



EAGLE EYES

Volume 10, Number 3

News From Fall Trimester 2002

ERS TO CELEBRATE TEN YEAR ANNIVERSARY

by *Lois Easton, Director of
Professional Development*

Grab your calendar! Circle this date: September 12, 2003. Write in big letters using a magic marker: Eagle Rock's Tenth Anniversary Celebration!

Yes, Eagle Rock turns ten September 12, 2003. It was ten years ago -- September 12, 1993 -- that the first group of students came to Eagle Rock: ER 1. As of today's date, we have reached ER 28, and

in September 2003, we'll have reached ER 30!

The day will begin at 10:00 AM on the Eagle Rock campus with a variety of activities. At 11:00, an official (but very lively, in the Eagle Rock way) ceremony will occur, followed by a fabulous lunch from the Eagle Rock kitchen.

Activities in the afternoon will include music, drama, art, and various demonstrations of learning around the campus -- from computers to the climbing wall.

More information will be forthcoming, but call Lois Easton at 970-586-7109 if you want to be sure your name is on the mailing list.

NEW BROCHURE, WEBSITE, AND VIDEO ABOUT EAGLE ROCK MAKE THEIR DEBUTS

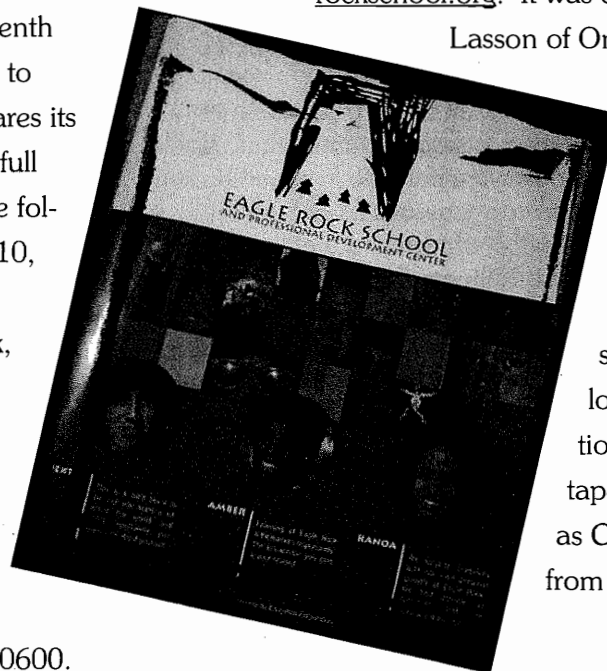
by *Lois Easton, Director of
Professional Development*

As Eagle Rock approaches its tenth anniversary, it seemed appropriate to update all the ways Eagle Rock shares its story. So, there's a new brochure, full color, 16 glossy pages, covering the following topics: bare facts, $8 + 5 = 10$, the campus, the students, a day at Eagle Rock, learning at Eagle Rock, new students, personal growth, student houses, admissions, the Professional Development Center, Eagle Rock graduates, and contact information. If you would like a copy of the new brochure, please call Lisa Spring at 970-586-0600.

The brochure was designed with the help of Omar Rodriguez of Elite Graphics in Denver.

There's also a new website, incorporating the theme of the brochure and many of the pictures and text. You can access the website by going to www.eaglerockschool.org. It was completed with the help of Lee Lasson of On-Line.Colorado.

Finally, there are two new videotapes about Eagle Rock. The longer one at 28 minutes features lots of student interviews and pictures of students and staff in action. The shorter one is about 15 minutes long and features basic information about Eagle Rock. The videotapes (which will soon be available as CDs and DVDs) can be requested from Lois Easton at 970-586-4805.



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Editor:

Lois Easton
P.O. Box 1770
2750 Notaiiah Road
Estes Park, CO
80517-1770

Phone Numbers:

(970) 586-0600

Denver Metro
(303) 442-7655

FAX

(970) 586-4805

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Spanish

Lois Easton
Director of Professional
Development

PERSONAL BREAK- THROUGHS MAKE GLOBAL DIFFERENCE

*by Jennifer Nauck
(Reprinted with permission
from the Friday, November 2
Trail-Gazette, p. A6)*

They caught chickens, made food for monks, made bowls of coconuts and wove mats. They built outhouses for a community with no electricity, and they taught eager Thai children their ABCs. They felt the warmest hospitality in small villages and anger toward foreigners in large cities.

Those who travel abroad as young people break through more barriers than those of typical American adolescence. When they return, those who have done it agree that they grew the most when they were yanked out of their comfort zones and forced to cope with new languages, new food and new ways of life.

For nearly three years, Breakthroughs Abroad has been sending high school age students all over the world on service projects in third world countries. Garth Lewis, formerly of Eagle Rock School, and Doug Frisbee started the non-profit, which sends groups of students on several trips each year. Far from a vacation, students are expected to be committed to their service project and to immerse themselves in the culture of their host country.

This year, seven Eagle Rock students competed for spots on two different trips. The two spots were partially financed by a donation from a generous Estes Park resident. When the whirlwind selection process was finished, Naheem Edmeade, 19, was preparing for three and a half weeks on the small Fijian island of Cicia, and Gennesaret Berrigan, 20, was packing for the village of Ban Mi in Thailand. Edmeade had never been out of the country, Berrigan only when she was a baby.

Eagle Rock had instilled the service ethic in the students, and it was the idea of service that made them go, not merely their sense of adventure and love of travel. On Cicia, Edmeade and his group would help

the village's men build outhouses. Berrigan's group did some remodeling in a Ban Mi school. Part of the trip's tuition helped purchase materials that were needed for the projects. When they weren't working on their respective construction projects both students were involved with teaching and tutoring children in their villages.

"It was unbelievable," said Berrigan. "Until I was on the plane, it didn't hit me that I was going to Thailand."

"I think I'm still waiting for it to hit me," said Edmeade.

When they arrived in their respective countries, Berrigan and Edmeade spent the first few days in orientation with an instructor and their fellow students, learning about their projects, getting to know each other, discussing what they wanted to get out of the experience, setting goals and learning what was expected of them. Not accomplishing their goal was not an option, said Edmeade.

***"I brought back stories, memories
and a whole concept of living life,"
said Edmeade.***

They formulated their first impressions of the other students during orientation, and

they both said that it was obvious that their motivations were quite different from many of the other students on the trip.

"I wanted to learn about a different culture, and to help out a small community," said Edmeade. Berrigan agreed, saying that unlike some of her peers, she wanted to completely immerse herself in the culture, to learn the language, and to make a connection with her host family. Others, she said, were more interested in shopping or partying. "I loved being immersed, being content with the Thai people," she said. "I would go out and help my (host) mom with the meals or the laundry. We didn't really talk, but we'd just be there."

Berrigan said that breaking through the language barrier was not as hard as one might think. As she was learning Thai, she and her family and others in the village communicated through charades.

English is widely spoken in Fiji, explained Edmeade, so the language barrier did not pose so much of a problem. Yet he was still eager to learn words in Fijian, which he often did through identification games

TWO MORE STUDENTS WROTE ESSAYS FOR NATIONAL EDUCATIONAL JOURNAL

In the last issue of "Eagle Eyes," we printed essays that two students -- Luke Sledge and Hayla Delano-Nuttall -- wrote for the leading national educational journal, Educational Leadership. The Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD) printed the essays in the September 2002 issue. Here are essays from Alicia (Ally) Alexander and Patrick O'Friel. Although Ally's essay was not printed in the journal because "it was too hard to cut," according to an editor, Patrick's essay was among the four that were printed.

FROM SEEDLINGS TO A FOREST

by *Alicia Alexander, Student*

My full name is Alicia Alexander, but everyone calls me Ally. I am nineteen and I originate from Chicago, IL but now reside in Orinda, CA. I am also multiracial. My grade schools and high schools were public although my grade school was a magnet school.

My attitudes about education today are very much based on the past. I feel that there is a place for traditional teaching methods, but I feel they are out-dated and ill-used. I feel that education is about the student not the teacher. The teacher has always been a tool in my eyes. But that tool has been put on too high a shelf and given supernatural powers for some odd reason and then made the focus of the classroom. The focus of the classroom should always be on the students.

Public and private schools have been entrusted with seedlings. In order to make each seedling grow, educators need four things. One is passion, the second is training, third money and fourth tools. Without passion, educators won't have a burning desire to help the seedlings grow into saplings, then trees. Without training, they won't have knowledge about how to help the seedlings grow. Without money they can't afford the gardening tools they need. Without tools they have no means to create the environment needed for students' minds to grow.

I want students' brains to grow like the

leaves on a tree, new brain cells unfurling with each new experience and exciting thought. The roots of my students' trees would be the basics, extending from there to the more advanced concepts. My trees can grow without standardized tests. I'll know how to test the richness of the soil of their experiences and concepts retained. I'll know which mineral is more important to the whole tree. My gardening tools will turn the soil and add nutrients needed to



have the saplings grow stronger bark and have better fruit later in life after they mature. My hoe will get rid of the weeds in my classroom such as teasing and laughing when someone gets the wrong answer and the teachers' need to be condescending to the student who doesn't understand. My saplings will have a strong trunk of integrity because teachers leading by example show and reinforce such noble concepts. My trees won't lose leaves in the face of frost from setbacks; they have learned problem-solving skills.

The owners of the tools have banded together as community and have built a large greenhouse around the trees to keep them warm. And when a tree disease comes along and attempts to kill my trees, they will have grown into a forest. The dignity and quality of their education will wrap them tightly, keep them from harm, enable them to get a job they never want to give up. The wind of the workforce will sigh with a gentle laugh because we finally got our recipe right for an education.

Cynthia Elkins
Arts

Mike Glowacki
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*Learning Resources
and Information*

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Scott Rashid
Cook

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*Society and
Social Studies*

Philbert Smith
Director of Students

Terry Tierney
Assistant Facilities

Lan To
Life After Eagle Rock

Alison Trattner
Language and Literature

CARING ABOUT LEARNING

by *Patrick O’Friel, Student*

You ask if students care about learning. Let’s focus that a little differently. Do students care about school? It is my belief that every person loves learning in one way or another -- whether their love of learning matches society’s expectation of education is another question altogether.

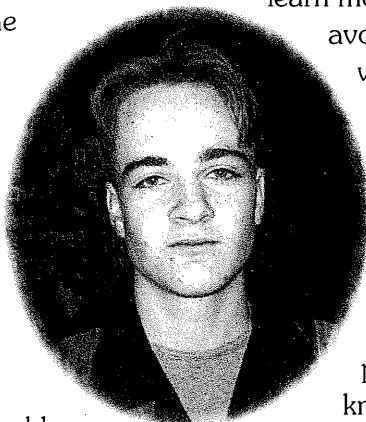
My experience with learning was a bit different. I grew up in a family of seven. After my father’s murder when I was 8 years old, my mother was forced to work 12-hour days, leaving 7 children to do as they pleased. My elder brothers didn’t like school,

so I adopted their attitudes. Even as a kindergartner, I was removed from class because I didn’t want to be there because it was “stupid.” My attendance record for my 9th grade class for a period of 6 weeks was 15 days in school. I already knew pre-algebra, but my teachers persisted in teaching me something that I already knew. One problem seemed to be the pace at which each of us learns.

The system seemed to focus on me and others as numbers, deciding how intelligent we were on the basis of attendance, grades, and GPA. I have always had a feeling this system does not work, because I doubt I was a complete idiot, but the numbers made it seem that way to my teachers and others. Watching this system made me grow very angry, because people who didn’t

even know me were judging my intellect.

I did struggle a bit with outside influences. My friends didn’t like school, but they didn’t know why they didn’t like it. They were consumed in social status. I figured I could kill two birds with one stone, learn more at home, and avoid having to deal with a social status.



Strangely, my truancy and attitude made me “popular” with others; whether it was a “good” popular or a “bad popular,” I wouldn’t know.

Unfortunately my school did not motivate me in any way. I despised everything about school. The major factor that

The system seemed to focus on me and others as numbers, deciding how intelligent we were on the basis of attendance, grades, and GPA.

demotivated me and others, were teachers who taught, “by the book.” It seemed at times that they didn’t understand what they were reading aloud to us. However, I had two teachers who really inspired me to do well. My science teacher Mr. Wong helped me as much as possible. He didn’t yell at me and give me grief about missing class; he compromised and gave me different work. Mr. Kruger taught me architectural design and mechanical drawing; I fell in love with architectural design because of the attitude he had with me. When I showed up to class after being gone for three days, he would politely greet me and show me what I missed, and I excelled in his class. Mr.

Kruger taught according to the attitude of the whole class; some days he would teach at the board; some days he would let us work away on our projects.

One of the reasons I think Eagle Rock is working for me is because of the individuality. I am not judged on my GPA. I am not judged on my test scores or grades because we have few tests and no grades. I am a learner, a person, not a number.

Having small classes is a must for learning. In our classes we find out how much each of us already knows about the subject. Then if I or another knows more than the rest of the students, we teach the rest of the class, until we are to a point that the teacher can open our eyes to the world of what we don’t know. You learn 95% of what you teach, so teaching one another is essential.

Hierarchy was a serious issue with me in my other schools. At Eagle Rock the tables are round to eliminate any front or back of the classroom. Our tables are round so as to make us all equal. Teachers at Eagle Rock are more or less a tool rather than an authority. They are not worried if we doodle or lean back in our chairs; they are worried about our learning, whether or not we are understanding. Our history teacher invites us to attack his lectures. He creates board games such as Concentration so that we can remember Latin vocabulary and Risk so we can remember American history.

No system will ever be perfect, but every system should give learners the tools to learn. That’s education. It is our responsibility to use these tools.

