

THE RIDGE

SPRING 2017



A SUSTAINABLE BLUE RIDGE SCHOOL



HEADMASTER TRIP DARRIN

GREETINGS FROM ST. GEORGE



Blue Ridge prides itself on choosing an annual theme that serves to give students, faculty and staff a common focus. With care for the environment and responsible use of energy resources at the forefront of global challenges, the School recently chose Sustainability as a two-year theme.

This edition of *The Ridge* showcases the many ways students and teachers have embraced the theme with classroom and individual projects. We even staged a Headmaster's Sustainability Challenge in January. Students survived the month without using Styrofoam or paper containers and earned a Headmaster's Day of rest in return.

The School is taking a broad-based view on this important subject, seeking to become a more sustainable organization in all regards. Thanks to the commitment of the Board of Trustees, BRS has embarked on a planned \$2 million investment in campus energy systems and infrastructure over the next two years. Initial projects include the installation of energy-efficient windows and doors, major lighting improvements, and significant upgrades to mechanical systems and controls. These projects will be completed by September 1, 2017, and the new system will allow for student involvement in the data-based management of energy use. Together, students and faculty will monitor energy efficiency and plan the next wave of sustainability projects with an eye on reducing energy consumption - and thus the School's utility bills - for years to come.

This edition of *The Ridge* also features a tribute to Paul Fehlner, who will retire in May after twenty-eight years of working with Blue Ridge boys as a science teacher and wrestling and tennis coach. Anyone who has taken Paul's Environmental Science class will know that it's bad timing on Paul's part to retire just as the School is launching a major sustainability initiative! Or, put a different way, Paul can take solace in retiring now that the School has begun to implement his wise advice.

It continues to be a challenging time for independent schools, especially in the boarding segment. While our work has never been more important or of higher quality, many schools are facing resource shortages and shrinking enrollment markets.

Blue Ridge, however, is enrolled to capacity, is celebrating the completion of milestone capital projects, and has improved faculty compensation over the last four years. These successes are possible only because people like you continue to believe in our unique ability to impact the boys in our charge. I am ever grateful for and ever reliant upon your support.

I hope to see you on campus at some point soon.

Go Barons!

Trip Darrin

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Mr. Franklin Daniels, Associate Headmaster for External Affairs
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THE BLUE RIDGE SCHOOL MISSION:

We focus on helping boys reach their potential through personalized, structured, innovative learning practices in a college-preparatory, all-boarding community.

Blue Ridge School admits qualified young men of any race, color, national or ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the School. Blue Ridge School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admission policies, financial assistance and loan programs, athletic and other administered programs.



English teacher Dan Dunsmore, principal writer for The Ridge magazine.



ARBORICULTURAL PLAN

by Dan Dunsmore

As Sustainability has taken front and center stage at Blue Ridge School this year, attention understandably has turned to the preservation of the campus itself. Through a new Arboricultural Plan, the arresting canopy of trees that welcomes visitors as they approach the dorms will soon be the focus of a comprehensive strategy meant to ensure the campus' current and future beautiful flora. Assistant Director of Outdoor Education Cory Woods, who is playing a vital role in the School's efforts in this area, describes the Front Lawn as "the postcard image of the campus." Few would disagree with this statement, and it's why the Front Lawn is the focus of the Plan.

While a committee continues to discuss the specifics, it is certain that periodic inspections of the trees as well as pruning, soil enhancement, cabling and lightning protection will be essential aspects of the Plan. Of course, an ongoing program of planting new trees is also a critical feature. Cory adds, "Preservation of this park-like setting should be paramount when thinking of the sustainability of our campus in terms of environment and aesthetics and safety."

An early step was for Headmaster Trip Darrin, Director of Facilities Ed Blain and others to visit nearby Lynchburg College, another tree-dominated campus. They looked at Lynchburg's Master Plan and knew it would be in Blue Ridge School's best interest to have a Master Plan for the Front Lawn as well. Retired science teacher and environmentalist Mr. Bill Henry was called upon at that point to give his expert advice. The services of Van Yahres Studio / BCWH Campus Planning were then secured to facilitate the particulars.

The initial findings from Mr. Mike Van Yahres and Mr. Borden Edgerton of Van Yahres Studio were encouraging. We are blessed, according to them, because 86 percent of our trees are in either the excellent category (100 years old, low maintenance and indigenous) or the good category (75 years old, relatively low maintenance and indigenous). Providence, it seems, has given us an excellent palette from which to start.

However, 47 percent of our trees are White Oaks. Therefore, moving forward, Mike and Borden recommend introducing diversity in

PROTECTING OUR CAMPUS CANOPY

our plantings. This would help avoid the risk of a new pest or disease destroying a dominant species of tree, resulting in half the campus trees dying. Thanks to the enthusiastic interest and much-needed funding from Blue Ridge alumnus Dr. David Sibley '76 to the Tree Fund in memory of former Director of the Learning Center Tom Engle, new seedlings have already been planted. These new trees include a Black Gum, a grafted male Ginkgo, a Forest Pansy Redbud and another White Oak.

The Redbud was planted in a specific spot to shelter a small shoot growing from the original roots of the Engle tree. We are hoping to let the oak sapling grow and naturally replace its grandfather. The White Oak that David donated was planted on the far side of the lake where there is a considerable lack of oaks. The Ginkgo was planted outside the auditorium to replace a Japanese Maple that was damaged and had to be removed (the Ginkgo fits the Asian ornamental tree motif of that area).

David is thrilled that the School is taking these steps. He has fond memories of the canopy from his high school days, and he knows that alumni of all generations consider the large shade-producing trees as one of the campus' most striking features and places of sanctuary.

David writes, "In the request to plant a replacement tree in honor of a beloved teacher, I realized how much the trees and lake and green spaces defined many of my BRS memories. I thought how important it was to plan for such losses and how I would like to offer trees as a gift to the next BRS brothers who would come through. I grew up under the watchful gaze of many trees and teachers, and pray for future boys to feel that peace and love as well."

The area of focus is the five acres that encompass the courtyard in front of all of the buildings on campus-proper between Battle House and the Williams Library. Van Yahres Studio took many factors into consideration. These included the conditions of root systems, trunks, leaves and crowns.

It is heartening to know that, of the forty-nine trees assessed, only one is currently considered

to be in poor condition. That means that the other forty-eight trees would be expected to live for at least thirty years under proper care.

Proper care encompasses many strategies. Pruning is at the top of the list. This would include the removal of dead/diseased/dangerous limbs as well overextended branches prone to breakage. Properly done, this also allows for the creation of an understory in selected stands to place a texture of heights and color from complementary species of trees and bushes. Selected lower branches would be removed in other trees to provide clearance of buildings, pedestrians, vehicles and vistas. Enhancements to the soil around the trees, such as bio stimulants that provide good bacteria, are part of the plan, too. Nurturing the roots and feeding the trees are as important as shaping the branches. In addition, cabling and bracing in selected trees will bolster the strength of the branches to head off splits and make them less susceptible to damage from winds and ice. Applications to hold pests and diseases in check will be crucial aspects of the care as appropriate.

Planting additional seedlings soon while the current trees are receiving the maintenance they need will promise a beautiful canopy for many years to come. Planning for the succession of a beautiful tree could require a strategic planting ten to twenty year before the need matures. Where plantings will occur are critical decisions that will be made in future phases of our Plan. Those decisions will be based on many factors, including eventual sites for new buildings. We are fortunate to have alumni such as David on board with this aspect of the overall Plan. Providing plants and ideas is essential to the Plan as this allows fine tuning of continuously emerging needs.

Four primary objectives will be met with the new plantings. First, long-lasting, low-maintenance, native trees will be planted. Second, species will be planted together in groups for increased effect. For example, Black Gum trees will be planted in one area and several Red Oaks in another area. Mixing in evergreens will ensure color in every season. Third, in order to provide more activity space but still provide shade for



Pictured from left: Cory Woods, Mike Van Yahres and Borden Edgerton of Van Yahres Studio

outdoor events such as graduation, new trees will be planted mostly around the edges of the Front Lawn. The fourth objective is to avoid over planting around the lake shore as this is a primary visual focal point and is integral to campus identity. Trees will be planted in a U-shape behind the lake and the buildings as backdrop. Indeed, trees can be both a specimen which commands attention and enhance the natural beauty of other features.

VanYahres Studios summarizes this perspective as part of its Initial Findings study. "The health and wellbeing of trees is important for any academic campus, but it is especially important for Blue Ridge School. The Blue Ridge Mountains are full of character: strong, independent, timeless. It is this rich character that students, parents and alumni expect to experience as they walk the campus grounds." Everyone who has been on the campus of BRS understands the truth of this statement.

Headmaster Trip Darrin adds, "Sustainability is a broad-based theme. While upcoming facilities renovations to improve energy efficiency will be a visible sign of the School's push to become a more sustainable organization, it's important for the boys to see that it's not all about buildings and energy savings. Sustainability relates to our stewardship of the environment, too, so I'm particularly excited about plans for the Front Lawn. I'm grateful to our alumni such as David Sibley who support these important endeavors."

BLAZING NEW TRAILS



EXPANDING OUR TRAIL SYSTEM

by Dan Dunsmore

The Blue Ridge School campus is fortunate to include a myriad of trails for both running and mountain biking. Thanks to the generosity of Tom Walton '02 and the Walton Foundation as well as the excellent work of Progressive Trail Design, multiple improvements and extensions have recently been made to those trails. More developments are now underway thanks to additional generosity from Ms. Sharon Rymer, current parent of Robert '07, who goes by the nickname RoRo, and the Robert and Hoyle Rymer Foundation.

Sharon's appreciation for the School in general and the trails more specifically is obvious as she explains why the Foundation has chosen to lend its support to the improvements. "Knowing Robert would have two seasons of mountain biking and the Outdoor Program were major factors in his decision to attend Blue Ridge School. He has had remarkable experiences with Coach Brown, Mr. Woods and Mr. Bruton. When Mr. Daniels approached our family about participating in specific campus enhancement projects, it was immediately clear that the Gateway Trail System was the project we wanted to support. The Robert and Hoyle Rymer Foundation has always been focused on improving educational opportunities and expanding the Gateway Trails at Blue Ridge School fits our mission very well. We are thrilled to have the opportunity to be a part of creating something so unique that truly sets Blue Ridge School apart from its peers."

FYI, while hiking or biking along one of the new trails, one should be sure to keep an eye out for a mischievous and elusive troll by the name of Elder. He just might be spotted under one of the many bridges or elsewhere. Pictures have been taken, and Elder has moved, so watch your step.

In the fall, Josh and Ben from Progressive Trail Design rerouted some of Sweeney's Trail. This will now be called Bryson Hollow. One may find this trail at the top of Twin Lakes where

From left, Jared Brown '17 and RoRo Rymer '17

it crosses over a small stream up from Hidden Lake. As a hiker or bike rider approaches, he will see the trail go left across and down. This trail ends just past Senior Rock. You might find Elder on this trail as there are many bridges!

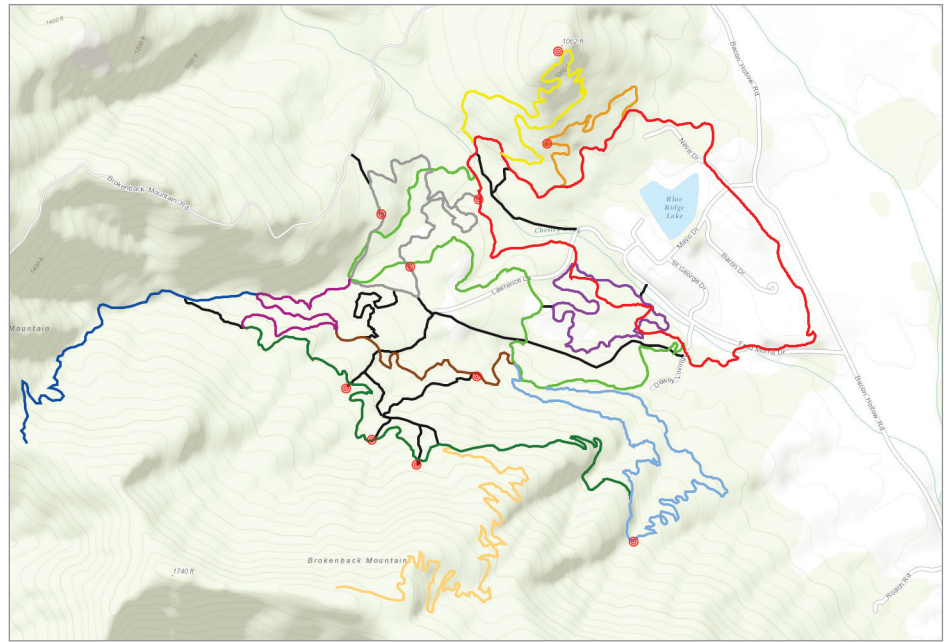
Josh and Ben have also rerouted Cabin Lake Trail. It is an easier climb up or a more fun way down. Some nice turns have been constructed and access to McFarlane (see below) will be at the top. This trail loop is now called Crawford Hollow and will no longer be called Cabin Lake. An adventurous soul may access it from Twin Lakes below Senior Rock.

A continuation of Bryson Hollow has been completed as well (see above to make it there), and one will see it to the right as he goes across. This climb is really new and will be muddy for a while. Once at the top, the brave traveler will see old Sweeney's to the right, which will begin the Ridge Line trail. McFarlane starts here, too, headed left.

The name of the McFarlane Trail stands out from the others. Dr. Ed McFarlane, while Headmaster of Blue Ridge School from 1992 to 2000, sought and received the original grant to start the current Outdoor Program. It is therefore fitting that the main trail in the system honors his legacy.

McFarlane has been mentioned twice so far as it stretches across the mountain from Bryson Hollow to Crawford Hollow for 1.5 miles. This may become the future jewel of the trail system. Across McFarlane, hikers and bikers will see an old spring box and wishing well from days past. Little Big Rocks is incorporated. Rappel Rock will tower over any adventurer and a new overlook (winter view of campus). Once past the overlook, some neat turns have been constructed that drop a wanderer down to the top of Crawford. Of course, one will be able to go either way he likes on this trail. McFarlane is currently completed to Little Big Rocks.

A couple of existing trails have also received some improvements, including a large bridge up Crawford behind Mr. Jon Baker's home. The top



The Mountain Biking (MTB) Project app offers the location of all of our trails.

of Twin Lakes has been the recipient of some work done to help with drainage. These new developments make the Ridgeline Trail much easier to traverse.

An area further up the ridge line off of McFarlane and just after Rappel rock is now the entrance to the newest trail called Moonshine. This 1.5-mile trail takes hikers and bikers to “the top of the top” past several fascinating pieces of scenery including old home sites and a hundred-foot rock wall. The wall appears to have been terracing for gardening or maybe to keep livestock enclosed. An old chimney also rises majestically from the surrounding foliage.

Signage for these trails is also important. Students, under the direction of Mr. Tony Brown, are currently carving trail names and other information into wooden signs that will assist both hikers and bikers. And further trail developments will soon follow! Blue Ridge School thanks Tom and the Walton Foundation as well as Sharon and the Robert and Hoyle Rymer Foundation for making these improvements possible.

Sharon offers this perspective on why the trails should be important to each of us. “The location of the School in the middle of the Blue Ridge Mountains provides so many opportunities to be out in nature — to just unwind, as part of a sports team or in a formal outdoor learning

program. Today's children grow up so ‘wired’ to their electronics and miss out on the physical and mental benefits of connecting with nature. Scientific studies have shown the link between time spent outdoors and improved short term memory, better concentration, increased creativity, reduced mental fatigue and many other benefits to the brain and the body. Improving the trail system will allow greater opportunity for the students, staff, faculty and community members to get OUTSIDE and explore with the added benefits of increased physical and mental health.”

One small way in which electronics and the outdoors may come together, though, is through the Mountain Biking (MTB) Project app. This app offers the location of all of the trails on the Blue Ridge campus. You'll find the School listed under St. George in Central Virginia. Have fun! And don't forget to check on Elder!

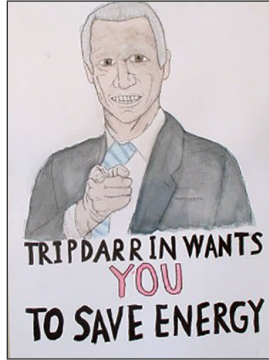


Elder the Troll

MAKING A DIFFERENCE IN THE CLASSROOM

by Hilde Keldermans

THE GREEN CHALLENGE



The Green Barons (the School's Sustainability Committee) and Headmaster Trip Darrin challenged the student body to save energy this year in a number of ways. To encourage the

student body to buy into these various challenges, classes such as art and Mandarin made posters about the importance of saving energy. The top prize for this poster contest was \$50 plus pizza for the winner's dorm hall.

In the fall, the boys were asked to save as much energy as possible. In fact, the hall that saved the most would win a pizza party! They were encouraged to turn off lights in their rooms and elsewhere when not in use and keep their rooms at moderate temperatures. They were also encouraged to take shorter showers and purchase LED bulbs for their desk lamps. They were reminded

that even small acts such as unplugging chargers when not in use can make a difference. Since there was no clear winner to this challenge, the Headmaster threw out another.

In January, the boys were challenged to use only one plate or cup per meal in the Dining Hall and to use reusable cups since Styrofoam and paper cups were removed from all areas of campus. A number of faculty bought ceramic mugs from second-hand stores. These mugs are still being used by the boys throughout campus. In fact, Styrofoam and paper cups have been absent from the Dining Hall throughout the month of February, and no one has missed them.

While these initiatives have been given to the students, the School has been busy with other improvements that will reduce energy waste. For example, new windows and LED lighting in the classrooms, offices and other areas of campus have been installed.

Stay tuned for what might happen next during the third trimester!

TEACHABLE MOMENTS

As part of the School's focus on sustainability this year, faculty members were asked to include environmental topics in their course work when possible. What follows is just a sampling of how many of our faculty members have addressed sustainability concerns as part of their curriculum.

Patrick Curtin's freshman history classes completed a two-part project looking at globalization and sustainability, past and present. Their segue was the Silk Road, which was a time of globalization that began over a thousand years ago. The class looked at the effects, positive and negative, on the Eurasian world, such as greater economic diversity on the positive side but widespread epidemics on the con side.

They also examined globalization from a historical point of view. It seemed important to Mr. Curtin at a time in which NAFTA and closing our borders are very much in the news. The students discussed both the pros and cons. The biggest con, arguably, is that our consumer economy, fueled by globalization, is unsustainable. They looked at some scholarly articles to see the numbers behind how and why this is the case. They also explored what they might do in their daily lives to try to mitigate the negative environmental impacts.

Peter Bonds' history students followed news topics on sustainability via his class Twitter feed.

Marcia Kozloski's students wrote and created presentations in Portuguese on sustainable issues facing Brazil.





Souleymane Sylla '18, Shane Ford '18 and Tyler Ewen '18 apply stain to the base of a bench the students designed and built in the new Maker Space classroom.

[The Fall 2016 issue of *The Ridge* includes an article about the new technology course that teaches hands-on skills. The students, for example, planned and completed a skateboard ramp. This article explains the additional ways in which technology has been used for hands-on projects.]

Astronomy students learned the basics of solar electric power at our Observatory in Jamie Bourland's class.

Don Mousted's English students wrote ten-page essays on Fresh Water Sustainability. The writing included work on Flint, Michigan; Standing Rock Pipeline; fracking; water conservation in Africa; Haiti; Baltimore; Cape Cod; Ethiopia; China; Japan and the problems with melting glaciers.

Hairuo's Yi's classes created posters in Chinese and designed a sustainable dream house.

TURNING TRASH INTO FURNITURE

SUSTAINABILITY IN THE MAKER SPACE

At the beginning of the second trimester, Technology Teacher and Faculty Technology Coordinator Mike Burris was looking for inexpensive building materials which could be turned into various woodworking projects for his tech class. He was aware of a new movement that turns pallets into furniture, and he soon discovered a source for discarded wooden pallets. He knew this would be an effective way to emphasize sustainability with his students.

Using Sketch, an online design software tool, students in Mike's classes have created plans for various pieces of furniture. So far they've made two bookcases – one stationary and the other on wheels – for the Tech classroom. They've also designed and built two tables and a couple of benches. Mike says he has also found discarded pieces of lumber and other materials the class has incorporated into their builds.

"At first, it wasn't clear what type of woodworking project the students would buy into," says Mike, who found that a number of boys gravitated toward the creative aspect of making something that's useable. "I've always been a proponent of project-based learning and believe there is a lot of value to teaching basic building skills," Mike continues. For example, it sets the boys up for possibly useful and better-paying summer jobs. These are also skills that they can use throughout their life.

Mike says he encourages his students to conceptualize an idea, sketch it out and build it. This hits on a lot of really important competencies. This process also teaches the boys about problem-solving and teamwork. Once the furniture is built, it's sanded and stained. Most of it will be used throughout the campus. As the quality and professionalism improve with each piece built in this class, Mike plans to implement even more ambitious projects on campus in the future.

CONNECTING STUDENTS WITH NATURE



ECOSYSTEM PROPOSALS

RYAN AMER '18:

OPERATION BUTTERFLY

Create a garden to attract butterflies and improve the health of native flowers on campus.

BRYCE BONGIOVANNI '17:

WOOD DUCK BOXES

Install boxes to encourage Wood Ducks to nest on campus near our lakes and improve the ecosystem of the lakes.

CONNOR COLEMAN '17:

PURPLE MARTIN HOUSES

Since Purple Martins are colorful and help maintain insects, both the houses and the birds would be an attractive and useful addition to campus.

DEVIN CORINI '19:

PLANT AN APPLE ORCHARD

Over time, the apples produced by an orchard will provide fruit for Apple Butter, can be used on campus or sold locally, and offer an opportunity to teach stewardship to our students.

JADEN FRAZIER '19:

IMPROVE LOWER POND

Installing a fountain in the center and replacing the carp would enhance and improve the health and beauty of the lower pond.

MYLES JONES '18:

BUILD A GREENHOUSE

A greenhouse would allow us to grow fruits and vegetables all year, and provide a teaching opportunity on how to establish and maintain a garden.

DARIUS MCGHEE '18:

MAINTAINING THE WATER QUALITY OF CHESLEY CREEK

Develop a program of community awareness about proper garbage disposal; move dumpsters away from the creek and plant a row of honeysuckle plants to keep litter from blowing into the creek.

AAMIR SIMMS '17:

INSTALL BAT HOUSES

Build new houses and move existing ones to entice more bats to campus to help minimize pesky insects such as gnats and mosquitoes.

From left, Alex Marchetti '18, Connor Coleman '17, Ryan Amer '18 and Bryce Bongiovanni '17 install a Purple Marlin box.



Fellow students help Bryce Bongiovanni '17 (far right) to mount his Wood Duck box on a tree near Cabin Lake on campus. From left are Ryan Amer '18, Alex Marchetti '18, Edmund Woods (Cory Woods' son) and Connor Coleman '17.

by Hilde Keldermans

Ecosystem Restoration is a unit in the Mountain Ecology course that seeks to accomplish four broad goals: (1) improve biodiversity conservation, (2) improve human livelihoods, (3) empower local people, and (4) improve ecosystem productivity. Therefore, there is an element of meaningfully connecting people with their natural surroundings. Being an ecology course, the students' projects focus on the sustainability of biodiversity and habitat. Of course, the topics also easily relate to Blue Ridge's current sustainability theme.

During the fall trimester, the Mountain Ecology students began to research specific ecosystem restoration projects that could be initiated on campus within the School's theme of sustainability. Most students had a great start, which they revisited with fresh eyes in the first weeks of the winter trimester.

The student's task was to pick a theoretical project that could take place on the BRS campus and that would accomplish one or more of the

goals listed above. Each student was to gain knowledge on the subject and then develop a short (less than five-minute) sales pitch to convince an audience to invest (time, money, and/or resources). This provided a meaningful, place-based, real-world problem solving, sustainability-focused activity. Most students selected from examples that Mr. Cory Woods provided, but some developed their own topic.

On December 9, 2016, Ryan Amer '18, Bryce Bongiovanni '17, Connor Coleman '17, Devon Corini '19, Jaden Frazier '19, Myles Jones '18, Darius McGhee '18 and Aamir Simms '17 provided a five-minute sales pitch of their projects for the School in a presentation format similar to the TV show "Shark Tank." They presented their ideas to a group of "investors" who would assess each project's feasibility as well as the general quality of the presentation.

The investors included Headmaster Trip Darrin, Associate Headmaster Kevin Miller, Director of the Outdoor Program Tony Brown,

Facilities Director Ed Blain, English teacher Dan Dunsmore, Academic Dean Jamie Bourland and Director of Communications and Marketing Hilde Keldermans.

Videos of each presentation may be seen on the Blue Ridge School website at <http://www.blueridgeschool.com/about-us/news-detail/sustainable-proposals>.

Congratulations to Connor, Bryce and Darius for receiving the most votes from the investors. Connor's proposal to install Purple Martin houses throughout the campus, Bryce's pitch to install Wood Duck boxes near Cabin Lake and Big Lake, and Darius' Trash Containment strategies are each excellent sustainability ideas.

In February, Connor's Purple Martin boxes and Bryce's Wood Duck boxes were purchased and installed, ready for the return of these birds to campus.

PAUL FEHLNER: TEACHER, COACH, MENTOR, FAMILY MAN

by Hilde Keldermans

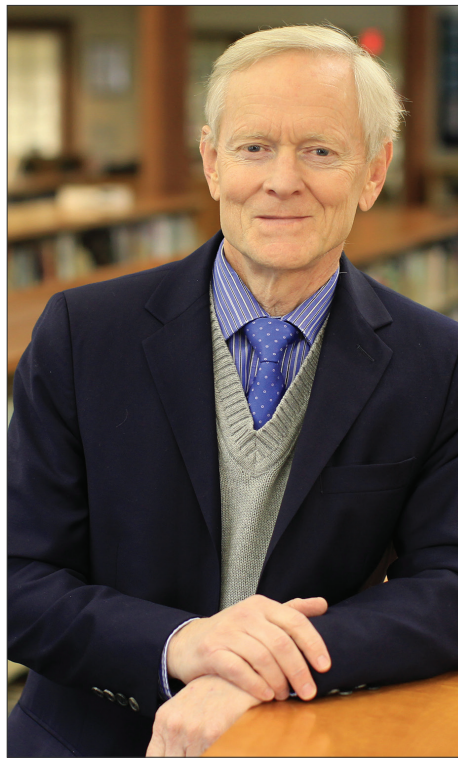
After devoting twenty-eight years of his career to Blue Ridge School, highly-respected and much-beloved science teacher Paul Fehlner is retiring. His contributions to the School are significant as is his impact on so many young men throughout nearly three decades. Beyond teaching science courses, he has coached a number of sports and directed the Saturday Morning Performing Arts program. He has also had a huge impact on protecting the biodiversity and ecosystem of the School's campus.

Paul was raised in Maryland along with his five sisters. He's always been proud of his German heritage as he recalls that both sets of grandparents immigrated from Germany in the 20th century. His path to teaching and ultimately to Blue Ridge was circuitous.

Paul discovered wrestling in high school where he was a member of his school's first wrestling team. "I was too small to do anything else," he says. He placed third his senior year in his end-of-season private school tournament held at Catholic University in 1969.

During the summers of his high school years, Paul worked as a life guard at a community pool where there were also tennis courts. He began to play tennis just for fun. "I have never competed in tennis," he adds, "but, when I was hired at BRS, they needed a tennis coach. At the time, all I really was expected to do was to supervise and drive the team around. They had their own coaches back home and did not need me for that. As our student body changed, though, I had to learn more and more about how to play the game. I am not a very good player, but I know how to teach tennis now," he says.

Following his graduation from the University of Maryland with a B.A. in General Studies, he returned to his high school to assist a former teammate as a wrestling coach. "That was the start of my coaching career," explains Paul. Throughout the years he has consistently coached wrestling teams.



Paul married Gail Phillips on November 24, 1979. The couple soon moved to Richmond following the wedding. There he worked for a landscaping company and became the head wrestling coach at St. Christopher's. The next year, St. Chris's headmaster asked Paul if he'd be interested in also teaching pre-algebra to seventh graders.

In 1989 when their first daughter Natalie was three, Gail had an interview with Southern Teachers Agency. The fact that her husband was a wrestling coach came up in the conversation, and the interviewer mentioned that there were several schools looking for wrestling coaches. Since Blue Ridge was one of the schools and it was fairly close to Richmond, the couple decided to check it out. They were instantly struck by the beauty of the place. Paul remembers, "We fell in love with it. Gail leaned over and said to me, 'I don't know what they're going to offer you, but you need to take the job!'" Paul and Gail have lived on the first floor of the DAR faculty apartment ever since. "It was a good place to raise our family," says Paul.

Their second daughter Kelsey was born here in 1991. Both daughters appreciated the village atmosphere at Blue Ridge where faculty children can roam freely and play with BRS students and their campus friends after dinners on the quad. Both Natalie and Kelsey also caught the acting bug at Blue Ridge. Faculty Emeritus Frank DeAngelis cast the girls in a number of performances during his tenure here. Both daughters went on to major in theater in college. Natalie is now the Theater Arts Director at Colonial Heights High School, and Kelsey writes scripts for children's videos in NYC. Both are accomplished actresses!

"Raising our two girls on the Blue Ridge School campus was the smartest decision we ever made," says Gail Fehlner. "They learned about community and nature while forging lifetime friendships. They took full advantage of the opportunities on campus in art, music and theater as well."

"Growing up at Blue Ridge is ideal for any kid. I couldn't have asked for a better backdrop for my childhood," shares Natalie. "The faculty who stayed as long as my parents did are like my aunts and uncles now, and their kids are like my siblings and cousins. After thirty years, you become a family. I feel very fortunate to have been able to grow up in a beautiful, safe, education-oriented family atmosphere. In fact, out of all the administrators, teachers and students alike, I believe faculty kids have the most love for Blue Ridge School. We might not have any relevance or power, but we definitely have the strongest ties. DAR and the Blue Ridge campus will always be my home, and I have Dad to thank for that," says Natalie.

Kelsey Fehlner agrees: "Growing up at BRS was a unique and wonderful experience, and I am grateful to have had the opportunity to live on such a beautiful campus in a friendly and loving community. My childhood consisted of bike rides with the other faculty kids, swimming, hiking, kayaking, pot-lucking, and most importantly

Pictured right: Paul Fehlner, Sam Ross '16, Nariman Muldashev '15 and Desean Bonner '16.

AN ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARD



singing in the choir and spring musicals, which have influenced my career as a performer today. I will always think of my dad as the coolest biology teacher, wrestling and tennis coach there ever was.”

In Paul’s first year at BRS, he was a varsity football assistant coach in the fall, the head wrestling coach in the winter and head tennis coach in the spring. He is also a certified weight trainer. He has coached wrestling for twenty-three of his twenty-eight years at Blue Ridge. Several of his wrestlers have won state championships and have been named All-Americans.

“Integrity, discipline, knowledge and compassion are all characteristics exemplified by Coach Paul Fehlner,” says Carl Frye, former Athletic Director and Faculty Emeritus. “Throughout the years, his teams could be counted on to exhibit excellent sportsmanship and skilled performances. His mastery of the technical skills of wrestling and tennis was shared with countless Blue Ridge boys who grew personally as well as athletically under his tutelage. He was a strong and caring role model to many student/athletes, including my own son Dan, whose lives he helped change by teaching them self-discipline and the rewards of hard work. It was also my privilege to serve as Coach Fehlner’s assistant for several wrestling seasons and to witness first hand his positive influence on my son.”

“Paul coached me in wrestling from my eighth grade year (before BRS) and taught me in his sophomore Honors Biology course,” says Rory Bosek ’04. “He was undoubtedly one of the positive impacts on me at the Ridge. It was a true joy to return to Blue Ridge as Alumni Director and coach the wrestling team with him for several years. When I return to campus there are several faculty who I have to visit or my trip seems incomplete. Visiting with Paul and all the Fehlner girls on their front porch was one of my favorite past times on these visits. Paul never felt like just a coach or a teacher; he felt like family.”

“Coach Fehlner has been a teacher, adviser and friend to me for over twenty years,” says Rudy Rudolph ’96. “When I look back on my life, I recognize that Coach Fehlner has been instrumental to my success. I hope that I am able to pass his teaching on to my own children as they get older.”



Left: Kelsey and Natalie Fehlner on Kelsey’s first day of kindergarten in 1996.



Right: the Fehlner family in 1991.

In recent years, Paul has taught Biology, Honors Biology and more recently Environmental Science. “It was great growing up with a biology teacher for a dad. I always knew, if I needed help on my science homework, I needn’t look too far,” says Natalie, who adds that she had a pet snake as a kid. “Not a lot of girly musical theatre girls like myself can make that claim.”

One of Paul’s most significant classroom accomplishments is starting a KIVA loan program for students in his Environmental Science class. His students pool a small amount of money, and the entire class funds a loan through this international non-profit. The organization aims to alleviate poverty by lending a small amount of money, sometimes as little as \$25, to borrowers who hope to become self-sufficient by starting a small business. Once a loan is repaid, the class can choose another project in which to invest.

When asked why he feels it was important for our students to participate in KIVA, Paul simply quotes Gandhi: “Poverty is the worst form of violence.”

Paul has been a committed member of the Blue Ridge faculty. He has served as the Science Department Chair and the faculty advisor to the Disciplinary Committee. He also led the

Faculty Steering Committee under Headmaster Ed McFarlane’s tenure. In this latter role, Paul led the committee to create a five-year plan and oversaw the VAIS five-year accreditation process in 1995.

Paul also introduced recycling to the campus soon after he arrived. He brought the concept of cultivated landscaping and the use of mulched planting beds to campus too. For a number of years, Paul maintained a family vegetable garden, which included a composting bin, next to DAR.

In 2015, Paul represented Blue Ridge at the IBSC World Conference in South Africa in preparation for his research on “Boys as Global Citizens.” His research involved creating greater interaction between BRS students and many of the recipients of the School’s community service initiatives. His belief was (and still is) that more frequent face-to-face meetings with those in need would increase students’ compassionate empathy, which means they would be compelled to help others without being required to do so. “Students in my Environmental Science class did, in fact, shift in their attitudes from simply going through the motions of community service to feelings of deeper empathy for those they were helping,” says Paul.

In June, 2016, Paul and Gail traveled to St. George's School in Vancouver, BC, Canada, where Paul reported his findings at the 23rd Annual IBSC Conference. Paul encourages all Blue Ridge teachers to participate in an IBSC research project. He found it invaluable and appreciated the opportunity not only to travel to South Africa and Vancouver, but also to meet many like-minded educators with whom he is still in touch.

"During his time at Blue Ridge, Paul Fehlner has been a steady voice in raising consciousness about our environment — how we are currently treating it and how we need to treat it," says Associate Headmaster Kevin Miller. "Over the past ten years in particular, Paul has made sure, in his classes, his activities and in a memorable commencement speech, that when we do consider our environment, we consider first and foremost the people in that environment who have been neglected, forgotten, overlooked for so long." "On the side," adds Kevin, "he's the preeminent beer connoisseur on campus, and has a sense of humor that makes its best appearances at faculty celebrations.

"At the heart of educating boys is the concept of relational learning – that, to be truly effective in bringing out a boy's potential, a teacher has to first establish a strong relationship or connection," says Headmaster Trip Darrin who adds, "Paul Fehlner is exceptional at getting through to Blue Ridge students and, notably, his skill has translated to boys from all over the world. While Paul and his family will be sorely missed, I know how much fun he'll have in retirement, and I'm glad we'll have a nearby venue for faculty gatherings!"

Finally, after grading approximately 3,360 final exams, attending 56 Parent Weekends, writing more than 10,000 teacher's comments, coaching around 96 sports seasons, and touching the lives of thousands of students, Paul is ready to move on to his next adventure.

As Paul retires in May, he won't be too far from the campus. He and Gail have already moved into their new home just a few miles away in Stanardsville. We know they both will be back on campus often. We wish Paul all the best and thank him immensely for his tireless efforts on behalf of Blue Ridge boys.

Please share your memories of Paul Fehlner as your mentor, advisor, teacher or coach with Hilde Keldermans at hkeldermans@blueridgeschool.com.

ANDREW GENOVA '03 AND MATT HARRIS '04 YOUNG ALUMNI OF THE YEAR

by Sam Fosdick '05

On Thursday, February 23, the Blue Ridge School Alumni Association presented Young Alumnus of the Year awards to Andrew Genova '03 and Matthew Harris '04. The event was held at East Coast Provisions in Richmond, which is owned by Blue Ridge School alumnus Brian Enrougthy '90.

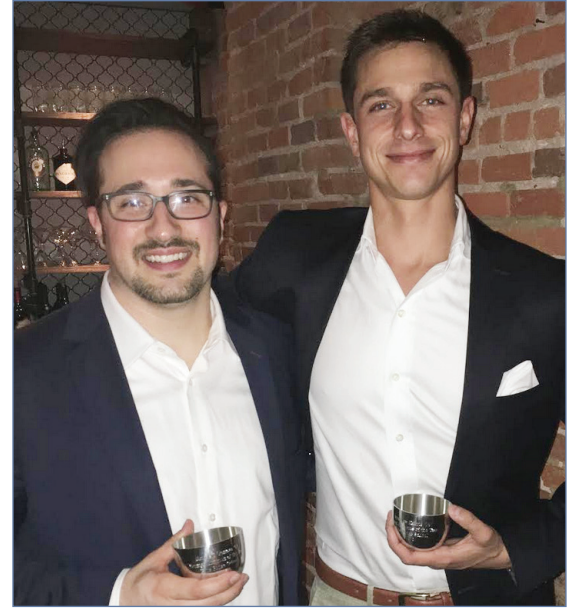
This award is given to one or more alumni who have graduated from Blue Ridge within the past fifteen years and who have demonstrated their devotion to Blue Ridge School by volunteering their time, energy and support.

Andrew Genova '03 came to Blue Ridge School at the beginning of his freshman year primarily because he wanted to experience a more diverse community. He challenged himself to become a better student in the classroom and a stronger leader in the community. He attributes his strong character to the great Blue Ridge School faculty members who always worked to influence his life and challenged him to be more studious.

Currently, Andrew is a commercial real estate consultant and specializes in tenant representation. He has experienced all facets of lease transactions. Thus far in his career, he has completed over 300,000 square feet of real estate transactions and has gained valuable experience in dealing with all types of leasing requirements as well as managing a national real estate portfolio for a large corporation.

Andrew received his Master's degree from Georgetown University in Commercial Real Estate Finance and Development. He received his Bachelor's degree in Psychology from Birmingham Southern College. Andrew is also a Fire Fighter II with Wheaton Volunteer Rescue Squad in Montgomery County, Maryland. In addition, he is a nationally certified fire fighter and emergency medical technician (EMT).

Andrew serves on multiple boards, including the board of directors for the Bethesda Fire



Andrew Genova '03 and Matthew Harris '04

Department, board of advisors for OurTime.Org, and member of the board of trustees for Oneness Family School where he serves as the treasurer. He currently holds real estate licenses in the District of Columbia, Maryland and Virginia.

On a lighter note, you can catch Andrew on the baseball diamond calling the game as an umpire from behind the plate.

Matthew Harris '04 developed a strong work ethic while at Blue Ridge School and has supported the Blue Ridge School Alumni Association since graduation by hosting regional events with his longtime significant other Bea Gonzalez and their son Sebastian.

After graduation, Matt studied Business Economics at Randolph Macon. He worked for his father's construction company until seven years ago, at which time he began working for a Richmond startup company called Health Warrior. According to its website, "Health Warrior is dedicated to vetting the world's growers for the highest quality Chia, and helping people conquer the many challenges of their everyday lives."

Matt has become an integral part of this company's early success as it has grown 1,100% in revenue during the past two years. Health Warrior began as an online company and is now in 3,000 stores across the country.

Matt is very active in the Richmond community as he works tirelessly for the Richmond SPCA and the National Alzheimer's Foundation.

Congratulations once again to these two young, successful alumni!

“The BAC has been a transformational project in many ways by not only making a hugely positive impact on nine varsity sports programs but also showing what’s possible when our family of alumni, parents, Trustees and school partners come together. That we beat our goal ahead of schedule is a testament to the strength of the Blue Ridge community. On behalf of the faculty, staff and students, THANK YOU!” - Trip Darrin, Headmaster



drone photo by Harry Buchanan '16

Last spring Blue Ridge School hosted the first track meet in decades. Pictured right are several track team members who won medals at that meet. Standing from left are Elijah Gordon '19, Nazir Hopson '17, Juan Mareco '18 and Jahlil Puryear '17. Seated from left: Adam Maisano '19 and Aaron Aldridge '17.*

**Elijah competed in the USA National Junior Olympics in Sacramento, California, this summer. He ran his best time of 11:24, which placed him at 24th in the nation among 15-16 year olds.)*

“With thanks to over 200 donors, our Baron Athletic Complex campaign surpassed our goal, allowing the School to fully fund the endowment of the new facilities and augment the original plans.”

- Franklin D. Daniels, Associate Headmaster





BARON ATHLETIC COMPLEX PHASE II

Phase II of the Baron Athletic Complex Campaign included a number of major projects including a golf practice range, two new grass soccer fields, extensive upgrades to the baseball field and meaningful landscape and infrastructure improvements.

The work began by correcting drainage issues that have plagued the lower fields for decades. Drainage pipes were installed to allow the flow of water to the natural drainage system and Roach River. The areas where rain water flows from the main campus above were graded as well. Erosion and sediment controls were also installed in the lower fields.

Once the old track was removed, the golf practice range was constructed with pro golf mats, a sand trap, and several hundred feet of target green.

In preparation for the new soccer fields, those areas were graded, leveled, raised and seeded and should be ready for soccer season next fall.

A parking lot was built near the soccer fields and the remodeled baseball field and was raised slightly to improve drainage.

The baseball facilities also received extensive work. The playing field was leveled and reseeded, a new fence was installed, bleachers and dugouts were refurbished and soon a new scoreboard will be installed.

Nearly one mile of hand-constructed fencing along Bacon Hollow Road has been installed, and ongoing landscaping will beautify the upper side of the road and, ultimately, a new outer entrance to campus will be added.



The 2016 VISAA State Football Champions thank you for the new artificial turf field on which they practiced and competed.

by Franklin Daniels, Associate Headmaster for External Affairs

The creation of the Baron Athletic Complex (BAC) is a genuine milestone in Blue Ridge history. And, just like it is for the student groups who enjoy it, this victory was indeed a team effort.

Together, more than 250 donors from all over America and around the world have made commitments totaling more than \$2,718,000. This exceeds BRS' goal of \$2,675,000 and fully-funds both the capital and endowment portions of the project.

The story of how the BAC came together is a poignant reflection of the BRS family and how the School gets things done.

The first in a series of transformative moments within the BAC effort came in early 2011. Blue Ridge School's longest-standing partner – its New York Auxiliary (NYA) – made a significant commitment to help construct a new track, challenging the School to bring the BAC off the drawing board.

From there, leadership-level solicitations began in earnest as BRS staff and volunteers spread out across the country in search of support. Jim McKenry '82 was an early leader, who with his family made a multi-year investment that would ultimately become a permanent tribute to his father.

The Perry Foundation in Charlottesville, another long-loyal friend of the School, soon joined the effort, challenging others to match their investment.

Alumni and friends then began to answer the call with a range of four, five and six-figure gifts that were critical confidence-builders along the way. Jimmy Crocker '72 became a vocal advocate in these days, rallying his peers to the cause and making his own extraordinary commitment to keep the ball rolling forward.

The largest single gift to the effort - \$592,000 – then arrived, the combined generosity of two international families with sons at BRS. This was a tipping point; the School community clearly believed the BAC was essential to its future success and there could be no turning back!

The Board of Trustees was particularly instrumental with a group-raise that totaled nearly \$300,000 to complete the artificial turf field. Within this, additional dollars were secured to create the iconic St. George and the Dragon seal now proudly displayed at mid-field.

Phase One – artificial turf field, six-lane track, and truly significant infrastructure upgrades - was completed in 2015. At this point, the project had reached the \$2.0 million mark, on-time, on-budget, and all in cash.

Focus now turned to Phase Two – the lower field areas along Bacon Hollow Road for baseball, soccer, golf and general community use.

Inspired by the overall success to this point, the NYA and Perry Foundation expanded their commitments with additional support specifically for Phase Two. Individual donors again answered the call. One sterling example

is Lewis Heaster '92, who fully-funded improvements to the baseball facility and to permanently dedicate the new field to BRS legend Carl Frye.

Once the project reached the \$2.65 million mark, a “finish line” effort sought to bring it all the way home.

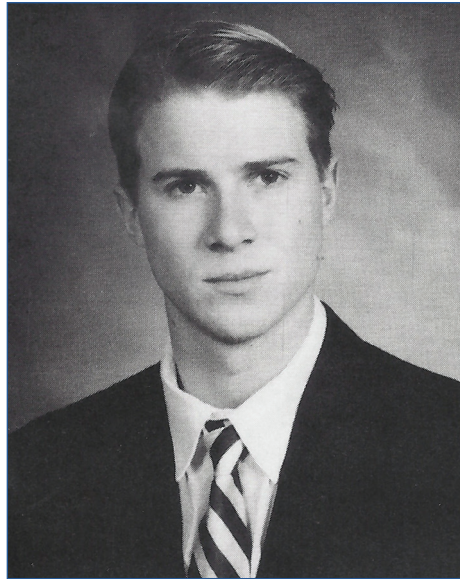
In a truly thrilling moment, the Alumni Council came forward with its largest commitment ever – a five-year gift that will name “Alumni Field” in honor of the thousands of Blue Ridge boys who helped build the athletic tradition we enjoy today.

Several individual alumni, including members of the Classes of '66 and '76 in celebration of their 50th and 40th reunions also answered the call.

Whether \$250 or \$250,000, the sentiment that inspired these gifts was universal – gratitude for how time at Blue Ridge has impacted the donors and their families.

While all at Blue Ridge are immensely proud of the BAC, the largest impact of any significant capital project is not the facility itself. The greatest value of an investment such as this is the effect it has on the larger community. There is no doubt that the Baron Athletic Complex has already made BRS more confident and better able to serve the students in its charge.

In an uncertain world, Blue Ridge has never been stronger. Thank you.



JOEY, 1996

THE MAGIC OF JOSEPH MOOREFIELD ABRAMO '96

AUGUST 17, 1977 - JANUARY 11, 2017

by Dan Dunsmore



The Blue Ridge School community was recently saddened to hear of the passing of Joseph (Joey) M. Abramo '96. After a brief bout with flu-like symptoms, he passed in the early-morning hours of January 11, 2017, from ARDS (Acute Respiratory Distress Syndrome). He is survived by his parents

Vincent and Wren Abramo of Arlington, Virginia, and his cousins Sarah Provancher Weber and Christopher Skorija.

The first of two memorial services for Joe was held at Westwood Village Memorial Park in Los Angeles, California, on Sunday, January 22. Mitchell Bell '84 officiated, and former Choir Director/Faculty Emeritus Dolores DeAngelis also attended.

Mitchell spoke to the crowded room on a rain-drenched afternoon about the magic of the young boy he knew as "Joey." "He knew that magic transcends any language," Mitchell said. He went on to talk about Joey's ability to make a person feel as if he or she was the most important person in the world. "Vortices are little tornadoes caused by landing airplanes. Joey would pick you up and bring you along with him like one of those vortices."

As Vince and Wren shared their memories of Joe, they gave Blue Ridge School full credit for giving their son the moral compass to make it through life. A copy of Joe's favorite poem "If" by Rudyard Kipling was placed on each chair before the service. Even his BRS classmates knew that Joe strove to live the life suggested by this poem. The lines "... If you can meet with Triumph and Disaster / And treat those two impostors just the same ..." were lines that Joe often quoted at that time and for the rest of his life. The theme of the poem is "Balance," which was something that Joe did well. Work, recreation, and nurturing friendships were of equal value to him.

Dolores adds, "It was a beautiful tribute to Joey – standing room only. The service was a celebration

of Joey's incredible life lived to the fullest with purpose, wit, friendship and love. It was inspiring to hear how he cared for each person his life touched – family members, friends, colleagues, and homeless people on the street. I was honored to sit with Wren and to be one of the representatives from Blue Ridge."

The second service was held at Trinity Presbyterian Church in Arlington, Virginia, on Saturday, January 28th. Mitchell Bell was a part of the service on the east coast as well. He was joined by Tristan Wright '95, English Chair Mr. John Young, History Chair Mr. Jim Niederberger, and Associate Headmaster for Academics Dr. Kevin Miller. While it's fair to say that the faculty and staff of Blue Ridge as well as his classmates gave Joey the chance to express his zest for life in many different ways, there was a different reason that these gentlemen were there. Joey gave his Blue Ridge family so much more than the School could ever have given him. That was Joey. In fact, it's not hyperbole to say that Joey's impact on everyone he met was magical.

Joe was raised by Vince and Wren in Arlington, Virginia, in the same neighborhood as the Bells. Their son Mitchell became one of Joey's first



Joey at the Tuck Shop

babysitters. “Joey preferred me over my younger sister because I would bring action figures,” Mitchell admits. Mitchell goes on to tell the story of Joey’s deal with him during one babysitting occasion. Mitchell was trying to convince Joey that it was bedtime. Joey told Mitchell that he’d go straight to bed if Mitchell would let him tie him to a tree. Mitchell had not been born yesterday so he made sure that whatever knots young Joey tied were loose enough to allow him to slip out of them. Still, Mitchell had a nervous moment as he watched Joey immediately go inside his house after tying the knots. “What if he has locked me out of the house?” Fortunately, he hadn’t. Mitchell looked in a couple of locations (the basement, the living room) before finding Joey sound asleep in his bedroom. Joey was as good as his word and had kept his promise to Mitchell.

Vince and Wren spoke often to the Bells, especially after Mitchell graduated from Blue Ridge in 1984. They wanted Joey to have the same core values from the Blue Ridge experience. This is how Joey came to be a Baron in the fall of 1994.

Among the interests that Mitchell had shared with Joey over the years were card tricks. Joey was a natural, and his interest in magic grew while he was a student at Blue Ridge. He enjoyed performing for others, which led him to the Blue Ridge School theater department where Frank and Dolores DeAngelis became impressed with him in a hurry. Frank, also a Faculty Emeritus, was an English teacher and the director of winter productions in the 90’s. (Sadly, Frank passed in

2014.) Dolores recalls, “I’ll never forget Joey’s performance as the Ring Master in *Barnum* during his junior year. It was one of our best shows ever at BRS due in large part to the magic that Joey brought to the stage – both figuratively and actually. He wowed audiences one more time as the Narrator in *Pippin* during his senior year.” Dolores adds that Frank appreciated Joey’s wit and wisdom. Frank would talk of their friendship and how much they loved one another. Mitchell remembers that Frank really helped Joey overcome a bout of homesickness that first winter by inviting him to his home and casting him in *Barnum*.

Dr. Kevin Miller recalls sitting with Joey in the auditorium several evenings during rehearsals of both *Barnum* and *Pippin*. As Frank would occasionally become particularly boisterous with the cast, Kevin and Joey would marvel at his passion and dedication to the students. “That meant something to Joey,” recalls Kevin. “Frank inspired Joey to give his best.” Kevin also has fond memories of watching Joey play soccer with the same enthusiasm he brought to other aspects of his life.

Mr. Niederberger came to know Joey very well as he and his roommate David Cates lived in Boogher when Jim was still a hall parent there. Jim remembers, “I really enjoyed taking Joey and David to Charlottesville for a town trip whenever they asked, one reason being that they were always so entertaining and so funny in their wry observations about school and the people

here.” Joey would serve on the Honor Council his senior year, and Jim recalls that his judgments were always fair, balanced and well-reasoned. Jim remembers that Joey was a solid history student, and he also witnessed his magic during rehearsals for and performances in both *Barnum* and *Pippin*. “He commanded the stage with his poise, talent and presence, all without any evident preparation for performing before coming to Blue Ridge.”

Tristan Wright ’95 recalls that Joey was smart, witty and a genuinely good person. “He was a true gentleman. We would talk maybe twice a year because he’d make a point to call to check in.” During one of those phone conversations, Tristan asked Joey about tracking down a motorcycle for him. Because of the information Joey shared with him about his own R75/6, Tristan purchased a 1974 motorcycle himself. Joey walked Tristan through questions he should ask the seller, then helped him with maintenance after the bike had arrived. “It just speaks volumes about Joey’s character that he would proactively be so genuinely interested in helping me out after not seeing me in years. I only wish we’d gotten to ride together.”

Joe’s senior English teacher Mr. Young would not be surprised to know that he was so attentive to a Blue Ridge brother. He remembers his good character and his always-positive presence in class.

(Continued on the next page.)



Joey Abramo as Ring Master in "Barnum" in 1995 (above) and in "Pippin" in 1996 (right).



During one of Joe's numerous returns to campus in 2011, he made a point of being photographed with John.

After graduating from Blue Ridge, Joe attended James Madison University. He earned his degree in 2001 and moved to Los Angeles where he received his JD from Southwestern University School of Law in 2004. While in California, he pursued his love of magic by joining the Magic Castle where he ultimately won the Olympic Gold Medal for close-up magic.

In addition to magic, Joe had a great interest in movies, often regaling friends with five to ten minutes of memorized dialogue from his favorites. He was also an accomplished photographer. His website is West405.zenfolio.com. (Go to Portfolio and then Slideshow.) This website displays pictures from his European travels, motorcycle photography, and some wedding photography that he was asked to shoot.

With all of these interests, his real passion was for motorcycles. He was a member of the Venice Vintage Motorcycle Club, joining them for their weekly rides. In recent years, he became an instructor and coach at the BMW Motorcycle RawHyde Academy, the premier training facility for off-road adventures. He also loved snowboarding in Mammoth.

Joe worked for Align Wealth Preservation and Insurance Services as a financial advisor, focusing on comprehensive financial planning. While there, he brought enthusiasm and fresh ideas to colleagues who also enjoyed his exuberant personality.

Dolores thanks Vincent and Wren for their kind words during the California service. "The service was truly a celebration that also inspired everyone there to BE more, dream more, imagine more and love more! Joey, thank you for living that life!" Mitchell would like us to remember Joey as a true Renaissance man. "The chapels for both services were filled with incredible people from all walks of life – the alcoholic who Joey encouraged and supported through his rehab, motorcycle club members, former teachers and respected business colleagues. So many stories about how he touched a multitude of lives."

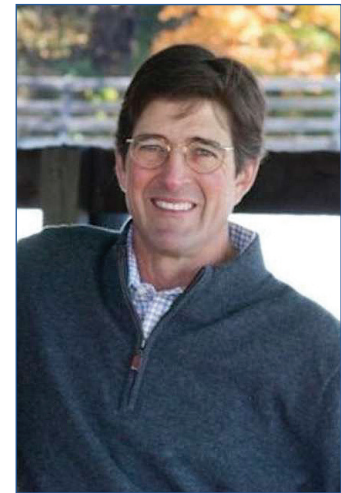
Before each of the three performances of *Damn Yankees* on February 10th and February 11th, current Director of the Performing Arts Will McGreal spoke to the audience about Joey's magical performances as the Ring Master in *Barnum* and the Narrator in *Pippin* on the DeAngelis Stage. That was followed by a moment of silence in memory of Joey.

Magic. That was Joey. He knew that Triumph and Disaster were both "Impostors." He knew that he could enjoy "talking with crowds," but never "lost the common touch." He demonstrated that "... you can fill the unforgiving minute / With sixty seconds' worth of distance run," by living his own life to the fullest.

He was Joseph the professional, Joe the motorcycle rider, and ... our Joey, a student at Blue Ridge.

Vincent and Wren suggest that the way his memory may be honored is by making a gift to the School in Joe's name.

CHESTER "CHET" WILLIAM FANNON III '80



OCTOBER 21, 1961 - DECEMBER 3, 2016

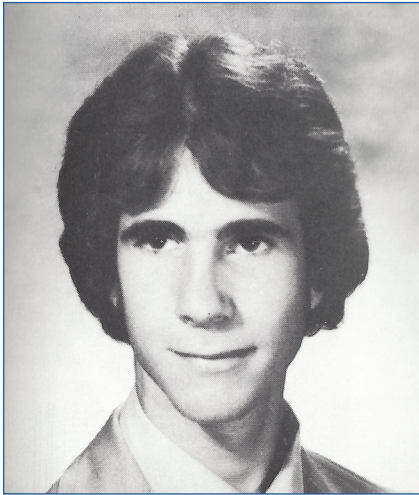
The Blue Ridge School family was saddened to hear of the passing of Chester "Chet" William Fannon III '80 on Saturday, December 3, 2016. His wife Kate Armfield Fannon and his sister Heather Fannon Young were by his side.

Chet was born on October 21, 1961, in Alexandria, Virginia, to Chester William Fannon, Jr. and Mary Frances Tucker Fannon. He grew up on his family farm in Laurel Hill, Rappahannock County. While attending Blue Ridge, he was known for his soccer skills as well as his love for the outdoors. He also delighted in bird hunting, dog training and habitat restoration, all which were fostered during his time on the Laurel Hill farm. Having always enjoyed horseback riding, he eventually became quite an accomplished polo player.

After graduating from Blue Ridge, Chet attended James Madison University in Harrisonburg, Virginia. Once he had earned his degree at JMU, he began a long, successful career with Fannon Petroleum, which has been an Alexandria, Virginia, institution since 1885.

His family notes that Chet showed the same courage, integrity and grace in his passing that had been the hallmarks of his life. He certainly exhibited those qualities while on the Blue Ridge campus, and he never missed an

STANLEY PHILLIPS “BUCKY” JAMES ’65



CHET, 1980

opportunity to give back to his alma mater. He is remembered with love and deeply missed by his wife Kate, his daughter Kingsley, son Chester and his parents Bill and Mary Frances Fannon.

He is also survived by his sister Beth and her husband Jimmy Swindler, another sister Heather and her husband Daron Young, as well as nieces Addie Swindler, Ellie and Claire Young, nephew Trey Swindler and beloved in-laws Howard and Gloria Armfield.

A memorial service was held on Thursday, December 8, 2016, at Trinity Episcopal Church in Upperville, Virginia. Family and friends gathered for remembrances at the Middleburg Tennis Club after the funeral service. Donations may be made in Chet’s memory to the United Network for Organ Sharing (UNOS) at 700 N. 4th Street, Richmond, VA 23219 or at www.unos.org.

If any family or friends would like to send in remembrances of Chet, please contact Sam Fosdick at sfosdick@blueridgeschool.com.



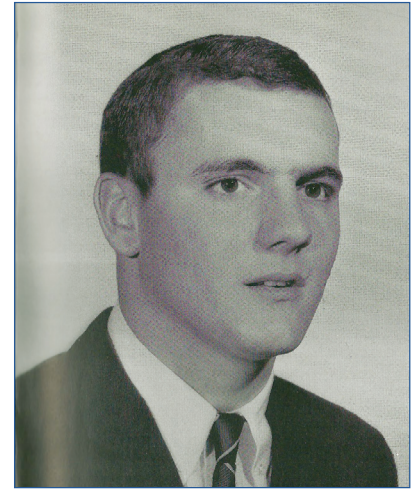
APRIL 5, 1946 - JANUARY 24, 2017

The Blue Ridge family only recently learned of the peaceful passing of Stanley Phillips “Bucky” James ’65 at age 70 on January 24, 2017. He was surrounded by family. Much of the following information comes from a previously-published obituary in *The News & Advance*.

Bucky was born in Lynchburg, Virginia, on April 5, 1946, to the late Stanley Phillips James and the late Martha Watts James Sawyer. In addition to his parents, he was predeceased by his brother William Watts James (Billy), his sister Maude James Tyson (BB), and his nephew Edwin Nelson James, Jr. (Nelson).

While attending Blue Ridge, he was quite the athlete and was the School’s first All-Central Virginia football player. He was also a Prefect. In the 1970’s, he served on the School’s Board of Trustees.

Bucky is survived by his wife of forty-seven years, Linda Quinlin James, his sons Stanley Phillips James III (Trey) and William Owen James (Owen), one grandson, William Phillip James, his brother Edwin Nelson James (Blitz), sisters Martha James Palmer (Bullet) and Nancy James Pruitt (Bo) and nieces Kim Gay McEniry and Martha Gay Williams. “Uncle



BUCKY, 1965

Buck” was cherished by his younger nieces and nephews John James, Perry Pruitt and Taylor Pruitt, and great nieces Clair and Lulu McEniry and Watts and Haines Williams.

Bucky worked in the construction business in Lynchburg for his entire career, spending thirty-seven years with Overhead Door Company. His real passions in life, however, were his family, friends and home on the James River in Elon, Virginia. He was loved by the entire community and was known as the unofficial “Mayor of Elon.” His many adventures with close friends were legendary, he was always willing to help those in need, and he never met a stranger.

A memorial service was held on Friday, January 27, 2017, at Whitten Monelison Chapel with Pastor Barry Tucker officiating. Internment followed at Spring Hill Memorial Park. Family and friends have been encouraged to make a contribution to the Patrick Henry Boys and Girls Homes: 860 Red Hill Rd., Brookneal, VA 24528.

Blue Ridge School Alumni Relations Director Sam Fosdick invites anyone to send fond memories of Bucky to sfosdick@blueridgeschool.com.

BLUE RIDGE SCHOOL
273 MAYO DRIVE
ST. GEORGE, VA 22935



2017 VISAA DIV. II STATE CHAMPIONS!