

# Teachers inspire pupils through art display, powerful piece discusses age-old questions

By Adam Crozier

Teachers **Ryan Teverbaugh** and **Alan Bundza** came up with an idea for what the duo calls Mount "Rap"more, a parody of South Dakotan landmark Mount Rushmore.

The idea began in a 2009 email chain. Geography teacher **Nate Orme** says, "This has been forged through fire for about a decade." Among those who weighed in were Teverbaugh, Orme and teachers **Patrick Chambers** and **Joe Cunningham**. Despite the many minds, Orme said they "never settled" on who would inhabit Rapmore. Until now.

Over seven months, Teverbaugh entertained his more peculiar thoughts when he and Bundza chilled together outside school. That's when Mount Rapmore came up again. Now Bundza is turning Teverbaugh's vision into what both hope will be an inspiration.

This work-of-art swaps George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Theodore Roosevelt and Abraham Lincoln for Dr. Dre, Tupac Shakur, Lupe Fiasco and Kendrick Lamar. Bundza envisions Mount Rapmore as a painted mural of musical legend, mountain and blue sky.

Bundza works on it in his limited spare time. Once finished, photos of Rapmore will be posted on [www.fal-](http://www.fal-)

consfocus.org or students may see Rapmore in its permanent home: Teverbaugh's classroom, 11G.

Teverbaugh, a 12-year social studies teacher, combined his knowledge for hip-hop with his expertise in history and political science. He compared each president's and rapper's careers.

As the first president, George Washington established precedents in policy and politics. Dr. Dre is a pioneer as well, an original gangster or "OG," as Teverbaugh put it. Dre's production and style throughout the years influences pop today. Teverbaugh notes that Dre discovered Tupac, Kendrick, Snoop Dogg and Eminem.

Thomas Jefferson wrote the Declaration of Independence. The document itself and Jefferson's all-out rejection of the status quo, mirrors Tupac's career. He took beef and gave it, Teverbaugh said. The rallying of a nation because of Jefferson's revolutionary words is similar to how the divide of East Coast versus West Coast rap started to blur upon Tupac's death, added Teverbaugh calling the rapper arevolutionary of writing and sound.

But where Jefferson was a revolutionary, Roosevelt was an evolutionary. The political progressive ushered in his

square deal policy, creating government support programs and expanding the precedent of government involvement in civilian life, according to Teverbaugh.

Roosevelt's counterpart is evolutionary artist Lupe Fiasco, whose content diversifies and increases at a faster rate than other rappers, Teverbaugh said. While the 26th U.S. president said, "Speak softly and carry a big stick," Fiasco's driving force is his smooth delivery, strong lyrics and commitment to social issues.

Teverbaugh paired Lamar with Lincoln, noting both built or build compatibility among diversity. Lincoln preserved the Union. Lamar bridges his varied fans through imaginative storytelling and loaded diction, while providing insights into his own cultural hardships. "Kendrick is the great unifier," Teverbaugh said. "When he speaks, everybody listens. Even Taylor Swift and Adele are like, 'Dude's legit.'"

Examining this mural may help students stop and think about power -- in art and all of life, said Orme.

"I think any artistic work gives us a choice to question," he said. "If you were to think about Mount Rapmore, is that a final tally? Who gets to decide who belongs and who doesn't?"



Senior Emily Ray and Kyle Kilgore play Connect Four during their free time in Maggie Cooper's class (Photo by Olivia Lighty).

## Best Buddies builds budding bonds that leave behind brilliant friendships

By Olivia Lighty

Like any student who joins a club, members of Best Buddies join because of the friendships and the connections they make outside the classroom, according to sponsor **Maggie Cooper**.

Best Buddies president, junior **Andrea Alvarez** said the club is an organization that promotes inclusion for people with an intellectual developmental disability. However, to most of the students, Best Buddies is more than just a club. It gives members a chance to make new friends and have wholesome high school memories while also helping develop life skills, such as communicating with other people.

According to Cooper, Best Buddies allows her students to make new friendships and be apart of a high school club.

"A lot of my students, this is the only classroom they see unless it's the Falcon Cafe. Unless I can pull kids in here, they don't get that social interaction with peers, like just walking through the hallways, standing in line at lunch, or walking out to the bus."

Cooper believes Best Buddies has helped her students communicate better with other peers as well as gives her students a friend they can see outside of school.

A member of Best Buddies and one of Cooper's students, senior **Emily Ray** has been in Best Buddies all four years of high school. Ray said being in Best Buddies has taught her "how to be a good friend."

This year, Ray is learning how to be a good friend to her buddy, Alvarez. Together, the two go to football games and theater productions. Ray, grinning from ear to ear, explains that she got to help Alvarez manage the basketball team during their season last year.

Senior **Cole Knoblett**, also a four year member of Best Buddies, feels that Best Buddies has given him a new perspective on how he sees other people as well as himself.

"I think it has made me a much more tolerable person. It's allowed me to see different perspectives for different people and not just be so stuck in my own frame of mind that I don't get to see beyond what my eyes see."

Together, Knoblett and his buddy senior **Dylan Reed** have bonded over their love of wrestling and video games. Knoblett, who states that Reed and he became friends instantly, enjoys hanging out with Reed outside of school.

**"I think it has made me a much more tolerable person."**  
-Cole Knoblett

"We really like to go bowling a lot, he's a better bowler than I am, I'll admit that. I like to take him to get ice cream sometimes, and we both really like movies a lot."

Reed, a one-year member of Best Buddies, feels that Best Buddies has helped him "better communicate with other people." Reed said that his favorite quality about his buddy is being able to talk to Knoblett about different games that they have in common. However, after Reed graduates he states that he will miss his classmates and his friends that he's made in the club and in class.

As for Ray, she will miss being in the Homecoming parades each year because she loves to hand out her favorite candy: Skittles.



Art illustration by Adam Crozier