

# THE ROYALSTON COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

October 2004



Volume VII, Issue VIII

A PUBLICATION OF THE FRIENDS OF THE PHINEHAS S. NEWTON LIBRARY, ROYALSTON, MASSACHUSETTS

Even a sleepy Town like Royalston has had its share of major disasters. Most of downtown South Royalston burned in 1904; the hurricane of September '38 flooded homes and factories as well as blew the steeple off the First Congregational Church; and Doane's Falls has been the site of deadly accidents too many times. Less seriously but still impressively, a breached beaver dam two weeks ago closed the main road east of the Town center causing a half million dollars in damage. In all of these cases, Town officials and citizens have stepped up and worked hard to lessen the damage. For the recent speedy Rt. 68 repairs, Keith Newton of the DPW, the Selectmen, Sen. Brewer and the taxpayers of Massachusetts have earned residents' crater sized thanks.

## Calendar of Events

October 3 Sunday  
1:00 p.m. **South Royalston School Reunion** at the Royalston Community School.

October 4 Monday **Child Health Day**

October 6 Wednesday  
Noon **Early dismissal RCS.** Lunch served.

October 7 Thursday  
3:30 p.m. **Friends of the Library Meeting.** Discuss library support, upcoming library events, and the next newsletter.

October 11 Monday **Columbus Day Observed**  
Library, schools, post office and banks closed

October 13 Wednesday  
2:00-4:00 and 7:00-8:00 p.m. **Last Chance to Register to Vote in the Presidential and State elections.** Mail in registrations must be postmarked no later than Oct. 13, 2004.

10:48 p.m. **New Hunter's Moon**

October 15 Saturday  
**Ramadan**, the ninth and holiest month of the Islamic year; the annual period of fasting and atonement begins at sunset this evening and continues through November 14.

October 21 Thursday  
7:00 p.m. **Trustees of the Phinehas S. Newton Library meeting.**

October 22 Friday  
Noon **early dismissal for Monty Tech** – Tour Day in afternoon

October 24 Sunday **United Nations Day**  
1:30 p.m. **Friends of the Library Nature Walk** to Royalston Falls. Appropriate for all ages. Kick fallen leaves, follow glacial potholes and climb a natural stone arch. About 3 mi. round trip. Mostly flat. Pre-register at the library 978-249-3572.

October 25 Monday  
**No School, Monty Tech** - Tour Day and Career Awareness Night

October 27 Wednesday  
10:00 a.m.–12:00 noon **Free flu shots** at the Town Hall sponsored by the Council on Aging. The flu shots are free and are open to all Royalston residents. Seniors are especially encouraged to attend.

7:30 pm **Ladies' Benevolent Society business meeting** at the home of Patience Bundschuh.

8:00 pm **LBS Memorial Concert**, sponsored by the Ladies' Benevolent Society, in the Ballroom at the Maples on the Common with several local musicians. Public is invited. Refreshments. 249-5993 for info.

8:06 p.m. Beginning of a **total eclipse of the moon** which should be visible in Royalston. Totality takes place from approximately 10:23 p.m. to 11:45 p.m, and the event is complete at 2:03 p.m. The total eclipse of the full Hunter's Moon should make for a dramatic evening of sky watching.

11:07 p.m. **full Hunter's Moon**

October 30 Saturday  
5:00 - 7:00 p.m. **Town Halloween Party**, sponsored by the Royalston Police Dept.

Bedtime: Don't forget to **"fall back" an hour on clocks** before you retire this evening. Also put brand new, fresh batteries in all house alarms: smoke detectors, carbon monoxide detectors, radon detectors. If the removed batteries still have some life, give 'em to the kids for their toys.

October 31 Sunday **Halloween**  
2:00 a.m. **Daylight Savings Time Ends.** Turn clocks back one hour.

5:00 – 7:00 p.m. **Official Trick or Treating Hours.** Library Open.

November 1 Monday  
10:30 a.m. **Preschool Story Time Costume Party** at the library. Children (and their caregivers) are welcome to dress in their costumes and join the others for stories and treats. Registration is not necessary.

November 2 Tuesday **Presidential Elections.**  
Don't Vote? Don't Complain! Don't forget to register by Oct. 13.

November 5 Friday  
5:00 pm **Village School Lantern Walk**, Pot Luck Supper and Family Contra Dance at Town Hall.



## **An important message from Rebecca Krause-Hardie, Royalston Tax Collector**

**First a thank you** - to the almost 100 people who responded to the tax amnesty program. We were able to clear up \$92,968 (~ 25%) in back taxes. The amnesty program (now over) was set up in Royalston to give property owners a chance to settle back tax accounts, without having to pay, what in some cases, were substantial interest penalties. We were also able to correct our books, in a number of cases where payments had actually been made but recorded incorrectly. Thanks for your help.

**The next step** in cleaning up the tax office is to collect the outstanding Back Property Taxes which now total more than \$380,000. This is essential revenue for the town, and is needed to fund our local services. And, the tax collector is required by state law, town bylaws, and the Select Board to collect these outstanding taxes.

**In the next few weeks**, personal letters will go out to all delinquent property owners itemizing the past due property tax amounts - including interest. Owners should immediately contact the Tax Office to pay these amounts or to work out a legally binding payment plan to bring their account up to date. **It's important that these letters be taken to heart, as the consequences really are very serious.** What happens if these letters are ignored? **The town will begin the process of taking or foreclosing on the land and property.**

**Please Note:** as of January 2004, state law requires that anyone owning parcels with back taxes will be denied permits such as building and occupancy permits. Persons purchasing land with outstanding taxes, and expecting to build, may be surprised that they will be unable to obtain a building permit - until the back taxes are paid in full. Note: transfers/sales of land to avoid the payment of back taxes is not appropriate, taxes are still due, and will only increase the legal fees that are payable with back tax collection.

**The Tax Taking Process:** The first step in this process is advertising the names of the assessed (and current owner if different) and the description of the parcel in the local paper. Each name will also be posted in several locations around town and the Royalston Community Newsletter, which goes to all residents.

**If the account is not paid in full within 2 weeks, the land will be put into Tax Title.** Tax Title is a lien on the property. It will be recorded with the Registry of Deeds. The tax, interest and all fees (including legal & notice fees) will accrue at 16% per year.

**The foreclosure process will begin in 6 months** with the town taking ownership of the property. While in tax title, the town can collect rent or other revenue from the property to help recover its costs. This step is really done only as a last resort; but we will continue this process in the upcoming weeks and months as necessary.

**If you have any questions** about this process or other tax issues, please contact the tax office at 978-249-2927. Office hours are Wednesdays from 1-4 and 6-8 PM., *other times by appointment.* Note: If you are a senior citizen or in financial difficulty, there may be special programs to assist you. For example, seniors may work in the tax office or other town offices to earn credits toward real estate taxes. Please, call us with your questions, or your concerns ... we do want to help. Thank you.

**Police Sponsored Town Halloween Party** will be held from 5:00-7:00 p.m on Saturday, October 30 at the Town Hall. Donations of wrapped candy welcomed. If you can help with games or a spook walk, please call Chief Deveneau at 249-5807.



*Boo! Dahlia Wright and Emma Finocchio were looking for the Big Bad Wolf at last year's Town Halloween Party. Many thanks to Laurie and Curtis Deveneau and Nancy Melbourne, who pull this event together year after year.*

## **Time Running Out for Voter Registration and Absentee Ballots for Presidential Election**

The presidential election between George W. Bush and John Kerry will be held on November 2<sup>nd</sup>. There are significant differences between the candidates' attitudes, platforms and personalities. For many important issues including the Iraq War, the environment, social security, tax cuts, welfare programs and energy policy, this election matters more than most.

Voters must be registered with the Town Clerk, Barbara Richardson, by October 13, 2004 to participate in the upcoming presidential election. Town Clerk's hours are Tuesdays from 7:00-9:00 p.m. at Whitney Hall and voter registration will also be held October 13 from 2-4 and 7-8 p.m. at home office of Town Clerk on Athol Rd.

For those who will be out of town on election day, absentee ballots are available in the Town Clerk's office on Tuesdays or by phoning the Town Clerk to arrange an appointment at 249-0493. Absentee ballots can be cast prior to the November election at the Town Clerk's Office on Tuesdays or mailed in. Mailed ballots must be received in Royalston by November 2<sup>nd</sup>.

## **Tree Warden Keeps the Peace**

A very big thanks from Butterworth Road residents goes out to Larry Siegel for doing such a fine job removing an old rotted tree that had fallen on the gravestones at the Butterworth Cemetery.

## On the Eighth Day, the DPW Rested: Route 68 Devastated and Repaired in One Week

After the remnants of Hurricane Ivan dropped nearly five inches of rain on Royalston in thirty hours, a collapsed section of beaver dam on an eight acre pond sent millions of gallons of water 3/4 of a mile downstream through an old millpond and onto Old Winchendon and Old Royalston Roads and over Route 68 around 9:30 p.m. on Saturday, September 18<sup>th</sup>. The result was a 200 foot crater 10 feet deep in Route 68 a mile south of the Common. Thus, on the main road to South Royalston, Winchendon and the Town elementary school, one lane was completely gone and the other was so undermined and completely unstable that chunks of asphalt tumbled down all day Sunday.

Town and State government and especially the Royalston Department of Public Works responded extremely quickly. While out checking for water damage that Saturday, Department of Public Works Supervisor, Keith Newton, happened upon an unexplained wetness in the road. He stopped to investigate and soon a two foot wall of rolling water filled with stones, sticks and other debris rushed out of the mist and overtook the road. Detours to Brown and Stone Roads were quickly set up. Soon afterwards, the Board of Selectmen voted to declare an official State of Emergency, which got all levels of State government involved including the offices of U.S. Senators Kennedy and Kerry and Rep. Olver. By Monday morning, State Senator Steve Brewer and State Representative Brian Knuutilla as well as Frank MacManmon of the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency were at the site certifying that the catastrophe far exceeded Town resources to repair. This made the Town eligible for State disaster funding assistance. Plans were immediately set in motion to repair the road. Joe Nunes of the Town Conservation Commission quickly produced a necessary report. Director Al Stegman, from the State Department of Transportation, shifted crews and equipment from other projects and state highway workers worked 12 hour shifts to repair the road in a week. A rock sluiceway was added to the roadway to prevent a similar flood from occurring in the future. State disaster money covered the entire \$500,000 cost of the repairs, so currently slated Town DPW projects funded with Chapter 90 and STRAP grants will not be jeopardized.

Getting the road reopened in record time took the cooperation, goodwill and hard work of many. Keith Newton, Sen. Steve Brewer, and Frank MacManmon of MEMA deserve particular thanks.

### DPW Grant

Royalston has qualified for a multi-million dollar Footprint Grant to repair Rt 32 in West Royalston from Tully to the New Hampshire border beginning in 2007. These grants are designed to fix roads without taking large easements. Royalston voters at the annual Town meeting next spring will be asked to support this project by approving \$200,000 to \$250,000 for the engineering, the only major cost not covered by the Footprint Grant.

### New Office Hours to Pay Water Bills in South Royalston *South Royalston Improvement Corporation and Wastewater Treatment Department*

Vickie Paine, Sewer Commissioner and Secretary and Treasurer of the Water Department, will hold office hours every Friday starting October 8, 2004 from 10:00-11:00 a.m. and 6:30 – 7:30 p.m. Water customers may pay their water bills at this time. Sewer customers must still pay their sewer bills with the tax collector on the day she is in her office.

### THE ROYALSTON CULTURAL COUNCIL DEADLINE FOR LOCAL APPLICATIONS TO TAP \$2000 STATE GRANT IS OCTOBER 15, 2004

The Royalston Cultural Council has set an October 15 deadline for organizations, schools and individuals to apply for grants that support cultural activities in the community. These grants can support a variety of artistic projects and activities in Royalston— including exhibits, festivals, short-term artist residencies or performances in schools, workshops and lectures. The Royalston Cultural Council will entertain funding proposals from schools and youth groups through the PASS Program, a ticket subsidy program for school-age children.

The Local Cultural Council Program, of which the Royalston Cultural Council is a part, is a grant program of the Massachusetts Cultural Council (MCC), a state agency. The MCC provides allocations to each of Massachusetts' 351 cities and towns to support cultural activities. This is the largest program of its kind in the United States.

Contact Patience Bundschuh, Royalston Cultural Council Chair, at 978-249-6081 or email [goodshoe@earthlink.net](mailto:goodshoe@earthlink.net) for specific guidelines and information. Application forms and more information about the Local Cultural Council Program are available on the MCC web site at [www.massculturalcouncil.org/lccgrants.html](http://www.massculturalcouncil.org/lccgrants.html).



Rt 68, a mile south of the Common on September 19, 2004

## Phinehas S. Newton Library News

Kathy Morris, Library Director

Trustees: Polly Longworth, Lisa Freden, Barbara Guiney

Mondays: 10:00am - 5:00pm and 6:30 - 8:30pm. Thursdays: 1:00pm - 5:00pm and 6:30 - 8:30pm

Saturdays: 9:00am - 12:00noon

978-249-3572 [www.royalstonlibrary.org](http://www.royalstonlibrary.org)

### Thank You

**Ferron Dooley Fairchild** for her capable weekly volunteering  
**Cady Boucher** and **Samantha Hutchins** for delivering books to the Royalston Community School.

**Shannah Lively** for prepping the new CDs for inclusion into the library collection

**Dan Vaccari** for all sorts of volunteer work

**Aaron Ellison** for donation of books-on-tape

**M. E. Kane** for displaying her artwork at the library

*Also the library is grateful for these recent Memorial Donations:*

A gift from the Village Improvement and Historical Society of Royalston in memory of Pat Poor

Gifts from Cindy and Steve Savoy, Patricia Barry, Thomas and Maria Barry as well as Edith and David Felker in memory of Humphrey Nash

### Bliss Hill's Gary Lippincott Wins Art Awards: Work on Display at Library

Gary Lippincott, of Bliss Hill Road, was awarded two prestigious Chesley Awards at the 19<sup>th</sup> Annual Association of Science Fiction and Fantasy Artists meeting at the World Science Fiction Conference held in Boston in September. The award is named after the great astronomical artist Chesley Bonestell and is the "Oscar" of science fiction and fantasy art. His winning works were "Autumn Fairies," a watercolor and pencil piece that won the monochrome award and "Jack," a bronze that won for best three dimensional art. **Several of Gary's pieces are on display at the library and may be viewed during library hours.**

### Preschool Story Time Halloween Party

There will be a Halloween costume party at the Preschool Story Time on November 1 at 10:30. Children (and their caregivers) are welcome to dress in their costumes and join the others for stories and treats. Registration is not necessary.

### Trick or treating at library

The library will be open for trick or treating on October 31 from 5:00-7:00 p.m.



### Library Walk to Royalston Falls

Ever wanted to explore Royalston Falls? Maybe you weren't sure which was the best trail, maybe you didn't want to go alone or maybe it just hasn't been a priority in a busy schedule. In response to a membership survey suggestion, the Friends of the Library are offering to lead family friendly nature walks to some of Royalston's most interesting natural treasures beginning with a trip to Royalston Falls on Sunday October 24. Meet at the library at 1:30 p.m. to carpool over to Greenwoods Rd and walk the Metacomet Trail south back to the falls. This route passes beaver swamp and follows a branch of Tully Brook which has sculpted beautiful potholes and even a natural stone bridge. There are some interesting cellar holes nearby. In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, the falls were called Cascade Falls; there was a dance pavillion and horse drawn trolleys brought couples to admire the scenic wonders, dine, as well as foxtrot, waltz and two step to live orchestras. President Garfield's mother grew up a stones throw from the falls. The famous local ghost, Peter Marlowe, met his end in this neighborhood as well. This trail is never steep but the footing is often uneven. Round trip is about 3 miles. Please pre-register at the library by calling 249-3572. Free

### Adult Fiction

Binchy, Maeve *Nights of Rain and Stars*  
Brooks, Terry *High Druid of Shannara: Tanequil*  
Clarke, Susanna *Jonathan Strange & Mr. Norrel*  
Cook, Claire *Multiple Choice*  
Cornwell, Patricia *Trace*  
Custler, Clive *Lost City*  
Divakaruni, Chitra Banerjee *Queen of Dreams: A Novel*  
Funke, Cornelia *Dragon Rider*  
Gore, Kristin *Sammy's Hill*  
Graham, Caroline *A Ghost in the Machine*  
Johansen, Iris *Blind Alley*  
LeGuin, Ursula *Gifts*  
Niffenegger, Audrey *The Time Traveler's Wife*  
Palmer, Michael *The Society*  
Patterson, James *Hide & Seek*  
Ralston, Aron *Between a Rock and a Hard Place*  
Spragg, Mark *An Unfinished Life*  
Stewart, Paul *Stormchaser*  
Winter, Jeanette *September Roses*

### Adult Nonfiction

Laaker, Micah *Adobe Photoshop CS*  
PDR for Nutritional Supplements  
Galleagher-Mundy, Chrissie *Caesarean Recovery*  
Harkness, Philip *Reliable Roses: Easy-to-Grow Roses That Won't Let You Down*  
Shapiro, Dr. Howard *Dr. Shapiro's Picture Perfect Weight Loss Cookbook: More than 150 Delicious Recipes for Permanent Weight Loss*  
Karp, M.D., Harvey *The Happiest Toddler on the Block: The New Way to Stop the Daily Battle of Wills and Raise a Secure and Well-behaved One to Four Year Old*  
Rich, Adrienne *The School Among the Ruins: Poems, 2000-2004*  
Native Universe: Voices of Indian America  
Mowat, Farley *No Man's River*  
Detzer, David *Donnybrook: The Battle of Bull Run, 1861*  
The 9/11 Commission Report: Final Report of the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States  
Cemetery Inscriptions of Royalston and South Royalston, Massachusetts  
Obama, Barack *Dreams from My Father: A Story of Race and Inheritance*

### New DVDs and Videos

#### DVD

Jane Hissey's Old Bear Stories  
Laws of Attraction  
The Passion of the Christ

#### Videos

The Adventures of Elmo in Grouchland: Sing and Play  
Fun and Fancy Free  
Get Pit! The 30 Minute High Intensity Workout  
Get Moving! The 30 Minute Moderate Intensity Workout  
Get Started! The 30 Minute Light Intensity Total Body Workout  
The Rugrats Movie

### Library Needs High Speed Internet Info

Since DSL is not coming to Royalston, the library is considering installing a satellite connection. If anyone has any experience with using internet satellite hookup in Royalston, we would like to hear about it – who the provider is, how fast the service is, does it work all the time, how many computers are you using with it, are you satisfied with the equipment and service, and how much does it cost? You can call the library during regular hours, stop by, or leave a message.

### Donating Books

Last summer several people generously wanted to donate books, especially paperbacks, to the library. Unfortunately, we were unable to take most of these books. With our cool and relatively moist summer, the basement of the library remained damp throughout the season. In fact it still has water on the floor. Therefore, any books stored there mildew in short order and mildew is something we definitely don't want in the collection. Paperbacks, especially those more than a year or two old, tend to be very prone to molding. We'd love to be able to stockpile books for a book sale but we lack the storage space. When we tried to put a dehumidifier in the basement, we only succeeded in drawing more moisture through the floor. In addition, as those who visit the library realize, space is in short order so that we must regularly recognize books that aren't being checked out and withdraw them from the library. This is always difficult (especially for me as I "weed" the children's room and happen upon books that my children loved and were the last ones to check out twelve years ago) but our purpose is to provide up-to-date materials for general enjoyment, educational purposes, and general knowledge. Unless a book is historically important or a useful broad reference book when it doesn't get checked out or used in the library, it's taking up the space that a book that would circulate could occupy. Additionally, people often want to donate books that they enjoyed reading. In many cases, we already own these books and if they are more than a few years old and we don't own them, it's easier for us to borrow them from other larger libraries through interlibrary loan, than to tie up shelf space on the chance that someone may want that book. That doesn't mean that we don't take donations. As our "thank you" citations show, we do accept new fiction and nonfiction and classics and books-on-tape and CDs that we don't own. If you'd like to donate a book to the library, please check with us first, to see if we're interested. If you'd like to read our collection development policy to understand the criteria we use to select materials for the library or any of our Library Policies, we have copies of all of them at the library.

### Volunteers Needed to Help Assemble and Mail this Newsletter

Thursday, September 30 9:00 am  
Friday, October 29 4:00 pm  
Monday, November 29 4:00 pm

If you can give us 30 minutes of your time, this job gets done very quickly. It's fun, easy, and rewarding. At town hall. Many hands ..... Thanks

## Royalston Community School Update

*Mrs. French, Principal*

Thank you to everyone for giving me such a warm welcome. I am feeling at home in Royalston. This has been a busy first month of school. We had our first PTG meeting on the 7<sup>th</sup>. We are wrapping up many projects that have been ongoing. We hope to install the bricks around the flag pole and to level and fill in around our stone tables in front of the school this fall.

RCS can use community help:

There are many ways that our school can earn extra cash or supplies for our school through our community members. If you can save your Campbell's soup labels and box tops for education and drop them off at school. These things really add up. Would you believe that one of those little box tops labels is worth 10 cents!!! That's more than a soda can. Please help us save. Also, if you shop at Hannaford's or Big Y, sign up to have your points go to our school. It only takes a minute and your help will go a long way.

Coming in October:

Our next PTG meeting is the 5<sup>th</sup> @ 6:30

Half Day of school on Oct. 6<sup>th</sup>

School Pictures by Lifetouch the 18<sup>th</sup>

Please join us for a Theater at the Mount presentation of "How to Eat Like a Child" to be held in the gym on October 22<sup>nd</sup> at 2:00. All are Welcome.

## After School Instrumental Music Lessons

**Band Instruments:** Again this year, Mrs. Beverly Chadwick will be offering group instrumental music lessons and after school Band for students in Grades 4, 5, and 6. Lessons will be taught on Flute, Clarinet, Saxophone, Trumpet, Trombone and Percussion. Beginners as well as continuing students are welcome. The program, which will take place after school at RCS, will be held each Wednesday. Parents will need to provide transportation. The \$10 weekly fee (payable in advance or weekly) includes a half hour Band rehearsal and a half hour group lesson. If this fee presents a hardship, some scholarship money is available. Please call 978-249-0358 for scholarship information. Parents will need to provide instruments for their children. They may be rented reasonably from the following stores: City Music (formerly Action Music) in Gardner (978 534 8989) or American Music (Gribbons) in Greenfield (1-800-873-5888). Lessons will begin on Wednesdays the 1st week of October. Register by contacting the Royalston Community School for a permission slip. For remaining questions, please feel free to contact Mrs. Chadwick at 978-827-4836.

**Interested in Guitar or Violin Lessons?** New classes are in the planning stages for guitar and violin lessons to be held after school or early evening at RCS. Lessons, costing \$15.00 for a half hour lesson, would be taught by Linda McCormack, who offers a similar afterschool program at Briggs Elementary in Ashburnham and in the Cushing Academy Summer Program. Age 7 and up welcome. Please call Mrs. McCormack for more information or to express interest at 1-978-874-0856.

## Get a Massage – Help a School

There is a unique opportunity for you to have a professional therapeutic massage right here in Royalston, and help out the children at the Village School at the same time with the Massage Fundraiser. Kindergarten parent Erik Bell, LMT, M.Ed, a Licensed Massage Therapist with a practice in Keene, is offering a one-hour table massage for \$35 or a 15-minute chair massage for \$10, with *half of all proceeds going to the Village School's building fund*. The massages will be available in your home or business, preferably during daytime (school) hours.

Contact Erik at 603-352-9776 for scheduling or questions. Some of the physical benefits of therapeutic massage include stress reduction, faster healing of strained muscles, increased joint flexibility and range of motion, improved blood circulation, reduction of tension-related headaches, strengthening the immune system, and overall improvement in physical health. This offer is good only until October 31st.

## Poetry Club Forming

The RCS '2004-05 Poetry Club is currently forming. All children in this community who enjoy reading and/or writing poetry are welcome. It meets biweekly on Tuesdays from 3:00-4:00 p.m. alternating weeks by age groups from October to May. October 5th begins Group 2 (grades 4-6) and October 12th is Group 1 (grades 1-3). Call Mary Carnie at RCS for more information. 249-2900.

## MONTY TECH NEWS

The Monty Tech school year is going very well, with full in-district enrollment and high retention of freshmen – among the highest retention rates the school has ever seen. The only Royalston concerns noted so far are associated with bussing, with one safety issue reported as well as some grumblings about the earliness of morning pick-up and the total length of time spent on the bus at both ends of the day. Royalston finds itself in a difficult situation. Our bus service (Laidlaw) serves only Royalston. The remaining district is covered by another service (Merrifield's), which no longer comes into Royalston on Monty Tech routes. Due to the extreme growth in attendees from Royalston (from 16 total students when the contract bids were originally sought to a current 27, predominantly bus-riding freshmen and sophomores), the Royalston route has really become a multiple-bus route, but the winning bidder planned for one bus. To further complicate matters, this is year two of a three-year contract and next year's freshman class could push total Royalston students close to 40 into an even longer, one-bus route.

John Dzerkacz in Monty Tech's business office, Laidlaw, Merrifield's and Royalston school committee member Mary C. Barclay are working together exploring the feasibility of options that would push first pick-up times later towards 6 a.m., and shorten some bus rides from more than two hours to an hour and a half. This is rather challenging, given that Royalston is a 45 minute drive from Monty Tech. Thanks goes to the many Monty Tech families in Royalston for their patience during this extended resolution process with ever-changing bus times and routes.

## Bible Club Begins

Bible Club will have its grand beginning on the first Wednesday of October at the Royalston Community School. "Rainboe" the clown will be our featured guest. "Rainboe" was very excited when she learned that our theme for Vacation Bible School during August was "The Fruit of the Spirit." She has a special presentation on that very theme and can hardly wait to share it with us.

Lyn Jahl and Sue Veilleux along with volunteer parents will team to lead Bible Club this year. On October 6th the children will join in the singing of all the songs learned at VBS. During the year, the old favorites along with new songs will be sung. There will stories, puppets, and scripture verses to help teach the wonderful adventures of the Bible.

All are welcome. A permission form listing the child's name and signed by a parent or guardian must be filled out and given to the homeroom teacher to be filed in the school office. Bible Club will be held at the Royalston Community School every Wednesday when school is in session.

For questions or a permission slip, please call Pastor Ginger at 249-9155 any time or Sue Veilleux at 249-5004 after 4:00 p.m.

## Recipe of the Month: Tomatillo Salsa

Aaron Ellison of NE Fitzwilliam Rd saves a little of summer's spice in his pantry with this recipe for home canned green tomatillo salsa. He and Elizabeth Farnsworth grew both green and purple tomatillos as well as the garlic, cilantro and peppers called for in this recipe in their local garden far from sunny Mexico, where tomatillo salsa is a ubiquitous condiment. Tomatillos, which look like like green cherry tomatoes in a brown papery husk, are in the tomato family (along with cotton, tobacco and deadly nightshade) but are in a different genus. They are closely related to the dried everlasting decoration called Chinese Lanterns. They don't tolerate frost, but they re-seed readily. Twelve plants yielded about 33 pints of salsa.

1. Prepare the tomatillos by parboiling 3-5 minutes (until soft) and then pureeing them in a food processor. Set aside.
  2. Saute for 5 minutes in 1/4 cup olive oil:
    - 1 medium red onion, minced
    - 5 cloves garlic, minced
    - fresh hot peppers to taste, minced
  3. Add 1 quart pureed tomatillos to the sautéed onions, garlic, and peppers, and bring to a boil
  4. Add:
    - 2 tsp sugar
    - 1/2 tsp. salt (or to taste)
    - handful of chopped fresh cilantro
    - 1 tbsp coriander seeds
 and simmer gently 1-2 minutes.
  5. Add:
    - 1/2 cup cider vinegar
    - 2 tsp lemon juice
 and simmer gently for 5 minutes.
  6. Pack into jars (1/2 pint, 12 oz., or pint) and process 25 minutes in a boiling-water bath
- Yield: 3 pints salsa for 1 quart of tomatillo puree.



## MadHatterDay

*submitted by Emily Parnanen*

MadHatterDay is a holiday in October to celebrate silliness. It fills the need for a second crazy day in the year, almost exactly half a year from April Fools' Day. The real spirit of MadHatterDay is turnabout: The nonsense we usually have to pretend is sane can be called madness for one day in the year; the superficially crazy things that really make sense can be called sane on MadHatterDay.

MadHatterDay is 10/6. The date was chosen from the illustrations by John Tenniel in Alice's Adventures in Wonderland, wherein the Mad Hatter is always seen wearing a hat bearing a slip of paper with the notation "In this style 10/6". We take this as inspiration to behave in the style of the Mad Hatter on 10/6 (which is October 6 here, although in Britain MadHatterDay occurs on June 10.) Some astute observers have noted that the paper in the Mad Hatter's Hat was really an order to make a hat in the style shown, to cost ten shillings sixpence. However, it is well known that Time Is Money, and therefore Money Is Time, and therefore 10/6 may as well be the sixth of October.

Take a look around you, drop your assumptions about what must be proper and normal, and see how much of it is just silly. Better yet, try to find something that does make sense.

## FIRE & RESCUE NEWS

*Mary C. Barclay, 249-2598*

[royalston\\_community\\_news@yahoo.com](mailto:royalston_community_news@yahoo.com)

October 3-9 is this year's National Fire Prevention Week, which focuses on an important part of fire safety, "Test Your Smoke Alarms!" According to the National Fire Protection Association, on the order of 70% of home fire deaths are a direct result of no smoke alarms or disabled smoke alarms. "Smoke alarms are the great safety success story of the 20<sup>th</sup> century – but only when they're working properly."

The NFPA suggests testing smoke alarms monthly, according to manufacturer's instructions, and replacing batteries at least once a year or whenever the alarm "chirps" to indicate a failing battery. A good time of year to change batteries is when you change your clocks back an hour in the fall, from daylight savings to standard time. NFPA also warns that it can be fatal to "borrow" batteries from smoke alarms. Keep a supply of batteries on hand for flashlights, games and other devices. If an alarm keeps "falsing," as in the case of an alarm that goes off when steam from the shower or smoke from a kitchen stove drifts by, reconsider the location of the alarm. Maintenance includes regularly vacuuming or dusting smoke alarms and replacing them at the very least, every ten years. A rule of thumb for replacement: If you can't remember the last time you changed them for new ones, it's time.

Properly installed, properly located, working smoke detectors are only effective if the family knows what to do when they go off. During the month of October, go over your EDITH (Exit Drills in the Home) plans, review what to do if a person's clothing catches fire, and make sure everyone in the family knows how to get help in a hurry.



## Congratulations and Good News

*Got something to crow about? Drop the news by the library or e-mail [chasegos@gis.net](mailto:chasegos@gis.net).*

Royalston Elementary and AHS grad **Katherine Lyn Drouin** recently completed requirements for her Bachelor of Science in Animal Science at the University of Massachusetts in Amherst. She accepted employment as a veterinary technician at the Massachusetts Association for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (MSCPA) Emergency Animal Hospital in Springfield.

Best wishes are in order for **Robert Newton** who recently departed for Warwick, RI, where he is attending New England Institute of Technology. He is currently studying for an Associate in Science degree, and plans to continue on for his Bachelor of Science in Architectural Building Engineering Technology degree. He is looking towards a career in house architecture. Newton is an Athol High School graduate and long-time employee at The Market Basket supermarket in Rindge, NH.

**Noah Siegel** of Prospect Hill Road was awarded the Sam Ristisch Award for Mycology at the recent Northeast Regional Mycological Society Meeting held at Lake Winnepesaukee, New Hampshire. Sam Ristisch, who is now in his nineties, is a well-known and well-respected mycologist from Maine and this award recognizes excellence in fieldwork and overall knowledge in mycology.

Great job, Winchendon Police Officer **Ray Anair** of Norcross Road, and Rindge, NH Police Officer Dan Anair. The brothers joined up with NYPD members in D.C. and departed ON BICYCLE, from the Pentagon on September 8 and rode through five states to Ground Zero for a September 11<sup>th</sup> ceremony. The first "NYPD 9/11 Tour de Force" took place in 2002 "as a memorial to the fallen NYPD, FDNY and civilians who gave their lives in the September 11, 2001 attacks.

## MEMORIALS

Condolences to family and friends of **Elli Esteri (Liimatainen) Allen**, 87, who died August 29, 2004 at Wachusett Manor, following an extended illness. She lived many years on Falls Road, and was able to stay there well into her later years, thanks to loving friends and neighbors Bob Cromwell, Walt & Nanji Thornton, and Vyto and Pat Andreliunas. She enjoyed nature, was generous in her support of the less fortunate, and was one of Royalston's first and most ardent supporters of recycling. She was predeceased by her husband, Robert S. Allen, in 1997. Memorial contributions may be made to either the Family Literacy Foundation; 3525 Del Mar Heights Rd., #348; San Diego, CA 02130, or to the American Cancer Society, Northern New England Region; Gail Singer Memorial Building; #360 Route 101, Unit #8; Bedford, NH 03110. Online condolences may be sent to the family by visiting [www.cournoyerfh.com](http://www.cournoyerfh.com).

## ERV'S LOOKIN' GOOD!

Royalston's Emergency Rescue Vehicle fund is lookin' good, especially given the success of the September semi-formal dinner dance hosted by the Royalston Firefighters' Association. Organizer Geoff Newton reported a boost of about \$2,300 from the proceeds of that night, which included a scrumptious, savory meal by A&B Catering of Athol and Warwick; dancing 'til midnight to the tunes of DJ Joey of Athol, and some special raffles, thanks to the generosity of Nichols and Stone Furniture Company, Gauvin's Sugarhouse of North Orange, Keven Barry of Royalston and a number of others. One generous attendee, on his way out, stopped to congratulate Geoff on a job well done and popped a \$50 bill into his pocket – "To add to the fund because it's a worthy cause."



## Council on Aging News

*by Deb Nunes*

The **Royalston Luncheon Club** meets on Wednesdays at 11:30 a.m. at the Town Hall for food, company and conversation. All Royalston Seniors are welcome. The meal costs \$1.75 and reservations need to be made by calling Dorothy Newton (249-8882) the Monday prior. A Chinese Auction is held the first Wednesday of the month, and a blood pressure clinic and Brown Bag distribution are held on the 4th Wednesday.

This fall we are planning to **travel to area restaurants** on the third Friday of October, November and December. October 15th we'll go to Monty Tech to their culinary program restaurant; November 19th we are planning to go to the Westminster Country Club; and for December 15th we have not yet picked a destination. All trips will leave at 10 a.m. from the Town Hall. Please let Betty Woodbury or Helen Williams know if you are planning on attending. We will carpool or you can meet us there.

The Council will also hold it's annual **Halloween Party** at the mealsite on Wednesday, October 27th. Start thinking now about your costume.

**The COA will sponsor the annual Flu Clinic on Wednesday, October 27th from 10-12 noon at the Town Hall.** The flu shots are free and are open to all Royalston residents. Seniors are especially encouraged to attend. The next regularly scheduled meeting of the COA will be on Thursday, October 14th at 11:00 a.m. at Dorothy Newton's house on Athol Road. All are welcome.

## Join the Birch Hill Rangers Snowmobile Club

New members are welcome at the Birch Hill Rangers Snowmobile Club, which meets on the 2nd. Wed. of the month at the Royalston Fish & Game Club at 7:30 pm.. Any questions contact Roy Smith at 249- 9687 or Ben King at 249-0987.

## An Invitation to a Piano Concert at the Maples

Ladies Benevolent Society Memorial Concert

It all started last year when town resident and musician Deb Nunes agreed to play the piano for the October 2003 meeting of the Ladies Benevolent Society of Royalston. Ladies "B" member Patience Bundschuh was hosting the meeting at her home, eager to have their recently renovated Ballroom and lovely grand piano put to more use. Well, she performed such an outstanding program of classical music, in such a perfectly elegant setting, followed by such delicious apple pie, that all attending agreed it should be an annual event, with an invitation extended to town residents.

Because Maxine Wilcox was such a beloved and missed member of the Society, it was decided to dedicate the concert in her memory. Then this past year, the Ladies lost another treasured friend, Pat Poor, who held the post of President and many other offices in the Society over the years. So the concert was renamed to honor both of them and all other past members that should be remembered.

Musicians this year include Rene Lake on piano. Additional musicians will be announced as they are confirmed. Benjamin West, whose most very favorite next-door neighbor and adopted "Nana" was Maxine, has also agreed to play a piano piece. Deb Nunes is playing the role of musical director this year.

So all are invited to the Ladies' Benevolent Memorial Concert on Wednesday, October 27, at 8:00 pm in the Ballroom at The Maples (the Bundschuh residence) on the Common. There is no admission charge, but donations to the LBS Scholarship Fund will be accepted. Light refreshments will be served after the music.

## The Second Annual Wachusett Writer's Conference

November 6, 2004 is sponsored by the Gardner News and hosted by Mount Wachusett Community College's LIFE Program will be held at the Colonial Hotel, 425 Betty Spring Road, Gardner, Ma. Keynote Speaker: R.A. Salvatore  
\$75.00 for conference includes lunch as well as morning and afternoon workshops. *Royalston's own Norah Dooley will be presenting two workshops.*

Make checks payable to: Mount Wachusett Community College with the memo line: LIFE or Writers' Conference  
Mail to: Attn: Enrollment Services,  
444 Green Street, Gardner, MA 01440-1000  
Or call with credit card (978) 630-9238

## Family Friendly Bike Trail

A perfect fall outing is the bike trail from Fitzwilliam to Keene. Since the trail follows an old railroad bed, the grade is never steep and the surface is mostly hard packed dirt. Scrubby hardwoods arch over much of the trail so the foliage should be lovely in October. Interesting man-made features include disused quarries, a long causeway through Rockwood Pond with views of Mt. Monadnock, pretty stonework bridges and the recently restored Troy Depot. It is impressive how much time, physical labor and money must have gone into leveling out the hills and valleys to make a steady railroad grade. There are some sleepy roads which cross the trail but all are marked by gates. Convenient stops along the way are the Gap Mountain Bakery (for pizza or a cookie) or the Troy Market for its impressive bash and dent collection of discount food. Families that need to bribe their kids into such excursions should know that the Twinkletown Mini-golf in Swanzee just happens to have a side street connecting the trail to Rt 12 very nearby. Find the trail head (marked with a yellow gate) a little west of the junction of Rt 119 and Royalston Rd in Fitzwilliam. It is about 4 level miles to Troy and another downhill 5.5 miles to Twinkletown.

*Know of a good local outing? Share the details with your neighbors via the RCN. Drop info at library or zap chasegos@gis.net.*

## Nickel and Dimed: Book, Film and Panel Discussion Series on Issues Facing Low Wage Workers

Mount Wachusett Community College  
978-632-6600 ~ [www.mwcc.mass.edu](http://www.mwcc.mass.edu)

Former mill towns in North Central Massachusetts, including Royalston, have high percentages of families who have difficulty making ends meet despite working several jobs. Mount Wachusett Community College has organized a series of free events to discuss issues faced by the working poor centered around the book *Nickel and Dimed: On (Not) Getting By in America* by Barbara Ehrenreich, which College President Dan Asquino is encouraging everyone in the college community and public to read as it "...chronicles the real-life struggles of low-wage workers." It is part of MWCC's "One Book, One College" initiative, designed to help students understand connections between subjects as well as the real-world applications of their education. Royalston's own Raeann LeBlanc, a MWCC nursing professor, describes the book as a "must read." Related October activities open to the public include **book discussions** on Wednesday, Oct. 13 from 11:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m., and Tues., Oct. 26 from 6 p.m. – 7:30 p.m. in the Murphy Conference Room; a **panel discussion** focusing on the living or minimum wage issues and the working poor on Monday, Oct. 25 from 11:30 a.m. – 1 p.m. in the North Cafeteria; Michael Moore **film presentation** "Roger and Me," on Wed., Oct. 13 from 6 p.m. – 8 p.m. in room 127, and on Thur., Oct. 14 from 1 p.m. – 3 p.m. in room 125; **film presentation** "Talking to the Wall: The Story of an American Bargain" on Tues., Oct. 19 from 6 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. in the North Cafeteria 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. in room 127. All events are free and open to the public. The book is available at the Phinehas S. Newton Library.

## In Your Own Backyard

Beth Gospodarek

October can be a cruel month in New England, and not just for Red Sox fans. With the frosts of October, the creatures in our backyards have three choices: die, hunker down or get out of town. Many insects like yellow jackets, blackflies and mosquitoes lay eggs to insure a new generation next spring and then die. For those that stick around, a variety of ingenious adaptations are used to outlast the winter. Cold blooded residents slow down their metabolisms to rock bottom for hibernation. Turtles and fish have been known to freeze solid in the winter, but thaw out and survive unharmed in the spring. Warm blooded animals including mammals and year round birds take on difficult combinations of dedicated foraging and profound resting necessary to keep warm throughout the coming winter. Migration is the final way to avoid the coming cold. Monarchs, dragonflies, humpback whales, huge flocks of juncos and even bats leave Massachusetts for sunnier climes this month.

The classic icon of that fall migration is probably the Canada (not Canadian) Goose. The familiar honking from a V formation high in an autumn blue sky is a seasonal treat like kicking leaves or baking apples. These waterfowl are famous for their large size (second only to swans in the US) and life-long mating habits. Human intervention has had a huge effect on their population sizes in the last 150 years. They were hunted to near extinction all over the US in the mid-1800s (a la the Buffalo or the Passenger Pigeon). Canada Geese populations were always most numerous in Canada, and the Great Lake and Plains states; although Massachusetts was on these birds' migration routes, there were no recorded nesting pairs in the state before 1930. According to Mass Wildlife, the State Department of Wildlife, Canada Geese were enticed to settle in our fair state due to human trickery. New England hunters brought back eggs from the mid-west or Canada and hatched them out. These domesticated cousins were then set out on ponds along migratory routes to attract wild geese to land for dinner. This practice was outlawed in the 1930s, so the hunters set these living goose decoys free. Unfortunately, generationally and geographically removed from the wild, the birds had no idea how to migrate anymore; this began the population problems now associated with permanent resident wild geese. They poop a lot (up to 1 lb of droppings / day) and often graze and spread droppings on lawns of playing fields, parks or golf courses. In the 60s, state conservationists had the big idea to lessen populations defiling the suburban parks in Eastern Mass by moving eggs and parents to Central and Western Massachusetts. This relocation was so successful that Central Massachusetts residential populations of Canada Geese are now 30-35% overpopulated. A hunting season aimed at drastically thinning numbers of residential geese is held January 15-February 15; a traditional hunt of migratory geese just finished in September.

## Why Do Leaves Change Color?

Meet at the Millers River Environmental Center, 100 Main Street, Athol. on Wednesday October 13 at 7:00 p.m. to find out. Dr. David Lee will speak on the Phenomenon of Autumn Foliage.

## Wildlife Sightings

Royalston is home to all kinds of impressive flora and fauna. If you spot something cool, pass it along to the RCN by getting word to the library or zapping [chasegos@gos.net](mailto:chasegos@gos.net).

**Big Blue Frog:** While walking near a South Royalston pond, Rhonda Bishop and her dog found a large cerulean blue bullfrog. It is a rare but well documented condition that occurs when the frog does not develop the usual yellow in its skin pigment.

**Vive la Moose:** Sept. 14 Sharon Harmon on her new bus route saw a very large moose with a full rack behind the field of the Bastille. He was really neat and about 7pm on 9/15 a female moose crossed ahead of Carl Kamp and Alyce Mayo near the entrance to Jacob's Hill on Warwick Rd. (RT. 68). Also, David and Sue Linnus saw a Baby Moose 3 miles up the street on Rt 32 from Tully Dam at the end of August.

**What next?** Keep an eye on (and follow your nose to) the recently-drained beaver pond surrounded by Route 68, Northeast Fitzwilliam Rd., Brown Rd. and Brown Road extension. The prolific Great Blue Heron population will be looking for the beavers' next home, likely abandoning their rookery of massive nests in standing dead trees, their droppings, vacated egg shells, dead young, and uneaten fish parts in the slimy mix below. The resulting, malodorous gruel should draw a number of interesting scavengers.



## October Hunting Seasons 2004

*Be aware that there could be people with weapons in local woods at these times; wear orange and use common sense. Dates inclusive. No hunting on Sundays.*

Pheasant, Quail and Grouse	Oct 16-Nov 27
Turkey	Oct 25-Oct 30
Deer (archery)	Oct 11-Nov 20

## MEMORIAL DAY COMMITTEE

Brenda L. Putney, (978) 249-7787 ~ [bputney@crystal-mtn.com](mailto:bputney@crystal-mtn.com)  
Barbara Richardson, (978) 249-6283

A bill is floating around in the Senate (H 1201), which would designate September 2 as "World War II Commemoration Day," to honor veterans who served in that war. The proposal calls for a 9:04 a.m. observance, with ringing of church bells to mark Japan's surrender and the formal end of WWII. The House gave near final approval last winter, but the Senate did not take up the matter until mid-September, too late for this year's commemoration. Those with an opinion on the matter will want to register their thoughts with Royalston's Senator Brewer at 617-722-1540 or [Stephen.Brewer@state.ma.us](mailto:Stephen.Brewer@state.ma.us) and with Royalston's Representative Knuutila at 978-632-0930 or [Rep.BrianKnuutila@hou.state.ma.us](mailto:Rep.BrianKnuutila@hou.state.ma.us).

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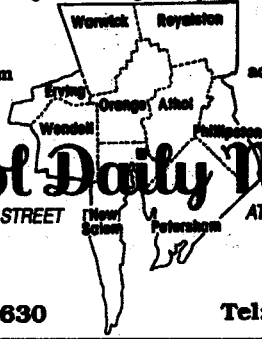


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October orders are due into Brenda and Mary Monday, October 4. Delivery is planned for Thursday, October 14. The order for last chance Thanksgiving goods is the November 11 delivery, and the final shot at Christmas items is the December 9 delivery. Please try to plan to order a month ahead in case something is out of stock.

### Classifieds:

RESHAPE YOUR SHAPE Ask me How! Call Deborah Linnus  
H 978-249-6361 C 508-331-0181

The Clark Memorial Community Center in Winchendon is currently advertising for some help. They're looking for **part time Aerobics/Fitness Instructors** and a **full time Aquatics/Safety & Camp Director**. The Clark offers an excellent benefits package, training and growth opportunities for full-time employees, and flexibility and an extra income for part timers. Job descriptions are available at The Clark or by contacting [bdubois@wpclark-memorial.org](mailto:bdubois@wpclark-memorial.org). Resumes, with a cover letter and minimum of three references, should be directed to Brian J. Dubois, Executive Director; 155 Central Street; Winchendon, MA 01475.

The Royalston Community Newsletter  
Friends of the Phinehas S. Newton Library  
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To submit news, articles, calendar notices, classifieds:

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Fax: 978-249-3572 (library)

Phone: 978-249-0358

In person: Drop off at library

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