



# EAGLE EYES

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## HUCKLEBERRY FINN BECOMES BIG RIVER FOR ERS “EXTRAVAGANZA”

by Lois Easton, Director of Professional Development

Students and staff at Eagle Rock presented the book *Huckleberry Finn* in musical form as *Big River* on August 6, 7, and 8. The Tony award winning musical holds true to the novel by Mark Twain (Samuel Clemens) but incorporates a number of stunning musical numbers that were performed by soloists, a chorus, and an orchestra.

All students and staff read the novel in small groups during the first six weeks of the summer trimester. The play’s program notes explain that these groups “plunged into deep exploration of Twain’s classic from every possible interdisciplinary angle.” At the end of the six-week block, groups presented something about their focus to all the other groups. One group did a musical performance using

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## EAGLE ROCK FEATURED IN NEW YORK TIMES

by Lois Easton, Director of Professional Development

The headline read “The High School at the End of the Road” (32). The subhead explained: “Dropouts, truants and simply bored teenagers -- Eagle Rock School in Colorado provides a moral compass for kids who have lost their way, and educators nationwide are paying attention” (32). The article, written by Alex Kotlowitz, appeared in the July 5, 1998, *New York Times Magazine*, and is the first to be published nationally about Eagle Rock.

Kotlowitz, author of two books and numerous articles, including others for the *New York Times*, spent a week in October and a week in December, 1997, at Eagle Rock to research his story. Publication of the story was delayed because Kotlowitz’s second book *The Other Side of the River* was published, and Kotlowitz went on a book tour to publicize it. Kotlowitz’s first book *There Are No Children Here* focused on a family in the Chicago Cabrini-Green projects. His new book focuses on two Michigan towns divided by a

river and racism; it explores how both towns reacted to the murder of a young black boy.

The *New York Times* article focused on Eagle Rock graduate Jerry McGinnes, beginning just before his admission to Eagle Rock and ending with his graduation in December. The article opens with Jerry’s plea to Juvenile Court magistrate, Joseph Coyle, that he be allowed to attend Eagle Rock rather than sent to a youth prison. Kotlowitz then describes Eagle Rock, physically and in terms of the students who are enrolled here. Kotlowitz cites national statistics about dropouts: “Nationwide, 485,000 teenagers dropped out of school last year, according to the U.S. Department of Education” (32). He continues: “In cities like Chicago and New York, barely one of every two entering freshmen graduates in four years” (32).

Kotlowitz differentiates Eagle Rock from other, similar schools because it is “set up by a major corporation.” He focuses on the personal growth, community, and moral aspects of the school. He characterizes the success of Eagle Rock: “Most [students] leave with a moral compass and a piercing inquisitiveness” (32).

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*"Big River" - continued*

hand-made instruments from the time period. Another group staged a courtroom battle over censorship of the book. Another made a presentation on the importance of the river in Twain's classic. Still another provided a feast of food from the day -- ham hocks, collard greens, corn on the cob, watermelon, and home baked pies.

The deep reading and presentations prepared students and staff well for producing Big River. Director **Alison Trattner** (Instructional Specialist in Language and Literature) and **Guy Mossman**, Assistant Director and Art Intern, wrote that the cast and crew "traveled [Big River's] metaphorical tributaries in more ways than we could have imagined: the emotional, intellectual, and technical crises; the stress and strain of rehearsals indoors and out, day and night; the issues of race and controversial language for which the book is notorious."

Trattner and Mossman continued their description of the relationship they saw between the play and life at Eagle Rock: "Above all things emerges the courage of young people seeking life experience and the dazzle and promise of raw talent. . . . This summer we lit out in Huck's footsteps for the 'western' territories to learn something vital about ourselves and each other." Trattner and Mossman invited the audience to "walk away from the show with the same respect for the issues of morality and community that we [have]."

Big River carries on Eagle Rock's tradition of an annual summer extravaganza, following upon Yerma in 1995, Midsummer Night's Dream in 1996, and The Wizard of Oz in 1997. All but Yerma were held in the outdoor amphitheater built by a mathematics class early in the summer of 1996.

Assisting Trattner and Mossman in the production of the play were **Rick Roberts**, Music Director; **Karolee McLaughlin**, Orchestra Director; **Brooks Oswald** and **Brian Hansen**, Lighting; **Richard Gordon** and **Rick Roberts**, Sound; **Christy Hall**, Stage Manager; **Heather Solar**, Makeup; **Garth Lewis**, Set Construction; **Michael**

**Christner**, Special Effects; **Mary Beth Mulcahy** and **Tina Platto**, Costume Design; **Clayton Cooper** and **Tina Platto**, Publicity; **Mary McGuire**, Artistic Director and Props; and **Karelle Scharf**, Program.

**David Nguyen**, a 17-year-old student from San Francisco, played the lead role of Huck Finn. Head of school **Robert Burkhardt** introduced the play and provided the afterword as Mark Twain. **Daniel Mosley**, a 17-year-old student from Chicago, played Jim. **C.J. Bush**, a California cowboy, played Tom Sawyer. Intern **Travis Beck** turned in a suitably malevolent performance as Pap. Two new students, **Casey Whirl** from Nederland, Colorado, and **Vincent Davis** from Bronx, New York became scoundrels as the Duke and King.

Intern **Josh Blomquist** played Judge Thatcher; intern **Guy Mossman** played the role of Silas Phelps.

Other actors had several roles: **Tara Trimmer-Jewell**, **Amy Sedillo**, **Tia Lottie**, **Mat Kasper**, **Howard Knox**, **Tamee Culp**, **Willow Moore**, **Melanie Dowers**, **Jena Argenta**, **Antoinette Macias**, **Talia Alarcon**, **Quitton Anderson**, **Melvin "Saja" Rowland**, **Mahkea Jackson-Sams**, **Haimanot Tesfai**, **Mary Beth Mulcahy**, **Noelle Thomas**, **Danielle Guerra**, **Danielle Williams**, **Elizabeth Halas**, **Melita Smith**.

It has become a tradition at Eagle Rock that some of the children of Eagle Rock staff members participate in the summer extravaganza. This year was no exception. Calling themselves the Rapsallions, **Carly Bowles**, **Everett Bowles**, **Nia Smith**, **Jeryca Phelps**, **Janis McLaughlin**, **Patrick Burkhardt** and **Eileen Burkhardt** danced and sang during the production.

Special effects this year included "flying" canoes and boats, fog, and explosions. **Michael Christner**, Wilderness Instructor, and student **Alex Ortiz** were in charge of these special effects.

## GRADUATE HIGHER EDUCATION ENDOWMENT FUND GROWS

by Dick Herb, Director of Operations

One of two major fund raisers, Graduate Work Day, occurred May 30. Eagle Rock students and staff were joined by four alums, two parents and three faculty children in the effort. A record \$4,922 was raised by a record 79 people responding to another record 38 different jobs. Another dozen jobs had to be turned away. The next Graduate Work Day will be held October 3, 1998.

At this writing, the fund is ten months old and has grown \$11,000 since April. The gain is the result of gifts, the sale of firewood (cut and stacked by new students), Graduate Work Day and continued good fortune in investments.

	<u>May Position</u>	<u>July Position</u>
Total Donors	270	291
Total Gifts	\$87,892	\$98,241
Investment Gain	\$7,752	\$10,840
Awards Written	\$-2,000	\$-2,000
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Endowment Value	\$95,944	\$107,081

If you would like to help make a difference in the life of an Eagle Rock graduate, please consider making a tax deductible gift to the Eagle Rock School Graduate Higher Education Fund, P.O. Box 1770, Estes Park, CO 80517. Or, contact Dick Herb (970) 586-7120.

## AUGUST GRADUATES PLAN FOR LIFE AFTER EAGLE ROCK

by Cristina Pagliuanan, Adjunct,  
Life After Eagle Rock

Eagle Rock is once again celebrating the accomplishments and bright futures of its August graduates as they embark on their lives after Eagle Rock.

In September, **Mat Kasper (Rutherford, NJ, ER-11)** will begin a post-graduate year at the Lawrenceville School in Lawrenceville, NJ. Among other subjects, he will be studying German and Irish literature. He is also looking forward to running cross-country in the fall and playing lacrosse in the spring.

**Sandra Ramirez (Boston, MA, ER-6)** will be moving to Washington, D.C. where she will begin ten months of intensive leadership training and a professional apprenticeship with Public Allies. Public Allies is a non-profit organization dedicated to building strong community leadership among

talented young adults through leadership training and professional apprenticeships in community organizations. In addition to Washington, D.C., Public Allies has offices in San Jose, Chicago, Raleigh/ Durham, Milwaukee, and Wilmington, DE.

**Tara Trimmer-Jewell (Grand Rapids, MI, ER-5)** will also be moving to Washington, D.C. after graduation. She is on the alternate list for a position with Public Allies and is busily searching for a job with another non-profit organization in the D.C. area. Her long range goals include teaching middle school and pursuing a law degree; her hope is to eventually effect positive change in public education through legislation. In her own words, Tara plans on "... having a ball, loving life, and genuinely smiling at least five times a day!"

**Eric Sterkel (Boulder, CO, ER-5)** will be heading to Bozeman, MT to work for a few months before starting a year with Up With People in January. Up With People is an experiential, international learning program that

provides personal and professional growth through a combination of travel, performing arts and community service. Eric is one of three Denver area high school students to have been awarded a \$5,000 scholarship from Up With People to participate in their program and is applying for additional scholarship money to cover the full program cost. Haimanot Tesfai, who will be graduating from Eagle Rock this December, was also awarded a \$5,000 scholarship and plans on joining Up With People at the same time as Eric.

**Mike Moon (Boulder, CO, ER-7)** will most likely be seeking employment in the Boulder area and would also like to spend some time living and working in New York City after graduation. He is interested in computer graphic design as a possible career and is considering applying to colleges to study this field after taking time off from school.

Congratulations to all the August graduates! The Eagle Rock community celebrates your accomplishments and your dreams for the future.

## HUMAN PERFORMANCE DEDICATED TO PHYSICAL FITNESS

by Clayton Cooper, Adjunct Staff,  
Professional Development

It is Wednesday morning, early. As the fog saunters over Eagle Rock and shadows compete for a glimpse of the morning sun, students make their way down to the gate. Every Wednesday--rain, shine, or snow--students start their day at six a.m. with a three-mile run. A few walk, most jog and some sprint to beat their personal best times.

Devotion to personal physical fitness is one of the primary objectives of the Eagle Rock human performance curriculum. According to Colleen Graham, Instructional Specialist, Human Performance Center (HPC), "Not every student needs to be a star athlete. Instead, we offer a variety of courses teaching the students how to make healthy life choices." Specifically, students learn various physical assessment exercises including target heart rate, body/fat composition, and the F.I.T principle (Frequency, Intensity and Time) for work outs. Students in classes such as Training for a Triathlon and Let the Games Begin use these skills to develop and implement a personalized fitness plan.

In addition to personal fitness, safety is emphasized as an integral and unique part of the human performance curriculum. One of the goals of the safety program is to impart "the knowledge and skills necessary in an emergency... minimizing the occurrence and consequences of injury or sudden illness." In addition to completing training for Community CPR and First Aid, students may take a number of Red Cross swimming classes. By taking a life guarding or safety class, many students become certified and can use their skills to benefit the community in the pool, on the climbing wall, or at the challenge course.

Later in the day on Wednesday, students

and staff are gathered on the Field of Dreams to participate in the weekly ritual of intramurals. Depending on the time of year, the sport may be softball, water polo, basketball, soccer or ultimate frisbee. Students both cooperate with each other on house teams and compete with other house teams. Student Adrian Gutierrez feels the intramural program is vital to community. "It provides an opportunity for players of all skill levels to interact in a competitive manner. Everyone does not always get along, but intramurals challenge people to try."

Activities such as intramurals and classes expose students to disciplines they would otherwise not experience. In a class called Sunny Delight, for example, students familiarized themselves with biomechanics and the techniques, rules and strategies of selected human performance activities.

The HPC curriculum meets and often exceeds the Colorado State Model Content Standards, but unlike many traditional high schools, it also incorporates intellectual discipline and aesthetic expression into learning. The Human Performance Center's integration of physical fitness, safety and activities provides a unique framework for the student to explore healthy life choices.

As part of a recent research effort, Eagle Rock attempted to contact every former student; however, we could not reach certain people. If you know how to reach any of the following students contact Carolyn Herb at (970) 586 - 8114.

Emily Embry  
Adin Hung  
Brian Eukel  
LuAnna Matthews  
Rhianna Eusea  
Paul Ritzie  
Mia Ferrell  
Shawnequa Scroggins  
Jaime Gutierrez

**Eagle Rock School**  
(Continued)

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**Colleen Graham**  
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Assistant Facilities

**Mary McGuire**  
Arts, Music,  
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**L'Tanya Perkins**  
Admissions Associate

**Tim Phelps**  
Chef, Instructor

**James Sherman**  
Society and  
Social Studies

**Brian Simoneau**  
Cook

**Philbert Smith**  
Director of  
Students

**Heather Solar**  
Health and Wellness  
Counselor

**Audrey Stevens**  
Registrar

**Alison Trattner**  
Language and Literature

**Bonnie Vavra**  
Business Administration  
Specialist

## NINE NEW INTERNS BEGIN THEIR YEAR AT EAGLE ROCK

by Clayton Cooper, Adjunct Staff,  
Professional Development

For the fourth consecutive year a new group of interns has joined the Eagle Rock community. Exciting possibilities lie ahead for this group of young educators. In the spirit of professional development, some will realize their life-long purpose is teaching. Others will turn to policy making as the means for reform. And still others may venture away from education into the service learning field or "for-profit" sector. Whatever the individual case may be, Eagle Rock interns and former staff serve as ambassadors, carrying forth the values and principles for which the school stands.

Here are the new Eagle Rock interns:

Travis Wright is from Knoxville, TN. At the University of Tennessee he studied community mobilization and organization. Travis also associated himself with philanthropic organizations such as The Points of Light Foundation and Big Brothers/Big Sisters. He will work alongside Garth Lewis in service learning.

The new art intern Marisha Simons currently lives in Colorado Springs, CO. After receiving her Bachelors degree

from Colorado College in art, Marisha worked in a variety of settings. Most recently she has been helping local artists with the business aspect of their careers.

Jon Anderson spent this last winter at Eagle Rock as a student teacher. Through his work in the Human Performance Center, Jon was able to complete a Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of Northern Colorado in kinesiology/outdoor physical education K-12 and social sciences/history. Jon will again assist Colleen and Mike in the Human Performance Center.

Sibyl Diver comes to ERS from San Francisco, CA. For the last year she has been working with inner-city youth in a marine science program in that area. Sibyl received her degree from Stanford after double majoring in Russian language and literature and human biology. Sibyl will work in the science department with Dave Hoskins.

Since graduating from Bryn Mawr College with a degree in history Kathryn Sharpe has been a member of the Urban Servant Corps in Denver, Colorado. While at Bryn Mawr she spent a year studying French in Aix-en-Provence, France. In the past she has been a family advocate, hall advisor, and teaching assistant. Kathryn will assist Lois in the Professional Development Center.

Amanda Paulson graduated from Dartmouth College in 1997 having

studied comparative literature, environmental studies and French. Since then she has worked in a Costa Rican field office for the Nature Conservancy. Originally from New York, Amanda will be teaching with Lee Ann, Celeste, and Alison as the foreign language intern.

Daniel Mirsky is joining the Eagle Rock community as the new social studies intern. Originally from Massachusetts, he received his history degree from Wesleyan University in Connecticut. In 1995 Dan worked with Facing History and Ourselves to improve Holocaust education in public schools. He is coming to Eagle Rock after planning educational trips for schools around the country.

Before coming to Eagle Rock Alexander Head was working as a program coordinator/ instructor at a snowboarding school in Stateline, NV. At the University of Vermont, Alex studied secondary education and English. In his internship, he is excited to combine his various adventure-based experiences with an already alternative English curriculum.

Miranda Johnson, the current social studies intern is staying an extra two weeks to lead diversity training exercises and orient the new interns to life at Eagle Rock. Cristina Paglianaun, the Life After Eagle Rock intern, will stay on for at least another year as an adjunct staff member.

*"New York Times" - continued*

After a description of one of the Gatherings he observed, Kotlowitz explores head of school Robert Burkhardt's career path--particularly its orientation towards service--and cites some of the service projects ("each teenager averages 500 hours of service both on and off campus each year") Eagle Rock sponsors (34). He cites Robert's opinions about values--"Every school has values. Where's your hall pass?"--as well.

Kotlowitz describes the program and curriculum at Eagle Rock and also discusses the effects the Professional Development Center has had on schools and educators around the country. But, mostly, Kotlowitz's article focuses on Jerry--his rough beginning at Eagle Rock, especially on the wilderness trip, and the times Jerry nearly left the school.

He describes Jerry's "epiphany," witnessing an incredible sunset and thinking about how people in jail are not free to see the same thing. Jerry's turnaround came when he refused to participate in some misconduct at Eagle Rock. Kotlowitz conveys the drama of that moment with reference to Robert: "At that moment, Burkhardt knew that Jerry had bought into Eagle Rock's values, its sense of community." Jerry pursued his sunset through art and eventually designed and painted a two-story high mural in the Lodge. At his graduation, he presented Robert with the sketch from which he had worked. Robert responded, "I'm not sure you understand how talented you are" (37). The article ends with Robert's comment on Jerry's apparent success, "He's got as good a start as we can give him" (37).

If you would like a reprint of the article, please call Lois Easton, 970-586-7109 or write her at the Eagle Rock address.

## LINDA SAND-GUEST JOINS EAGLE ROCK AS DIRECTOR OF CURRICULUM

by Lois Easton, Director of Professional Development

After a year-long search, involving a Curriculum Cabinet composed of Colorado educators with expertise in curriculum, Dr. Linda Sand-Guest has been named Director of Curriculum. Linda is a Fort Collins, Colorado, native; she attended Fort Collins High School, did her undergraduate degree in English at CSU, and taught at Fort Collins High School.

She knew Judy Gilbert, Eagle Rock's first Director of Curriculum, when the two of them were among the first twenty-five trainers in a unique, national program called "Assisting Change in Education" sponsored by the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD). Judy Gilbert passed away unexpectedly on June 9, 1997.

Linda earned her Masters of Education at CSU and her Doctor of Education at Harvard, where she studied with Roland Barth, founder of the Principals' Center at the Harvard Graduate School of Education and a friend of Eagle Rock. She leaves a position as Project Coordinator for Rocky Mountain Teacher Education Collaborative (RMTEC) where she has coordinated a multi-million dollar grant funded by the National Science Foundation to align teacher preparation practices in mathematics and science with the way mathematics and science teachers are expected to teach in high schools. Her office consisted of several campuses, including CSU, UNC, and Metropolitan State College of Denver.

Prior to her work with RMTEC, Linda was assistant professor with the University of Denver and adjunct faculty with Regis University. She was chairperson for Language Arts, Coordinator of Gifted Education, and Chairperson of the

Leadership Team at Leshar Junior High School in the Poudre R-1 school district from 1979-1991. Other teaching experience includes work as a team teacher for underachieving students at Gemini Junior High School in Illinois and teacher at Skinner Junior High School in Denver.

Linda has published widely and presented frequently at conferences. Honors include Invited Delegate, Supervision and Curriculum Delegation to Vietnam; Who's Who of American Women; Who's Who in the World; Who's Who in American Education; Honorable Mention, Colorado State Teacher of the Year; Teacher of the Year, Leshar Junior High School; Innovator Award, Phi Delta Kappa. She has belonged to and participated in a number of educational organizations such as the American Educational Research Association, the Colorado Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development; the National Council of Teachers of English; and the Colorado Language Arts Society.

Linda and her husband, Richard, a psychologist and business consultant, are moving to Estes Park. They have two children, a son in college and a daughter working as a flight attendant for United Airlines.

In her letter of application, Linda stated, "It appears to me that Eagle Rock School and I are much alike. We believe in the potential of all persons; we strive to be on the cutting edge of educational reform; we strive to integrate all of life; we work within the present moment; we respect nature and the need of human beings to be connected to her and to one another; and we strive to continue to learn, to evolve, to grow, and to experience the joy, the camaraderie, and the wonder of life. No one will truly replace Judy Gilbert. However, she and I were quite compatible and, if I were to step into her shoes, I feel certain that both you and I would find them a comfortable fit."

Linda began her work at Eagle Rock August 1, 1998.

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