



HERONFIELD ACADEMY

April 6, 2021

Dear Heronfield Families,

So I played my first games of nine square yesterday, and I have lived to tell the tale. Mr. Jordan wasn't feeling well, and as someone who has coached a number of youth and high school sports, I was glad - even eager - to cover his seventh grade classes as the day began. Among many options, the kids in both classes quickly chose to play nine square, an expanded version of four-square that's truly a Heronfield original, developed by Mr. Jordan and a student some years back.

I've seen nine square many times this year, but I haven't ever worked out the exact rules. All set with my athletic clothes and running shoes, I shared that I'd be playing also, and that I'd just figure it out while waiting my turn in line. Two of the great things about this version of a playground classic is a) that there are nine people involved at all times, and b) that the line moves quickly. So in a matter of minutes, or even seconds, I was in the mix. And then I moved up a square. Why? I'm still not sure, but then it happened again. And the ball skipped through my square, the students realizing that I was out before I did. And as I looked up I saw the girl who did it looking rather apologetic, feeling a bit bad that she'd eliminated - gasp! - the Head of School. I know that Mr. J, Mr. King and others jump into the squares from time to time, but it seemed like this was a fairly rare event. Was she in trouble? Would her grades take a hit? Of course not - it's all in good fun, I said, as I skipped to the end of the line.

Like many games, nine-square is pretty easy to learn but, boy, it takes a while to get the hang of it. I kept entering the game and progressed my way around a bit, occasionally making a decent play but more often benefiting from the student's kindness and/or fear as they seemed to steer a bit clear of me. Truth told, I was still eliminated on occasion, almost balancing things out with a nice play here and there. And then, it happened. I made it all the way to the ninth square, the server's place in the middle of all the others. And while there certainly wasn't a great ovation, I did hear a 'good job, Mr. Turner' and a clap or two. Subdued as it might have been, it was a nice acknowledgement for someone just glad to join in the fun.

It's clear that one can get pretty good at nine square, but I think I'm a long way off at this point. One might hope my past as a hockey goalie would help, but should one stand back in the square, the better to have time to react, or stand aggressively close to the action, leaving oneself open to being hit? Who can say? In any case, it's lots of fun. Credit to Mr. Jordan for creating a most inclusive and enjoyable game, and credit to the students who made an old fellow feel welcome.

Not a bad way to begin a Monday, and here's wishing everyone a good week ahead!

Warmly, John

CONFERENCES:

Heronfield conferences via Zoom will be held on Friday, April 16. There will be NO classes that day and students should participate from home. Last week, a SignUp Genius email was sent, please contact Amy Green at frontoffice@heronfield.org if you didn't receive an email.

SPRING FUNDRAISER:

Tickets for our Spring Fundraiser, **A Night on the Farm**, will go on sale next week! Please open the Save the Date attached.

COMMUNITY MEETING and SANCTUARY SPEAKERS

This week: Mr. Clark hosted the finals of the geography bee today; tomorrow, Mr. Turner talks about connecting with nature in our National Parks. Up next week: Meggie Donovan's cousin shares her work studying amphibians for Tuesday's Community Meeting. Amadou Talla of Phillips Exeter Academy joins us again for Wednesday's Sanctuary; he will speak on the Muslim holy period of Ramadan, which begins next Monday.

HERONFIELD GEAR

The online store is now open for all your HA gear. Click [here](#) to see our Spring collection. The deadline is TODAY- **Tuesday, April 6** so get your orders in now!

Important Dates:

Wed, April 7: Afternoon 7th Grade TEA 2:15-3:15pm

Thurs, April 8: Game Time 2:15-3:15pm

Afternoon 7th Grade TEA 2:15-3:15pm

Fri, April 9: Game Time 2:15-3:15pm

Mon, April 12: 6th Grade Arts Night 5:30pm

Wed, April 14: Afternoon 8th Grade TEA 2:15-3:15pm

Thurs, April 15: Afternoon 8th Grade TEA 2:15-3:15pm

Game Time 2:15-3:15pm

Fri, April 16: Conference Day: **NO CLASSES**

6th Grade Game Night 6-8:00pm