

11.19.10

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Published biweekly by and for the Upper School students of Riverfield Country Day School in Tulsa, OK

VOLUME V NO. 6

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

Good judgment comes from experience, and experience comes from bad judgment.

— Barry Le Patner



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weekend weather

SAT 71

SUN 73

INFORMATION FROM WEATHER.COM, 11/19/10, 9:00 A.M.

# Visiting Day is here!



Senora Sacra and her Spanish students are ready for visitors today!

PHOTO BY RAMSEY TALLADIVEDULA

By Meghan Kelkar  
ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT EDITOR

Today Riverfield is hosting a special day when parents, grandparents, and friends can come, tour the school, and witness some of the wonderful things happening here at Riverfield. Traditionally, this is the day of the year when relatives and friends have the opportunity to sit in on our classes and see what attending Riverfield is really like.

But this year is different. Not only will our visitors be able to see the academic side of Riverfield, but also the arts that are an integral part of this school.

First, visitors will have an opportunity to visit classes with students from 8:30 to 10 a.m. Then everyone will follow the Drumline as it snakes through the campus, gathering everyone for a special welcome and assembly in the Gym.

Then the real fun starts! A Fine Arts Festival begins at 10:30 with a performance by one of the Upper School Rock Bands helped by the Blue Raven Jr. Chorus. Visitors will then choose from various performances and demonstrations throughout the remainder of the day.

Groups with scheduled events include Upper School, Middle School, and 4<sup>th</sup>/5<sup>th</sup> grade Rock Bands, Drama (featuring some K-3<sup>rd</sup> grade students and sets created by the Upper School Art classes), Speech & Debate, Filmmaking, the Blue Raven Chorus, Home Ec, 4<sup>th</sup> grade Orff, and 5<sup>th</sup> grade "Stomp!"

Lunch will be served in the Upper, Middle, and Library Commons. During lunch, the \$10,000 raffle winner will be announced and a strategic overview of RCDS will be presented.

Today will be very exciting, and we hope all our students, along with their relatives and friends, enjoy the fun!

## Tulsa Zoo improvements needed

By Sam Laney  
STAFF WRITER

After recent troubles, the Tulsa Zoo has managed to hang onto its AZA accreditation by a thread. The Association of Zoos and Aquariums, which accredits zoos, has given the Tulsa Zoo one year to make improvements to maintain its status.

Accreditation makes it possible for the zoo to acquire animals and provides other benefits to the facility.

Zoos and aquariums typically go through the accreditation process every five years. The process usually takes six months, and the AZA sends a

report with suggestions for improvements. The Tulsa Zoo was not due for accreditation. However, an investigation was started earlier this year after a giraffe died of hypothermia in

**“The elephants remembered me. It’s a great childhood memory for me.”**

January. The zoo is working to make cold weather improvements to its facilities.

The Tulsa Zoo is transitioning to a new system of management. Under the new

system, the zoo will be run for the city by a private organization. The board president of Tulsa Zoo Management, Inc., which will be taking over operation of the zoo, said he is “thrilled” with the AZA decision. He stated it would have been terrible to have lost the accreditation. If the zoo fails to comply with all of the AZA’s recommendations, it could lose its ability to acquire and keep animals and might close.

Riverfield junior Matt Faeth expressed great hope that the zoo could get through this rough patch. “The elephants remembered me,” he said. “It’s a great childhood memory for me, too.”

## Public schools face cuts in funding

By Chris Dickey  
STAFF WRITER

According to the Reuters news service, a group of public school districts in Kansas filed a lawsuit on November 2 claiming their state government has once again unconstitutionally shorted students. The lawsuit says the state failed to comply with a funding plan agreed to in 2006, according to a statement from the districts’ lawyers.

“While the court-approved plan called for \$755 million in new funding, the legislature and governor have thus far cut over \$303 million from the schools,” the statement reads. Kansas’ Governor Mark Parkinson, who did not run for re-election, hopes the next administration and legislature will work together “to uphold the state’s commitment to public schools,” his spokeswoman said.

The school funding situation is similar in Oklahoma. Oklahoma ranks 48th in the nation (below Kansas) in per student education spending.



Where will public schools find additional funding?

PHOTO BY RAMSEY TALLADIVEDULA

The ongoing recession has resulted in deep cuts in Oklahoma’s state budget, including a \$228 million blow to common education funding. This has resulted in layoffs of teachers, school consolidations, and elimination of some class offerings in many public schools.

On November 2, voters in Oklahoma overwhelmingly rejected State Question 744 which would have required the state to spend the same amount per student as the average expenditure in surrounding states.

The Oklahoma Education Department will be scrambling to find funding options for public education because federal stimulus money used this past year will not be available in the coming year. With an anticipated increase in the requested amount of funding and the expiration of stimulus funds, Oklahoma schools may soon follow suit with Kansas.

# 2 Sports/Opinions

GO BLUE RAVENS and  
LADY RAVENS!



Jacob Allen goes for a lay up against Dove while being covered by defenders.  
PHOTO BY ANNAHLYN PUGH

## Update on RCDS Varsity basketball

By Ryan Peake  
SPORTS EDITOR

Riverfield's basketball season has finally begun.

As of November 16, the date of this writing, the Varsity Boys' team had played three games and one Jr. Varsity game. The Lady Ravens had played two games.

Varsity wins over Boulevard Christian on November 9 and Dove Science Academy on November 12, combined with a November 16 loss to rival Rejoice Christian, have given the Ravens a 2-1 record in the young season.

In the Dove game last week, senior Zack Allen led the Ravens to victory with a scoring barrage of 42 points.

But the tone was much different this week during the Rejoice game. The Varsity Boys played most of the game from behind, going into the fourth quarter down by 12. They battled back at one point to take the lead, only to lose the game by just five points.

One of the culprits in the Rejoice loss was poor shoot-

ing, as the Ravens combined to make only 30 percent of their shots.

On Monday, November 15, the JV Boys also suffered a loss to Rejoice.

The Lady Ravens had played two games as of November 16, one of them resulting in a win over Dove and the other a loss to Rejoice.

Coach Martin, the new mentor of the Lady Ravens, opened her basketball coaching career at Riverfield with the win over Dove. She is fortunate to have a team that is loaded with lots of young talent. Freshmen Sarah Carson and Logan Mitchell scored 21 and 12 points respectively in the girls' 51-20 victory over Dove. In their second game, the Lady Ravens lost a close contest 28-39 to Rejoice.

Next week, both Varsity teams have a conference home game on Tuesday against South Coffeyville. Game times have been set at 6:30 for Varsity Girls and 8:00 for Varsity Boys. Both games will be played at Riverfield's Clark Gymnasium.

## Farewell to a tentacled oracle

By Malachi Keeter  
STAFF WRITER

George Washington. Clint Eastwood. John Paul Jones. These names evoke images of heroism, of majesty, of an unbreakable spirit always looking upward, to the horizon, to the future.

Unfortunately, the sports world recently mourned the passing of another hero. He did not ride atop a majestic steed. He did not wield a gun. He did not even wear a hat. But he was no less a hero than these others.

Paul the Octopus was born in January 2008, to common octopi in Weymouth, England. He was raised in a modest aquarium tank in the Sea Life Centre in Oberhausen, Germany where his career began.

Germany was to play in the UEFA Euro 2008. For curiosity's sake, Paul's keepers pre-

sented him with two boxes filled with food. One box was marked with the flag of Germany, and one was marked with the flag of their upcoming soccer opponent. It was agreed that the box Paul opened first would be declared Paul's predicted winner.

The magnitude of the choice was not lost on Paul, whose tiny cephalopod brain searched long for an answer.

And he chose correctly.

Paul went on to choose the winners of eight consecutive German soccer matches, which, according to Professor David Spiegelhalter of Cambridge University, is a 1/256 chance given random options.

In 2010, Germany was to play in the World Cup, which is a really big deal for people who use the word "football" to describe the wrong sport. Everyone looked to Paul, the oracle, to predict the winner. Would the

Teutonic ball-kicking force prevail, or would Australia upset them?

Paul chose Germany and, as usual, Paul was right. Paul was right seven more times, in fact, correctly predicting each of Germany's seven World Cup wins, and even identifying Spain as the winner of the final match.

However, Paul was not without enemies. After his team's rightfully projected loss, one Argentine chef published a recipe for octopus online, a clear death threat. Iran's President Ahmadinejad said in a speech in Tehran that the West was using the octopus to spread "western propaganda and superstition."

On October 26, the entire world held its breath as Paul breathed (do octopi breathe?) his last. Truly, we were all touched by his loving tentacles. Godspeed, Paul the Octopus. Godspeed indeed.

## The 'Don't Ask, Don't Tell' policy

By Malachi Keeter  
STAFF WRITER

The United States military has a longstanding policy of not allowing openly gay soldiers to serve. If the soldier stays quiet about his/her homosexuality, they can serve in accordance with the "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy. Otherwise, they can be discharged if they "come out of the closet."

This policy is unpopular among the LBGT community in America as well as others. Many politicians, such as President Obama, have promised to repeal DADT, but they

have not done so.

A study done by Quinnipiac University in February of this year showed approximately two thirds of the U.S. population believes that the DADT policy is discriminatory and about one third does not.

It is a tough issue because conservative policy-makers raise the issue of unity in the fighting force, believing that having openly gay and straight soldiers side by side may cause tensions that lessen troops' effectiveness.

Riverfield Upper School students are divided in opinion.

Samuel Laney asked, "Do we really want more hazing in

the military? New recruits are already hazed, so you can imagine what would happen to an openly gay recruit. It would cause a fragmented fighting force."

Meghan Kelkar said, "It's basically unfair to gays, and it forces them to lie about it (their sexuality) to their commanding officers."

DADT is a difficult issue, and it seems to be a fixture for the time being.

However, the federal court system weighed in on the matter with a recent decision that the policy could be unconstitutional, so a repeal may be possible in the future.

## Mac/PC: Which do you choose?

By Meghan Kelkar  
STAFF WRITER

The new MacBook Air is a laptop from the Apple line of products, and it is being referred to as "the next generation of MacBooks." With Apple products improving and taking small steps to change our ideas about technology, many are wondering if Macs are better than PCs.

A Mac will work better with Apple components such as the iPhone, iPod touch, and Nano. In addition, Macs are considered simpler to use, come with better software, are less prone to computer viruses, and they are more stylish.

On the other hand, with a PC you have a variety of brands you can choose from including Dell, HP, and Gateway. They are typically cheaper in price than Macs, are better for gaming, and are more easily upgradable.

Riverfield students have differing opinions about which kind of computer is better. Ramsey Talladivedula would love to

have a MacBook Air. "I would rather have a Mac than a PC because they are known to have fewer viruses," she said.

But Matt Faeth says he will stick with his trusty PC. "I prefer the PC because I know it well, and I'm afraid of the hassles that come with converting to a Mac."

It all comes down to a matter of personal preference. Your choice of computers may well depend on which disadvantages you are more willing to cope with. The truth is, there are pros and cons to having both Macs and PCs. However, they will both be part of our society for years to come.



Starting this year, students at Riverfield can choose between Tablet PCs and Mac laptops.  
PHOTO BY RAMSEY TALLADIVEDULA



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## 3 A&amp;E

**HOLIDAYMART is COMING!** Every year, RCDS friends and family members sell their hand-made wares in the hallway of the Main Building. Mark your calendar for December 6-16! ...

## FINE ARTS FESTIVAL PREPARATIONS



Today at 11:15 and 1:15, the Drama department will perform two shows. Both are theatrical versions of Dr. Seuss stories, "The Lorax" and "One Fish Two Fish Red Fish Blue Fish." These are the first RCDS Drama productions that have collaborated with the Upper School Art classes.

PHOTOS BY CLAIRE WHITE

## The top ten reasons 2010 is a great year for hip-hop

By Bryce Rossler  
STAFF WRITER

**10. THE RETURN OF THE POSSE CUT** — From the Wu-Tang Clan's influential '93 classic to singles with the entire No Limit lineup jumping in, tracks filled to the brim with rappers were a key part of hip-hop's golden era. Now you're seeing more posse cuts — a fun type of track.

**9. THE YEAR OF THE COMEBACK** — Eminem was going through a rough patch, but he made a decent album this year. Kanye was on a losing streak with two mediocre albums, but he's stepped up his game and his next release looks to be a big one. T.I. also seems to be on the path toward making good music again. Seeing old faces do well always gives you a great feeling.

**8. A REVITALIZED MIXTAPE CIRCUIT** — 2006 and 2007 were good years for hip-hop, due in part to all the free material available (much of it coming from Lil Wayne.) The more free stuff, the better. This year has been punctuated by the release of many mixtapes, Kanye's G.O.O.D. Friday series, and some truly great unofficial albums.

**7. BEEF!** — When Nas said in his bashing letter to L.A. Reid, "record label beefs are so 15 years ago," it signified something larger: the '90s beef is back. Hip-hop hasn't had a slew of beefs since Jay-Z/Nas, and the most recent

REAL beef was Gucci/Jeezy. But this year, between diss tracks and Twitter wars, rap feuds are relevant again.

**6. ARTISTS ON TRIAL** — Lil Boosie, T.I., Gucci Mane, and Lil Wayne are just a few of the notable artists who have been incarcerated this year or are currently facing trial. Famous run-ins with the law during the '90s were an integral part of rap's growing publicity. 2010 is seeing a revival of this.



Connor Schmigle flips for hip-hop.  
PHOTO BY RAMSEY TALLADIVEDULA

**5. SALES** — More often than not, top quality records don't chart well. This year, that isn't the case. Bad albums are flopping, and good releases are being rewarded by fans copping their stuff. In turn, titles are moving units. This will be pivotal in the future.

**4. FAIL OF THE CROSS-OVER** — Lil Wayne's *Rebirth* was blasted for being atrocious, and Travie McCoy's *Lazarus*

straight up flopped (and rightly so.) Don't even mention Drake's platinum debut *Thank Me Later*, because that was more of a pop-R&B hybrid. It's encouraging that the hip-hop fan community is denouncing mutated crossovers.

**3. GANGSTA REVIVAL** — Rap in the '90s was headlined by a gangsta mentality. The revival of that mentality is led by Waka Flocka Flame's debut LP, *Flockaveli*. On top of that, four gangsta rappers (L.A.'s Jay Rock and Nipsey Hu\$\$le, Atlanta's Pill, and Indiana's Freddie Gibbs) were incorporated into the 2010 XXL Freshman lineup. Even Rick Ross, already a commercially established artist, is branching out into a more *mafioso* style.

**2. QUALITY** — Recent years have been plagued by albums with poor quality. But this year is easily the best year quality-wise since at least 2005. Huge releases are coming out, and there have been some really great ones. Best of all, there have been relatively few bad records. This is a big step in the right direction.

And the number one reason:

**1. FRESH, NEW STYLES** — For years, the rap game has been filled with the same old cookie-cutter artists doing the same old stuff. But this year, many artists have brought something unique to the table. "Smoke rap" is on the rise, Das Racist has brought a style that's smart and hilarious at the same time, and Lil B is totally out in left field.

## Zach Hill's 'Face Tat'

Zach Hill's drumming has been a major influence on math rock. For those who don't know what math rock is, it is rock drenched in mathematical complexity, with odd-ball time signatures and bizarre song structures.

Zach Hill's solo projects have taken this to another level of zaniness. But while his last album, *Astrological Straits*, was a sprawling, experimental, over-the-top mess of a record, *Face Tat* feels a bit more calm, like Zach Hill went from drinking three energy drinks per day to two.

Even with the scaled-down energy, *Face Tat* is still a bugged-out, off-the-wall album experience. Clamoring drums rummage through the atmosphere of the songs, with disoriented and distorted vocals filling in the spaces between drums and synthesizers. Zach Hill's ability as a drummer is phenomenal, with skit-



tering cymbals and snares hitting at the exact moments necessary for the off-kilter rhythm, and it sounds like a true center of the record.

The only real problem with *Face Tat* is that it has no consistency or purpose. It sounds like one of the most bizarre jam sessions out there. That's always been a problem with math rock for many listeners, and *Face Tat* does nothing to fix this.

Despite that, it's impressive to hear musicians work together this well and create such an energetic musical atmosphere.

**GET READY, IT'S COMING!**

## Riverfield Rocks CAFÉ NIGHT

Our bands will rock the Clark Gymnasium on Friday night, December 4

## A RuneScape revival

By Matt Faeth  
STAFF WRITER

Despite the fact that playing computer games is not allowed during the school day at Riverfield, one online game has made a significant revival among a group of Upper School students. That game is RuneScape.

Some may think they have outgrown the preadolescent game, but others argue it takes them back to their childhood and just genuinely makes them happy.

Garrett Johnson, a level 40 mage, said, "It's, um, a game that makes you think about the origin of life ... like, are we meant to be archers, mages, or

combat warriors?"

Emmy Gore, a level 10, voiced her opinion about it saying, "It's kinda stupid."

Continuing on a search to uncover the greatness of RuneScape, Luke Johnson, a level 40 warrior, divulged his true feelings when he said, "It's a place where I can feel cool whenever the real world makes fun of me. I can be athletic and finally fly free like the eagle."

Hunter Skoog, a level 58 pro, enthusiastically said, "It's the way of the future!"

If you would like to make plenty of new friends, then join this fraternity.

Go ahead, the gates of Lumbridge await!



Tristan Hightower (center) is surrounded by fellow RuneScape players after school in the Commons.  
PHOTO BY RAMSEY TALLADIVEDULA

# 4 Features

COMING UP IN OUR NEXT ISSUE: Foods for Finals Week, the Dallas Cowboys' woes, Kinect injuries, winter movies, Betty White ... and more!

## Riverfield's teachers make a difference

By Ramsey Talladivedula  
STAFF WRITER

Students who have attended Riverfield most of their lives have no idea what public school is like. Here at Riverfield the students are different, the classes are different, and the overall environment is different. But for the most part, it is the teachers that make the difference.

At Riverfield, it is common for students to develop good relationships with teachers because most teachers consider Riverfield a second family. By taking down barriers that suggest teachers are nothing more than the superior force in the classroom, Riverfield students learn to engage themselves with their teachers.

The confidence these relationships create will be crucial

in years to come when students face interviews or need to have conversations with professors in college. Teachers here at Riverfield are giving students the confidence they will need to be successful in life.

Developing these kinds of relationships is better for everyone's future. Many students know a few teachers that they will most likely keep in contact with after graduation.

Classes at Riverfield are more exciting and fun to attend because students know and like their teachers. Unlike many public schools, this is not the type of place where you simply sit in class, open your book, and listen to the teacher. Students are involved during class time, and the teachers understand this relationship well.



Mr. Hodges, Mr. Breig, and Ms. James are not always serious.  
PHOTO BY RAMSEY TALLADIVEDULA

## Choosing a college

By Ramsey Talladivedula  
STAFF WRITER

When looking at colleges, the number of students attending any given school seems very high compared to our "breaking 100" student population at Riverfield's Upper School.

So, what are the differences between attending a "small" college with a couple of thousand students or a big university with 30,000? Which is the better choice? Does the student population even matter?

At a large university you will have the widest variety of courses and majors. There is also an assortment of housing options from co-ed to dorms to Greek housing. Universities are well funded and have a large range of social and academic opportunities.

But they have their weaknesses as well. It is easier to get lost in the crowd at a large school, and it is harder to get to know your professors. This makes it harder to stand out. The change from our small high school to a big university might

be too drastic, and you might feel overwhelmed. Smaller colleges may be easier to manage.

**Make sure you think through all your options ...**

Small colleges also have smaller class sizes, and many of these schools focus on a particular major. Teachers and advisors are able to get to know students on an individual basis. Professors usually teach the classes instead of teaching assistants.

However, small colleges have their downsides, too. There are fewer majors to choose from, fewer resources to use, and fewer social and academic opportunities. There is also less focus on sports and more limited housing options.

Choosing a college or university is a long and difficult process, so make sure you think through all your options. After all, it is a decision that will determine your future.

## Diversity Committee works to create an accepting environment

By Max Harkness  
STAFF WRITER

Since the recent Diversity Lunch at the Upper School, more and more people at Riverfield are becoming aware of the students' Diversity Committee.

The major goal of the committee is to put people together. Every person has unique traits that make that individual special. The Diversity Committee wants to encourage people to get along happily despite these differences.

The leader of the committee, Omar Rana, said that he founded the Diversity Committee because, "with all the issues lately concerning teens, we want to create an environment that is accepting for all." He stated that having this committee will lead to a more welcoming culture and make Riverfield students feel better about themselves.

After the well-attended Di-



James Colpitts, Omar Rana, Brandon Miller, and Meghan Kelkar encourage everyone to support the Diversity Committee.  
PHOTO BY RAMSEY TALLADIVEDULA

versity Lunch, the committee is taking a much-needed breather. They are currently concentrating on identifying with themselves, making each other feel better, and learning what is unique

about each of them. Then they plan to pass this attitude around and hope the more accepting atmosphere will make Riverfield a better place to be.

Get ready for positivity.

## Google unveils automatic car

By Sam Laney  
NEWS EDITOR

Google, a leader in new technology, has branched out from the web and recently unveiled an autonomous vehicle capable of driving itself.

The car collects data using cameras, radar sensors, and laser range finders. That data, combined with Google's extensive road maps, allows the vehicle to navigate through traffic.

While the cars are capable of driving themselves, they were not unmanned during testing. A trained driver was behind the wheel that could take over on a moment's no-

vice. There was also a software analyst monitoring the test.

The project is much like that of the DARPA Challenge, a competition funded by the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency, an arm of the U.S. Department of Defense. In this competition, teams race unmanned vehicles across harsh desert terrain. However, Google has taken this concept one step further. Google recruited several engineers that have participated in the DARPA Challenge to work on the project.

Google said the purpose of the project is to increase car efficiency and safety as well as reduce traffic accidents and reduce carbon emissions. The

World Health Organization reported that nearly 1.2 million people die per year in traffic accidents, and Google hopes this new technology will help reduce that staggering figure.

Google also reported that most of the problems facing the project are not technical but legal and bureaucratic. Many officials do not feel it is safe to allow autonomous vehicles on city streets. Bureaucrats are not the only ones that do not like the idea of self-driving cars. Many people enjoy driving. While this technology is cutting edge, it may be a while before it is adopted by the public.

## Forest Class gets unusual frog

By Max Harkness  
STAFF WRITER

At Riverfield, we are renowned not only for our laid-back environment, but for our abundance of animals. We have donkeys, llamas, goats, peacocks, and horses, some of which walk across the school grounds like they're the kings of all they survey.

In the Forest Class, you can see one of the newest additions to the Riverfield animal family, a glass-skinned frog. Technically, right now it is a glass-skinned tadpole. The Forest class acquired the unusual amphibian last month.

Several children in the class said the tadpole had whiskers. One child said it looked like a catfish, so perhaps it does indeed have whiskers! As the tad-

pole matures into a frog, it will develop see-through skin, thus giving this species its distinctive name.

The Forest Class was pleased to have a visitor from the Upper School newspaper

come to their room to "interview" their frog, and many of them wanted to talk about it.

The frog's name is Bugeye, and he is sure to be a great addition to the diverse Riverfield animal family.



It will be interesting to watch this clear-skinned tadpole grow.  
PHOTO BY RAMSEY TALLADIVEDULA