will be heading off to Canobie Lake Park. I have provided a separate attachment of important information that will be shared with the students this week. Please feel free to print this flyer for your refrigerators, as it's hard to keep track of all these end of the year events and activities!

On the last day of school (Thursday, June 19), the entire school will travel to the high school for our end of year assembly. Students will be dismissed directly from the high school at 10:45AM. Those who ride the bus will load at the high school. Parent pick-up will be at the high school back circle driveway (just off Hayward Road).

With the final days of school dwindling, the items in our lost and found are growing. Please make sure students check to see if their items are still in the school building before it is too late. We will be emptying the lost and found on Friday, June 20, and donating the items to charity.

It is the end of a wonderful school year and I wanted to take a moment to express my gratitude and admiration for the teachers at RJ Grey. Their ongoing commitment to our students as well as their encouragement and support makes me feel proud each and every day. They have provided a curriculum that has promoted a comprehensive academic foundation, critical thinking skills, and personal achievement. As we reflect on the past year, I wanted to highlight our school's dedication to the Acton and Boxborough communities through wonderful examples of community outreach. All of our teachers have facilitated or participated in team activities designed to encourage student involvement in a range of school/community service projects. I think you'll be as impressed as I am with the list below:

Fall clothing sales (AB fashion clothing) raised more than \$3000.00 donated to Gaining Ground, the Food Project and our local Acton Food Pantry.

Within their team, many students learned about and discussed factors causing both local and world hunger. They discussed the hardships of budgeting for a family of four on minimum wages, and also had the difficult task of planning a week's menu of nutritious meals given their spending limit. In addition, students participated in a simulation of the per capita distribution of food resources in the world, and discussed some of the factors that result in the inequities they discovered. The culmination of the project was a trip to the Food Project, where students worked in the fields and planted many rows of fresh vegetables. While there, they learned about sustainable agriculture and the organization's efforts to help relieve local hunger.

In support of UNICEF, many students collected more than \$600 to support victims from the natural disasters in China and Myanmar.

Through a change drive, the Student Council contributed (through a change drive) \$2000 to the "Make A Wish" Foundation. \$200.00 was also given to Special Olympics and the local Beacon Santa.

Through a range of community service projects and activities, including a Coat Drive, many Massachusetts and New Hampshire families received practical assistance over the course of the school year.

In addition to walks to the Food Pantry, some teams provided labor to the Land Stewards of Acton and Boxborough for garden planting, trail maintenance and conservation area clean-up.

Some students were involved in science mentoring at the Douglas School. In this regard, students committed to seven Tuesday mornings to mentor second graders.

I am sure that all of us can agree that all RJG students learned about the importance of active citizenship, and the difference each one of us can make when we give service to our community. Great job RJG!!!!

In expressing my appreciation, I must make special mention of Mr. Jack Hughes, who has completed his year as the interim Assistant Principal at RJG. I have been honored to work alongside Mr. Hughes this year and his dedication to the students and families of RJG is unsurpassed. I know I speak for the RJG faculty when I say that Mr. Hughes leaves RJG a better place. With his wisdom, humor, and unflappable nature, he has influenced all of us in countless ways. Mr. Hughes will return to his retirement at the end of June and with heartfelt gratitude, I wish him the very best.

Please rest assured that Mr. Hughes has left the Assistant Principal position in great hands. I am thrilled to share that Mr. Andrew Shen will be joining the RJG staff, effective July 1, 2008. Mr. Shen recently completed his M.Ed. at Harvard University, served as the Associate Director and Dean of the Asian American Center at Northeastern University, and was former social studies teacher at Lincoln Sudbury High School. Mr. Shen's wealth of experience will be a great asset to the RJG community for many years to come.

As our students move ahead to their next set of challenges, I wish them continued energy and motivation to persist and achieve. On behalf of the RJ Grey faculty, it has been an honor to be part of the lives of our young adults, to watch them take risks, grow and succeed.

To our parents and guardians, let me end this final edition of the 2007-2008 Grey Matters with a heartfelt thank you for all of the support you have given our school throughout the

year. Working together as a team, our students have learned essential skills and met personal and academic goals. Your participation in the educational experience of the school has been an essential part of our success.

Have a wonderful summer.

RJG End-of-the-Year Field Trip Information June 18, 2008

7th Graders - Kimball Farm

- Lunch is provided at no additional cost
- There will be a DJ playing
- You will not be allowed to leave items on the bus or leave items with the chaperones so we strongly recommend that you do not bring any valuables.
- Normal school dress code applies (i.e. no bathing suits, exposed midriffs or exposed underwear, etc.)
- Students will return to school in time for our normal 2:06 PM dismissal.

8th Graders - Canobie Lake Park

- There are a limited number of coin lockers available. As you may not leave items on the bus or leave items with the chaperones, we strongly recommend that you do not bring any valuables.
- Students are not allowed to use the swimming pool.
- There are many water rides and you are likely to get wet. Please dress appropriately.
- Lunch is available at the park (average meal \$10-15). You may bring a lunch if you wish.
- Be sure to stay with other students. No groups should be smaller than two students.
- You must check in with your team teachers near the Merry-Go-Round between Noon and 1:00 pm.

- You must gather near the Merry-Go-Round to go home at 2:45 PM.
- You will arrive back at school at around 4:15 PM.
- If you have any problems, please go to the benches near the Merry-Go-Round. There will always be an RJG staff member there.
- School buses will be here to take students home on their normal routes at 4:15PM.
- Students that do not ride the bus must be sure to arrange for a ride home.

Enjoy the day!

Craig Hardimon
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