

## First Bi-weekly Adolescent Update!

The adolescent class kicked off the year with a 4-day, 3-night, 32 mile hiking and camping trip along a portion of the Appalachian Trail. The first day, we set out from the intersection of the AT and Route 206, for a short, 4 mile day. We spent the night at Brink Road Shelter, and met several people hiking the entire trail (“through-hikers”). The students spent much of the first evening setting up their tents, filtering water, cooking rice and beans, and acclimating to the joys of living in the woods.

The second day, the students had a longer, 8-mile hike, to a grassy campsite. The students dedicated an exceptional amount of time to trying to build a fire, and after dinner Nicholas and Jake dedicated an equally exceptional amount of time to hanging bear bags containing our food. We had this campsite all to ourselves, except for a few exceptionally large, aggressive bees, sending everyone into their tents at an exceptionally early hour. Overall, it was an exceptional day.

The third day we hiked 7 miles to the Mohican Outdoor Center, where the students were able to kayak, canoe, and swim in the lake. In the evening, everyone took much-needed showers, and “cooked” dehydrated, camping meals. We spent the rest of the night by the fire, making s’mores, and doing some debriefing activities, during which the students had the opportunity to share their thoughts and feelings about the trip.

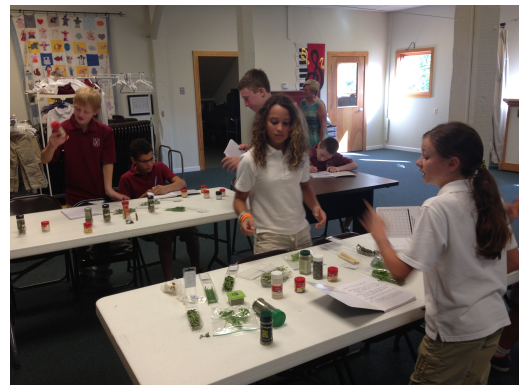


The final day went without a hitch, until reaching the parking lot to find that the van was not there. Forty-five minutes and two stressed teachers later, the van was found not more than 500 yards away. We stopped for ice cream on the way home, before finding ourselves slightly lost, and 30 minutes outside of New York City. We arrived back at school tired, happy, and ready for the weekend.

A special thanks to Joe Russel, Beverly’s husband and an experienced hiker, for

accompanying us on the first two days of our trip.

This week, back at MANJ, the students quickly adjusted to their academic work. We jumped right into our first Occupations (Science) unit, Herbaceous Gardening with Ms. Louise. The students have been working hard on finishing their projects for presentations on Monday. We have also started with our twice-a-week French lessons with Ms. Caroline, a native French speaker. We are starting our



year in math with a Math History unit. We had our opening Math History presentation, and the students have chosen mathematicians from history to research. In two weeks, the students will be acting as their mathematicians in a dramatic presentation. We have introduced both literature and math seminar to the students, both of which we will begin next week.



The adolescents have also been beginning to take charge of their responsibilities around the school, including caring for our new lamb, Violet, taking care of the chickens and collecting their eggs, harvesting from our garden, and general maintenance as needed. In Creative Expression, the students painted the stools that they will be using for their adolescent careers at MANJ. The energy and enthusiasm of the students has been infectious – overall, a great start to the year!