

From The Newsroom

Rockbridge Reporter Student Edition

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FCA: The Next Generation

For most Americans, Monday is the worst day of the week. The work week is just starting, there are things to be done, and you do not have the luxury of the weekend to look forward to for another five days. However, there is one reason why Rockbridge Academy students look forward to waking up early on Monday mornings: FCA.

Beginning at 7:15 a.m., FCA (Fellowship of Christian Athletes) is a time for the students to come together and worship, and have an encouraging start to the week. Following the graduation of last year's senior leaders Seamus McKenna, Abby Harries, and Grace Godfrey, this year there is a new generation of leaders -- Rockbridge seniors Alyssa Bouma, Heather Cate, Gilbert Horst, and John Vanik.

You will not find any lack of passion or dedication in this new generation of leaders. "I decided to take an active role in FCA because I know that especially in the dialectic years, people have a great

need for spiritual encouragement and growth. I was there and know that it's a very hard time of life. That's why I am in FCA, because the other leaders and I want the young men and women to take their faith and make it their own," said Gilbert.

For those students who may be hesitant about coming to FCA for various reasons, there is no need to worry. Even some of the leaders were re-



by Maddie Marmen

luctant to attend for the first time. Alyssa was just such a one, "I just didn't know much about it." But after attending a few times, all her hesitations were assuaged.

"Even if you don't play sports,

FCA is a great place to find encouragement and to worship God...which we all need! And even though it's tough getting up early on Monday mornings, I always leave FCA refreshed and ready to start my week. Once I just started attending, I really enjoyed it," said Alyssa.

All of the students who have attended once are usually very likely to come again as a result of a great experience. "I love the singing at the begin-

ning, because you're not focused on others around you; you are beholding the grace and majesty of the Father and His love for you. I also love "The Workout," where we have been talking about 1 John, and you get to know your Savior better. It's a lot like a round table discussion, but without the pressure," said Rockbridge junior Emily Hinz.

So, if you are a student who may be a little nervous about coming to FCA, all of the leaders are happy to help. Heather Cate said, "FCA is a great way to start off the school week and will be an encouragement to you if you are stressed, hurting, doubting, or just plain exhausted. And if anyone has any questions about FCA, don't hesitate to ask!"

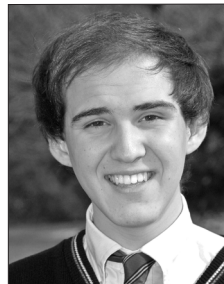
Let Them Eat Cake: Crab Cake That Is

The Rockbridge Academy first-grade annual Crab Feast was done a little differently this year. In fact, the entire celebration donned a new name, that of "Crabs and Cakes." The change occurred, October 1, in order to facilitate better time management for both parents and teachers in the already fun-filled, but busy, first-grade schedule.

First-grade teacher Miss Yolanda Statema said, "The main reason we trimmed down the Crab Feast (by not having the children each try to pick a crab) was really to simplify the event. In the end, the benefits were even greater in that it allowed more time for the dem-

onstration and to try and catch the crabs with bait."

Mrs. Lisa Brenninkmeyer, mother of first-grader Jane Brenninkmeyer, concurred. "I am ALWAYS grateful to anyone who simplifies something in my life and makes things easier. Because we have a big field trip coming up, I didn't mind that parents weren't included in the Crab Feast. Jane didn't have anything to say about the crab aspect of it all -- she was all about the Smith Island Cake. That was a huge



by Raphael Shim'on Hill

hit!"

While last year's "Crab Feast" was dedicated solely to picking crabs and ran the risk of mallet mayhem, this year's tasty new alternative takes practicing Maryland patriotism to a whole new dimension.

The fortunate first graders of 2010 were able to sample Maryland Blue Crab, crab cakes, and also a succulent slice of the Maryland state dessert: the Smith Island Cake, a ten-layered chocolate cake smothered in an ebony cocoa

frosting. Now for all of you Marylanders who didn't know we had a state dessert, it is understandable because it was only dubbed the "state dessert" two years ago. The first graders, however, did not even need a reason to consume this scrumptious tower of chocolate goodness.

Gathered in a crescent moon arrangement of chairs, the eager first graders got to experience firsthand what crabbing is really like. Rockbridge dad Mr. Bob Boardman, father of student Stanley Boardman, was happy to bring his crabbing gear and, to the excitement of the children, real live crabs. He exhibited the

Let Them Eat Cake: Crab Cake That Is (continued) ...

ways of catching a crab, with string and bait or with a cage, and eventually set up two little plastic tubs with which the children could experience crabbing for themselves. Each tub held about three or four crabs, and a piece of string and bait that the kids could lure the crabs with.

"I wish I could do this

forever" was the exclamation of an excited Stanley, who was having a particularly good time "crabbing." There were also several soft-shelled crabs on display that many of the kids were having a good time observing. "It's really gooey when I poke it; why don't you try?" said first-grader Isabella Mathisen, who was intrigued

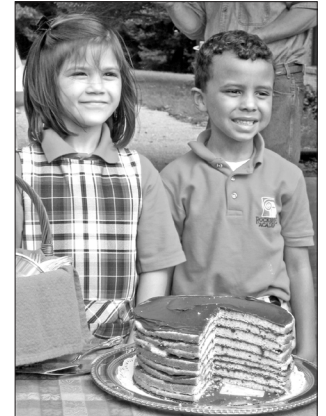
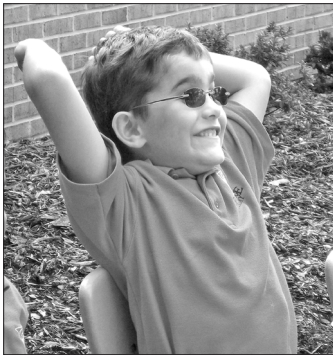
and delighted by the prone, immobile crabs.

As much fun as the curious first graders were having playing with the crabs, the general consensus of all was that the cake was truly the best. Glazed with chocolate, with seemingly unending layers of fudge, messy faces were a perfectly pleasant punish-

ment for such a sinfully satisfying dessert.

After all had received and consumed a large piece of cake, the children ended the day happily, tummies full and satisfied. Despite this year's lack of mallets, the kids found new ways of having fun and experiencing the definitive Maryland pastime.

Student Photographs: Photos courtesy of (left to right): Alex Buchholz (Gr.7), Rachel Wallen (Gr. 11), Dee Buchholz (Gr. 7), and Caleb Kaiss (Gr. 7)



The Underground Chess Club

Extra-curricular programs play an important role in the lives of Rockbridge Academy students. Students can pipe sweet songs in the Recorder Club, make beautiful music in orchestra, or take part in the eagerly awaited sporting events. However, there is one club that many haven't heard of—the Chess Club.

On Thursday afternoons, while other students head off for homework, sports practice, or after-school jobs, Mr. Finkbeiner's homeroom fills up with enthusiastic students ready to play chess. The club meets every Thursday afternoon from 2:45 until 4:00.

Student leadership has been a theme within the halls of Rockbridge for years. While older students tend to assume more of the responsibility when it comes to leadership, a younger group of students is starting to make an impact as well. The Chess Club was founded by tenth graders Peter Ramsey and Noah Diekemper. "It started when Noah and I

wrote a joint post-mortem article last year about the old Chess Club they used to have for third grade through sixth grade. We started reminiscing and realized that we should just start a new one ourselves."

While the club may be small, students who attend regularly have nothing but good things to say about it. When asked what her favorite part of attending the Chess Club was, eighth-grader Emily Diekemper said, "In Chess Club, you can learn about different chess strategies and learn to look at a situation from all angles."

Unlike most school programs, the Chess Club is commitment free. "Feel free to just walk in on a convenient day. There's always someone dropping in to watch, comment, or play. Even Bradley Finkbeiner, Jr., comes in to play," says Ramsey.



by Emma Marmen

And if the students' testimonies were not enough, Great Ideas teacher, Mr. Brad Finkbeiner recommends it. "It's a great way to relax, converse, and cultivate thinking skills—all at the same time."

The Chess Club does not have any competitions scheduled yet, but depending on how much interest it receives, this may be a future feature. For now, the club primarily focuses on learning and further developing one's chess abilities. But just because the club does not compete does not mean that the members lack enthusiasm. Members are constantly improving the way the game is played and using different techniques to change things up.

"Last year, Mr. Finkbeiner was gracious enough to lend us his chess timer. We were almost immediately play-

ing games where there was a time limit of only two to five minutes before completion. It changed the game completely and soon there was always someone playing the variation. This year, I plan to start a correspondence game (a game played over the computer which lasts longer than an hour) and bring it to the club so that we can all combine forces as a team," said Ramsey.

The Chess Club is an activity worth one's time. With eager players ready to take their opponents' king and new tactics being added all the time, there is a lot to attract students. Mr. Finkbeiner says, "I would encourage those who do not know how to play to come and learn, just to see if they like it. Plus, it's a great chance to prove you are more logical than Mr. Finkbeiner."

Stop in on Thursdays and watch the Chess Club at work. If you do not, you could be missing out on one of Rockbridge Academy's best-kept secrets.