Table of Contents

From the President ............................. 2
The Magic Farm ............................... 3
Choose your own agro-adventure
Out of His Shell .............................. 7
A boy is more than his behavior
Farm School Goes Prime Time .......... 11
A sweet premiere
The Face of Philanthropy ................. 12
Snapshots ....................................... 13

Written by: David Johnson
Photography: Joan Crooker, Cara Dukelow, David Johnson
Designed by: Erich Asperschlager
Edited by: Robin Boyd

Thank you to R.C. Brayshaw and Company for their generous contribution toward production costs. rcbrayshaw.com

Horizons is the quarterly magazine of Crotched Mountain, one of New Hampshire's most respected non-profit organizations, dedicated to serving people with disabilities. Learn more at cmf.org.

To support Crotched Mountain through a gift, visit cmf.org/give or call 603-831-8224.
THE PLACE WHERE GREAT THINGS GROW

Every day I walk the campus of Crotched Mountain School. I treasure these “walkabouts,” and not just because I log some serious steps. These trips allow me to soak in the natural beauty of our milieu—the bright, open, blue sky (dotted by cruising eagles, of course), the sight of mountains off in the distance, the lush green grass. Lately, however, there’s been a new stop in my daily travels: the Farm School garden, which is, right now, alive with vibrant colors.

Seriously, take a look at those flowers. While no picture can do justice to an array like this, hopefully you can get a sense of the green-thumb grandeur that has overtaken a good portion of our school property.

What’s especially great about these flowers is how they came to be. As with anything in Farm School, students are front and center, digging their hands into the dirt, planting the seeds, sifting the compost, watering religiously, and culling the weeds.

And then, just like that, they can see the fruits of their endeavours, pushing out through the soil and filling our school grounds with color. That’s the magic of Farm School.

That’s the magic of vocational programming at Crotched Mountain.

Our students are able to build real-world skills, from gardening, egg-collecting, and syrup-making to recycling, shredding, delivering, and much more in our other vocational offerings.

We’ve got students doing work for mechanics and landscapers and volunteering for Meals on Wheels and the local animal shelter. The opportunities are endless; all it takes is some creativity and willingness to plant the seeds of success. And with just a little tending, something remarkable will bloom.

Thank you to all of our supporters who have contributed to making Crotched Mountain School the place where great things grow.

Michael Coughlin
President and CEO of Crotched Mountain
It’s a beautiful day at Crotched Mountain School. The clouds have long since rolled out, leaving behind an expansive clear, blue sky. Birds of prey zigzag on the horizon. You stroll past the school entrance, heading towards the glass-faced structure of the Media Center. As you walk, you hear a mix of sounds: clucking and cawing and crowing. You draw closer to a greenhouse, tucked behind an array of brilliant wildflowers. Eight foot tall sunflowers reach skywards. Garden hoses wind around the flower beds like green, coiled serpents. The whole area is abuzz with life—plant and animal alike.

You’ve arrived at Farm School.
**SECTION 2: THE ANIMALS**

You are drawn toward the cacophony coming from the across the road. You see fences and small buildings. Children are mingling nearby, holding buckets and baskets to collect eggs. It is obvious there are chores to be done today and the students are eager to oblige.

In one pen, turkeys and ducks hang out together. The ducks quack away as they splash in the small plastic pool, while turkey hens dawdle nearby. A few brave ones saunter up to you, nosing their beaks into your hand, checking if you’ve got food.

You notice one turkey in particular, a large male with an odd gait. He appears to be the tom of the flock. You wonder what his story is...

Go to **SECTION 5**

**SECTION 3: THE GREENHOUSE**

You enter the greenhouse. The temperature spikes at least ten degrees. Besides warmth, the other notable sensation is the smell: dirt and earth, maybe a hint of decay. It’s organic.

Regal tomato plants stretch from floor to ceiling, heavy with green orbs that are just now flirting with the concept of ripening.

Smaller seedbeds in plastic trays line the shelves. Sprouts are emerging from the soil, no doubt the result of a disciplined watering routine. This place is teeming with the activity of life, lush and green.

You notice a few Crotched Mountain School students enter the greenhouse. They pick up their watering pails, fill them from the nearby sink and begin doing their rounds. Tipping, pouring, quenching.

You see that many aspects of real-world skill-building are at play here: motor skills, rule-following, patience, punctuality, respect, mindfulness and, of course, witnessing the very real fruits of one’s labor. You nod to yourself, impressed. It’s the complete vocational package.

That’s when you see the Farmer’s Market sign. Farm School has taken their wares to nearby Peterborough.

If you want to jump in your car and drive to the Farmer’s Market go to **SECTION 6**

If you want to walk towards the animals go to **SECTION 2**
SECTION 4: THE PICNIC TABLE

You walk to the picnic table just in front of the greenhouse where several students, teachers, and staff are huddled. Matt Nevins’ class has come to Farm School and they’re working with Farm School teacher Caitlyn Hatzell to make their own pickles.

Everyone gathers around as Caitlyn takes them through the process, soaking the homegrown cucumbers in brine and adding the special mix of Crotched Mountain herbs and spices.

You try a sample—delicious!

If you want to walk towards the animals go to SECTION 2
If you want to investigate the greenhouse go to SECTION 3

SECTION 5: RALPH THE TURKEY

The story goes: Before Ralph there was Tom. And Tom wasn’t the nicest turkey you’d ever find. He was irritable and ill-tempered. Just a high-maintenance turkey all around. He was sent to another farm.

Word came down that a friend of Crotched Mountain had a turkey she was willing to donate. Beth Simpson, Farm School Coordinator, and two students hopped into the pick-up one day and drove thirty minutes to the farm. There they met Ralph. Gentle, friendly, and laid-back, the perfect turkey for Crotched Mountain School. Working together, Wyatt and Colby, the two students, guided Ralph into the cage, hefted it onto the pickup, and everyone drove back together.

That afternoon, Ralph was introduced to the flock, where he assumed the new mantle of “tom,” where his duties included the occasional aggressive gobble to keep predators at bay and, when the mood grabs him, do his part in making some new turkeys.

You give Ralph a polite nod, silently welcoming him to his new home. He looks at you with typical turkey indifference.

Say, what’s going on over at the greenhouse?

Go to SECTION 3
SECTION 6: THE FARMER’S MARKET

You pull into the main parking lot of Monadnock Community Hospital in Peterborough, NH. You follow the signs for Fresh Chicks Farmer’s Market, a weekly fixture in the summer. You park and walk over to the market, which reveals a parade of tents, housing local vendors peddling their home-grown goods.

You find the Crotched Mountain Farm School tent. Beth Simpson, the Farm School Coordinator, is overseeing the operation, flanked by several students. In front of the crew is a vast arrangement of tomatoes and beans and kale and cucumbers and summer squash the size of cinder blocks. It is quite the spread.

Note: Summer squash the size of cinder blocks is absolutely inedible. How about summer squash the color of sun.

“I like harvesting vegetables,” Lang, a Crotched Mountain School student says to you, as he organizes the produce. “But today I’ve really liked communicating with the public because I’m trying to work on that kind of stuff. I’m also able to work on math skills and speech and budgeting.”

Impressed, you happily open your wallet and purchase enough fresh vegetables to fill your trunk. You bid farewell, climb back into your car and drive back to Crotched Mountain School. You hike the accessible trails, munching on a delicious cucumber. It’s been a good day.

THE END
This is not going to be a story about The Hits. The Hits are incidental. They are a means of expression. They do not represent the totality of the individual. The Hits do not define who the boy is. Rae is more than The Hits. Much more.

Raekwon is 16 years old. His home is in the Greater Boston area, but he’s spent close to half his life in Greenfield, New Hampshire, at Crotched Mountain School. Rae has severe autism, which has catalyzed a particularly pernicious method of coping and communication: self-injury.

By the time Rae came to Crotched Mountain School for his second admission—after moving back and forth from the public school and Children’s Hospital—he was averaging approximately 1,000 hits a day. It was probably more. Staff lost count.

“We could not track every single one,” says Kris Horton, Rae’s residential program manager at Crotched Mountain. “It ended up being easier to measure the intervals of time when he wasn’t hitting himself.”

For this second time around, there was initial skepticism about bringing Rae back. The number one concern—as it has always been with Rae—was safety. Was Crotched Mountain School capable of ensuring that Rae and his staff could be safe?

But there was nowhere else to go. Rae’s family had found no other schools, which would likely have resulted in only one alternative: a restrictive hospital placement. So the Crotched Mountain team put together an ambitious plan, which included a full complement of related services to include Applied Behavior Analysis, psychology, speech, occupational therapy, therapeutic recreation, orientation and mobility and music therapy all wrapped up in a 2:1 staffing model.
The district signed off. The family signed off. The plan was set.

Rae was coming back.

For those first few months, Rae was the Mystery Man, the kid who lived in his own place, rarely ventured out and received all of his education in the home. When people did catch glimpses of him, they saw a small, lean boy wearing arm and leg immobilizers (light plastic sheaths that limited his ability to punch or knee himself in the head), a modified kickboxing helmet (think Darth Vader-like headgear), maybe an oral motor device (to protect his tongue), who was flanked at all times by two staff members.

“The focus in therapy was on maintaining his safety via management of all his protective equipment,” said Gwen Rumburg, Rae’s occupational therapist. “We were trying to get him to participate in activities without hurting himself.”

If you did happen to witness one of his behaviors—and they were frequent in the beginning—you would have seen self-inflicted ferocity that you wouldn’t soon forget. The staff would intercede immediately, offering up their hands and forearms as shields to absorb the blows. Soon after they started to use large, custom foam pads to intercept The Hits.

“You spent the day blocking,” Kris says. “Rae seeks reactions. He feeds off them. They fuel his behavior. And because he’s a genius—and I’m not kidding about that—he would be able to control his environment and control his staff. He’s forgotten more about behavioral management than most of his staff would ever know.”

“For that first year, there were no demands,” says Chris Leary, Rae’s teacher at Crotched Mountain School. “All we asked of Rae was to ‘just communicate what you need.’ He probably averaged about 20 words a day that first year.”

The team—which Kris labeled as the clinical equivalent of the 1992 Olympics Dream Team—met twice a week, five hours total, for the first year. They combed through data, pored through the reports and worked to pinpoint the source of Rae’s behaviors.

To the best of their clinical ability, the team deduced that these hits were Rae’s way of controlling his environment, of communicating his displeasure with demands that disrupted a routine (Rae would often burrow in his couch or tightly wrap his arms around himself for the sensory input, and any demand, even as innocuous as “time to eat” or “go to the bathroom,” that threatened that posture could trigger an episode).

Rae’s days were deconstructed down to the minute. The team crafted three-inch thick binders that outlined Rae’s schedule, complete with every response
and behavior staff could expect. Then came the tireless integration of all this information; staff, therapists, and teachers needed to be on more than the same page—they needed to be on the same word in the same sentence in the same paragraph of the same page.

“We all became predictable,” Kris said. “That meant Rae had a greater sense of comfort in knowing what would happen. And that meant he would feel safe.”

For Rae, it meant more than feeling safe; he needed to articulate it. And so, several months ago, when the conflict between control through adverse behavior and being safe would begin to broil inside him, when he noticed that he was wrapping himself tightly with his arms as he faced the crossroads, he would say to himself: “I be safe, Rae. He would make the choice, he would assert control, he would practice mindfulness.

He would be safe.

After the first year of residence-based education at Crotched Mountain, Rae finally entered Chris Leary’s class. For nine months he stayed in the same room, working on simple academic challenges like puzzles, voice recognition, object/shape identification, and tactile icon recognitions using a communication device. As he grew more and more comfortable with the routine and the environment, Rae turned his attention to a new challenge: macaroni and cheese.
Rae’s team implemented a plan to teach him how to make his own mac and cheese, which involved “reverse engineering” the process; Rae would start by eating the mac and cheese and the team would work backwards, teaching him to mix, to add the butter, to add the cheese packet, to turn off the microwave, to turn on the microwave, and all the way back to the opening the box. Eventually Rae was doing the whole process, in order, by himself.

It had taken two years.

Today Rae has no helmet (by his own choice). He walks throughout the school and around the campus. He makes frequent trips into the community. He waters plants at the Farm School. He is a reliable, active participant in the afterschool music program. “Rae absolutely loves music,” Kris says, “anything with rhythm.”

“It was all positive interventions,” Chris says. “It was tone of voice. It was body language. These changes were made slowly and with intent by the whole team.”

“A lot of other places might have worked with Rae in a punitive fashion,” Kris adds. “But that’s not us. That’s not Crotched Mountain.”

“Rae is a work in progress and I always marvel at how much effort he has put into his success” Gwen says. “Life used to appear very difficult and painful for him but now he looks like a happy, secure teenager who is thriving.”

There are days when there are no Hits. On a bad day there might be twenty.

But this story is not about The Hits. This story is about Rae. About how he found control; how he discovered equilibrium; how he made himself safe.

And how he, for the first time, a few days ago, walked into the Farm School chicken coop, an environment he had never ventured into before, gathered eggs amidst the unpredictable chaos of squawking, flapping birds, brought the eggs to the home economics room in the school, turned the water to boil, dropped his eggs in, removed the shells when they were cooked, mashed up the eggs, applied his favorite ranch dressing, and carried his meal to the table.

He sat down and began to eat, scooping forkfuls of his custom egg salad, enjoying his lunch, only pausing, more and more infrequently, to speak a small sentence with enormous power.

“I be safe, Rae.”  ■

Left: Beth and Rae prepare egg cartons
Who says there’s nothing good on TV? This spring, NBC Boston paid a visit to Crotched Mountain School for an eyewitness report on our sweet student-powered syrup operation.

The call came in at 8:30 a.m. on Friday, March 16. It was a reporter for NBC Boston and she was interested in doing a story about the syrup program at Crotched Mountain School. She and her cameraman would be in Greenfield in three hours.

And with that, Farm School sprang into action.

By the time Kristen Pope, the reporter with NBC, pulled up to the campus, Beth Simpson, Farm School Coordinator, and two Crotched Mountain School students, Langdon and Colby, were lined up and prepping for their first encounter with regional news-casting.

For the rest of the day, the Farm School Team took their guests on a filmed and guided tour of the syrup-making experience at Crotched Mountain School—from the clustered sugar bush with tubes draping the maples and funneling sap into massive barrels to the wood-fired evaporator in the sugar house on Terrion Way.

It was an impressive sight, and one that Kristen and company marveled at. Here was full-scale maple syrup production, start to finish (the endgame being pints and quarts of amber goodness bottled, labeled, and sold), that Crotched Mountain School students have a hand in the entire way.

Indeed, syrup season is a Farm School highlight and the hard work has paid off in more than just PR. Last year, Crotched Mountain won Best Syrup in New Hampshire (School Division) from the New Hampshire Maple Producers Association. The prize money was used to help purchase a brand new evaporator.

“I love being a part of a team, because I’m surrounded by people that I like a lot,” Colby said to Kristen in his interview for the story. “It’s fun doing these activities because I’m a hands-on learner.”

Watch the NBC segment at cmf.org/nbcsyrup
Hitching Their Wagons to Crotched Mountain Kids

A special thanks to the Starlight Children’s Foundation of New England and Disney Worldwide Outreach for once again donating high quality, terrific toys and art supplies to our Crotched Mountain children, something they have been doing since 2004. Donations last fiscal year included several Radio Flyer Wagons, which will no doubt illicit some wonderful childhood memories for many of our supporters.

In addition to the swell wagons, Starlight and Disney also sent along all kinds of puppets, coloring books and pencils, and even included a Darth Vader mask!

With such generous support from corporations and foundations, Crotched Mountain is able to provide the very best to children with disabilities, whether that support comes to us as in-kind donations or direct financial gifts.

Let’s face it. Sometimes there is nothing better than playing with a little red wagon.

To find out how your business or foundation can support Crotched Mountain, please contact Kathy Waters, director of fundraising, Kathy.Waters@CrotchedMountain.org, 603-547-1485.

A CHILD’S FUTURE. YOUR LEGACY.

Setting up a charitable gift annuity with Crotched Mountain is a simple way to make a meaningful contribution to the work you care about, and you receive a fixed stream of income for life.

As of July 1, 2018, Crotched Mountain increased its payout rates for charitable gift annuities, with new rates above 5% if you are 65 or older. Now, with a new gift annuity, you can receive the new, higher rate, guarantee a lifelong income, and save money on income and capital gains taxes. Best of all, you will offer a child a life of unimagined possibilities.

NEW GIFT ANNUITY RATES
Effective July 1, 2018

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ONE BENEFICIARY</th>
<th>TWO BENEFICIARIES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AGE</td>
<td>RATE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65</td>
<td>5.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75</td>
<td>6.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>85</td>
<td>8.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To learn more about these and other giving opportunities, please contact Doreen Baker: 603-547-1482 or 603-831-8232 Doreen.Baker@CrotchedMountain.org. Learn more at cmf.org/plannedgiving
Sam and her long-time paraeducator Hope celebrate a beautiful commencement celebration for the Crotched Mountain School Class of 2018. It was a perfect June day for a graduation, as families, friends, teachers, staff, and students filled Carter Hall to share in the achievements. Following the ceremony, guests enjoyed a special luncheon in the brand new student dining area.

Watch the graduation video at cmf.org/grad2018
On July 11, we welcomed New Hampshire Governor Chris Sununu and the Executive Council to the Crotched Mountain campus for one of their traveling summer sessions. Here, the Governor takes a moment to pose with our own David Moulton. Special thanks to Executive Councilor David Wheeler for making it all possible.

A GOVERNOR’S WELCOME

ANOTHER MAGICAL STORY TO TELL

Once again, our great friends at Story Land welcomed staff and students with open arms, providing free passes for a day of fun at the iconic New Hampshire amusement park. For over 50 years, Story Land and Crotched Mountain has had a rewarding relationship (all money given to the Story Land wishing well goes to support programs at Crotched Mountain School) and this year proved to be another wonderful chapter. Christian’s smile tells the whole story.

Watch the fun at cmf.org/storylandquest.
Your company can make an extraordinary impact on the lives of extraordinary people!

For nearly 70 years, Crotched Mountain School has served children with unique needs, helping write incredible stories of success and independence. Your company can write your own chapter. Your employees can share in the saga.

Partnering with Crotched Mountain offers:

- Impact matched with your company's values and social goals
- Unique, rewarding volunteer and team-building opportunities
- Curated content to deploy to your internal and external audiences
- Custom company partner pages on our website
- Networking with like-minded community changemakers
- Invitations to inspiring, exclusive events

Visit cmf.org/impact to learn more!

603.547.1486