

AROUND THE BEND

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Riverbend High School



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DECA GOES TO INTERNATIONALS IN ATLANTA

Hayleigh Pickett

During the weekend of March 3rd through the 4th, a number of students went to Virginia Beach for the DECA state competition. The trip was delayed as students were supposed to leave Friday, March 2nd. However, because of the windstorm, Storm Riley, these high winds made it dangerous for students to travel that morning. Although the trip was delayed, students left Riverbend at 4:30am Saturday morning, arriving around 7 am. Role play acts, in which students act out different scenarios based on individual events, were all day Saturday from around 8:30 am to around 4pm.

Saturday night, Riverbend advisors hosted a complimentary dinner for all of the Riverbend students. Students also received their VA DECA t-shirts as well as their ribbons for honor society and merit awards during that time. After dinner Saturday night, students went to the first award ceremony to see who placed top ten in their tests and roleplays.

Sunday morning, there was another award ceremony where the top overall and who placed for Internationals was announced. Riverbend had 28 participants place with high enough scores to go further to Internationals. The following students who are moving on are: Mark Baechtel, Matthew Bakerian, Pia Basilica, Abby Crocker, Darius Dunn, Dillon Fields, Nicole Fontenot, Jennifer Garth, Hannah Henley, Kenady Horne, Karen Huezo, Katherine Hummel, Rachel Ivy, Trinity Jelinek, Amber Kressler, Ryan Leaf, Grace Long, Ethan McCue, Katelyn Moulton, Elizabeth Mueller, Sarah Statler, Wally Tamana, Sophie Thomas, Gabriella Viacara, Erika Waszak, Natalie Williams, Connor Wills, and Sarah Young. This is the most students Riverbend has brought to Internationals, also known as ICDC. ICDC was in Atlanta, Georgia this year from April 21-24 2018. Lizzy Mueller, Riverbend senior won the \$1,000 Louis Spillman Scholarship, which according to Virginia DECA is given



to, "remarkable women who contribute so much to Virginia and the nation through the DECA organization." When asked about what she has gained through DECA, Mueller stated, "DECA has truly helped me find my passion of marketing, which will be my major at the University of Tennessee." On top of this accomplishment with Riverbend, Junior, Sarah Young, is also now the 2019 Virginia Region 3 Vice President. She ran a campaign while attending states this year to promote herself for this distinguished honor. Young said, "I am so excited to work with the state action team and represent Riverbend." Marketing teachers, Ms Collison and Mr. Gardner were both recognized at state competition as the most outstanding advisors in the state. Riverbend DECA in itself was also rec-



Photos provided by Kelly Collison

ognized as the largest club in Region 3, also achieving Gold Level Certification. This is the highest level of certification depending on the number and type of activities a school-based enterprise completed that was worked on by Lizzie Mueller and Kennedy Horne, advised by Ms. Collison. At DECA Internationals five Riverbend students placed as finalists. These students were seniors, Ethan McCue, Abby Crocker, Lizzie Mueller, Kennedy Horne, and junior, Sarah Young. Mueller and Horne placed top ten and are still waiting for the official scores to be released. DECA hosted a 5k run, with Dillon Fields winning 1st place. Overall, Riverbend DECA did well and they're looking forward to next year's competition in Orlando!

NATIONAL WALKOUT AND MARCH FOR OUR LIVES

Chloe Becker

The Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School shooting in Parkland, Florida has started conversations all over the United States. In addition to the National School Walkout, the March For Our Lives was also held in cities around America. The center of the March was in Washington D.C., but other marches were held in cities all over the country to make it more available to people not living near the nation's capital. The march in Washington was hosted by young people, mostly victims of the shooting in Florida such as Cameron Kasky, Emma Gonzales, and Sarah Chadwick. Speeches were given to the mass of people who attended by both these hosts and guest speakers. Signs were made in support of increased safety measures to protect the children of America. Although some schools participated in the National Walkout to fight for school safety, The March for our Lives was explicitly fighting for an end to gun violence. Its specific objectives include increasing the accessibility of ATF, an increase in background checks for people buying guns, a high capacity gun ban, and a limit to firing power on the streets. ATF is the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives. When making changes to its policies, it is required to make public announcements to the people of America. Currently, the major-

ity of the public does not have easy access to ATF and this is why a major goal of the campaign is to make it more known in order to educate people on issues related to gun control.

Some students at Riverbend used their voices and protested at local marches. Meg Ilijevich, junior, went to the march in Richmond. "I wanted to go to the one in D.C., but I had to be home later that day and it was a little too far away. The march in Richmond was really great and inspiring too, though. I feel very strongly about the issue and am glad that I was able to go to a local city even if it wasn't D.C. to use my voice and hopefully cause a change," she said. Senior, Nile Fisher, attended the march in D.C. and said, "It was really inspiring and powerful to be in an environment where so many people my age were fighting for the same thing."

Memorable guest speakers at the D.C march included Martin Luther King Jr.'s granddaughter, who said, "I have a dream of a gun free world. Period," alluding to her grandfather's famous speech. Samantha Fuentes, a survivor of the Parkland shooting, was so nervous that she had to stop and vomit in the middle of her speech, although she bounced right back up with humor after. Emma Gonzales stood silent on stage for six minutes in solidarity of the time it took for a school shooter to kill 17 of her peers. Other powerful

speeches were given but they all had similar messages- age does not limit anyone's ability to fight for what they believe in and a human being's life is worth more than any gun.

In addition to the march, a national school walkout was held on March 14th in thousands of schools around the country. The walkout lasted 17 minutes, with each minute representing each student killed in the February shooting. Although many schools around the country did not condone students walking out of class, Riverbend allowed students to sign up online and participate safely in the protest. SCA historian, Pia Basilica, said, "I think we collectively agreed this was something important for our school to take part in. Putting all opinions aside, this was something a lot of students were interested in participating in and we serve at the pleasure of the people, so it felt right to do our part as student representatives." At 10 AM, students exited their classrooms and proceeded quietly to the commons where SCA officers led them into the gym. 17 minutes of silence and solidarity then took place in hopes that awareness for school safety would be raised. Principal, Dr. Wright, said, "The SCA sponsored walkout [began] at 10am and [was] a 17 minute march of silence to acknowledge the 17 victims of Stoneman Douglas High School and to promote increased measures for school safety."

GERMAN EXCHANGE

Hayleigh Pickett

From March 14 - March 30, 2018, our school hosted German exchange students for a two week period. The 17 German students we hosted are from Straubing, Bavaria, Germany and their ages range from 15-16, as they are all current sophomores.

There were 17 exchange students at Riverbend this year. The Germans are hosted by Riverbend students and have been given the exchange students a completely new experience. Over the course of two weeks, they took two official group field trips to Washington, D.C, and Williamsburg, but the students visited many different places with their host families: Monticello, Mt. Vernon, Shenandoah, and Virginia Beach.

Senior, Madeline Marshall who hosted Lena said, "My favorite place to take them was colonial Williamsburg because it was cool to see their reactions to seeing what they read about in their English textbooks." Lena Räß, German exchange student said, "My favorite part of the trip was shopping in Potomac Mills." When asked about what she learned through her hosting experience Marshall explained "I learned more about German politics, which is fascinating. It's a lot different reading an article about "How the Teenagers of Germany Feel About Merkel", and actually hearing their individual opinions about her. I loved learning about the German culture,

and how similar, but also different it is. It was also interesting to learn what the German students thought of Americans!"

Frau Mades, German teacher, said, "I love seeing my students interacting with the exchange students and watching them discover their similarities and differences; watching them gain an appreciation of another culture and renew their appreciation of their own culture." Mades has been doing this exchange at Riverbend for five years now and it grows more every year. This program has had an outreach to many different families and students and has truly benefited them all. "Everyone has been overwhelmingly positive about the experience. Many of the students who were involved in the exchange are still in contact with their exchange partners, even after 7 years," Mades said. "We've all benefited from the program,

in both language and culture terms, whether it was practicing German with native speakers, learning how to make German dishes, having the exchange partners and teachers lead discussions and give presentations about their culture and on the other side, we've done the same thing for the school in Germany."



German exchange students and Riverbend Students on a field trip to Washington D.C. on March 18, 2018. Photo provided by Frau Mades