

THE ROYALSTON COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

April 2006



Volume IX, Issue III

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

Calendar of Events

Death and Taxes are said to be certainties. Royalston has suffered a jarring spate of deaths lately and many are saddened by the holes left in the fabric of our Town. When the taxes are coming out is less certain. Bills should be sent soon once the state approves the newly mandated interim reassessment figures. Be prepared. There will only be one tax bill this year.

April 1 Saturday **All Fools' Day**

April 2 Sunday
2:00 a.m. **Daylight Savings Time** begins (spring forward to change your clocks; check your batteries in smoke and radon detectors)

2:00 p.m. **Understanding the Modern Middle East** lecture and discussion series at the Phinehas Newton Library. Dr. David Mednicoff, a professor from UMass Amherst, will present *The Modern Middle East and the United States, a brief overview*. Call 978-249-3572 for info.

April 2-8 **National Library Week:** Win fabulous prizes at our wonderful Phinehas Newton Library.

April 3 Monday
6:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m. **Town Elections at Town Hall (Precinct 1) and Whitney Hall (Precinct 2)**

April 6 Thursday
The next Royalston food coop order is due
3:30 p.m. Friends of the Library Annual Meeting, elect officers, eat rhubarb squares, make plans to help the library and its staff.

April 7 Friday
Noon **early dismissal** ARRSD elementary schools

7:00 p.m. **Open mic** at the Town Hall, a diverse variety show featuring friends, neighbors and other talent from our community. Great refreshments prepared by the baking hands of the Cultural Council. To sign up to play, call Jim Bennett at 978-575-1052 or show up early. Last open mic until next fall.

April 11-14 **Book Fair at RCS.** Buy Scholastic books to help raise money for the local elementary school library.

April 13 Thursday **Passover**
7:30 p.m. **Open Space Committee open meeting** at Town Hall.

April 14 **Good Friday**

April 15, Saturday
10:00 a.m. (rain or shine) **Egg Hunt on the Common.** Bring a labeled container. Free. Donations of candy and plastic eggs sought. Drop donations at library or Country Store

April 16 Sunday **Easter**
6:02 a.m. **Easter Sunrise Congregational Service** (please arrive on Common a little early)
8:15 a.m. **Easter Sunday Mass** at Our Lady Queen of Heaven
9:00 am. **Easter Sunday services** at the First Congregational
11:00 a.m. **Easter Sunday services** at the Second Congregational
6:00 p.m. **Congregational Youth Group** meets at The Parsonage

April 17-21 **School spring vacation**

April 17 Monday **Patriot's Day**
Post Office, library, schools closed. Commemorates the first shot fired in the **Revolutionary War** in 1775



7:00 p.m. **R.F.D. EMS Training-** Mass Casualty (MCI)

April 20 Thursday
2:00 p.m. **Kite Flying Day** at the Phinehas Newton Library. Bring a kite or borrow one at the library. Learn about kite flying traditions around the world. Kite stories, kite flip books and kite refreshments.

7:00 p.m. **Focus Group** to aid Phinehas Newton Library in Long Range Planning at Town Hall. All are welcome and needed. Particularly interested in input from residents who rarely/ never use the library. Refreshments.

7:00 p.m. Hartman's Herb Farm workshop on growing and using herbs, sponsored by the North Quabbin Garden Club at 100 Main Street in Athol. Members free ; nonmembers \$5.00.

April 21 Friday
7:00 p.m. **Possible Special Town Meeting** at RCS

April 23 Sunday **Orthodox Easter**

April 24 Monday
7:00 p.m. **Trustee Meeting at the Library**

April 26 Wednesday
RCS trip to see **performance of Aladdin** at Mount Wachusett Community College. Kindly funded by Royalston Academy and the PTG.

April 27 Thursday
3:44 p.m. **New Flower Moon**
5:00 p.m. **Royalston Community Coop** orders due
6:30 p.m. **Monty Tech School Council** meets in library

May 3

Wednesday

8:45 a.m. **May Day celebration** at the Village School: Morris Dancing, May pole weaving and singing. Welcome the May, wake up the Earth, and banish winter.

May 4

Thursday

7:00 p.m. **Tool Town Live concert** with Heidi-Jo Hanson (sultry voice and powerful guitar) opening for **Jonathan Edwards**, (Sunshine, Go Away Today and other hits) at Memorial Hall in Athol.

May 5

Friday

7:00 p.m. **Annual Town Meeting** at RCS. Vote on the Town budget and weigh in on Town issues.

Memorial Day Committee

Who should provide this year's Memorial Day address? A recently returned veteran, the parent or spouse of someone on active duty, or a non-military person in whom patriotism runs deep are all possibilities. Age is not important; the message, and the display of respect for those who paid the ultimate price in service to our country is what this day is about. Please contact Brenda Putney at 978-249-7787 or bputney@crystal-mtn.com with suggestions.

Royalston Luncheon Club/COA:

A Few Changes

The monthly Council on Aging meeting has been changed to Wednesday, April 5, at 11 a.m. in the Royalston Town Hall. Blood pressure and other health clinics have been changed to the second Wednesdays of each month. The same as always, the group meets weekly for a friendly lunch at 11:30 a.m. in the Town Hall dining room. Seniors are \$2, pre-seniors are \$2.50. To reserve a seat, please call the new contact person, Betty Woodbury, by the Monday evening prior at 978-249-9656.

Royalston Cultural Council 2006 Projects Funded by the State, Community Survey in the Pipeline

Marie-Claire Humblet, Royalston Cultural Council Chair

The Royalston Cultural Council is happy to announce that the State has funded its 2006 programs. This includes the popular Winter Variety Show the first Friday of each month from November to April, a Medieval minstrel show, a teen art exhibit in the fall, a theatre performance for elementary students, a multimedia poetry show for our Seniors, participation in the funding of the Quabbin Valley Pro Musica Chorus and a circus skills workshop in early summer. In mid May, a dinner/dance with the famous Reprobate Blues Band will be a fundraiser for the July Music Fest

Meanwhile, the Cultural Council launched a survey of our community needs. It is mandated by the State but the Cultural Council is looking forward to an opportunity to test new ideas. Would people enjoy the return of dances with live music? How about another show by our local artisans? Are insects truly a deterrent for participation in outdoor movie performances in the summer? Beyond what the Council has in mind, what would be particularly nice to hear are ideas of activities that have not been organized recently or, maybe, never were. Do think about it; what would you like? The first round of questionnaires will be completed at the April 7 Winter Variety Show; the next ones will be on a sunny Saturday on the Common in front of the Post Office.

Community Roadside Clean-up

Saturday April 29, 2006

Bullock Park

9:00 to 12:00



Lunch at 12:00: Hot Dogs, Beans, Chips, Soda

Donations of Food Items / Trash Bags / Gloves welcome.

Call Charlie Scribner for information: 978-249-2649

Roadside trash can also be picked up earlier and delivered to the dump for free that Saturday. (Makes a great April school vacation project.)

Top 5 reasons to pick up trash:

5. Unscientific surveys of local litter lout habits
4. Free hot dogs
3. Natural beauty is worth a morning's labor
2. Models social responsibility
1. Trashy streets beget more trash

Rescue Squad Honored

The Royalston Rescue Squad was recently honored by the Trustees of Reservations for their part in the rescue of a 17 year old landscaper from Hubbardston working at Birch Hill Dam last summer. While attempting to mow a narrow strip of grass, Caleb Comptious drove his tractor too near the edge of a culvert and fell 12 feet into a brook. The mower fell on top of him with the engine and blade still running. A mile away, Clifford Simula heard his yells and called 911. The rescue squad responded and called a life flight helicopter. Amazingly, the landscaper was banged up but had no serious injuries.

Planning Board Expresses Concerns about Tully Lake Subdivision

The Royalston Planning Board has responded to the concerns of Royalston and Athol residents by sending the following letter to the Athol Planning Board, which was written by Planning Board member Vyto Andreliunas:

We are writing to express our interest in the matter of a definitive plan entitled "Grand View Acres" (Definitive Subdivision of land in Athol, Massachusetts, off Chestnut Hill Avenue, for Dreamtime Builders, dated February 17, 2006), which has come before your Board. Many of our Royalston citizens have approached us with a range of concerns, and as abutters, we wish to be included in future proceedings to the extent provided by law.

While we have not had the benefit of a full review of the plan at this point, our attention is drawn to the intensity of development on a seemingly fragile landscape. The obvious aesthetic impact upon adjacent public lands and valued recreational benefits which inure to both towns should not be regarded lightly. Other environmental concerns, particularly runoff and other drainage will deserve the most serious scrutiny.

We look forward to working with you in reaching a determination in the serious questions raised in this application.

ed note: There is a public hearing about this proposed development on Monday, April 10 at 7pm at the Athol Town Hall. This is an appropriate time for Royalston residents to express their concerns.

Royalston Zoning Project Kick-off Meeting

Tuesday, April 4, Town Hall; 7:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

(the meeting will take place before the regular Select Board meeting)

BOH News

Phil Leger, Board of Health Chair

Someone took the lock from the upper gate at the transfer station. Could that person bring it back? It costs the town and you all money to replace the lock and make new keys. Why someone would take it, we don't know.

The BOH has received a Dept of Environmental Protection grant for 50 kitchen scrap buckets. These are available free with purchase of a compost bin. Bins are \$20 and \$30 depending on type. They are made from recycled plastic and work well. See Charlie at the transfer station for more information.

Remember townwide roadside clean up is April 29th, 9-noon. with checkpoint Charlie Scribner manning the point at Bullard Park. Hot dogs and hamburgers afterwards. Pick a road, wear reflective vests or bright clothing if you have it. Remember safety first. This is the time of the year to pick up all those beer cans and other trash that tasteless people deposit on our roads. The BOH strongly supports this all volunteer effort.

There will be an article at the annual town meetings enabling the BOH to enter into mutual aid agreements for public health emergencies. We urge the voters to support this article. It will allow the BOH to ask for assistance from surrounding towns in time of need. The BOH is also working on emergency dispensing site plans. The BOH is asking for volunteers to help in all aspects of this important work. We need nurses and intake personnel to be part of the planning process. Contact Phil Leger/ Chair at 978-249-9410 if you think you might be interested.

Building Department Reminders

Geoff Newton, Building Inspector

House numbers: It is imperative that all dwellings within the Town have the number assigned affixed to the building so that it is visible from the road. The town can enforce the fine relating to this bylaw through Chapter 40, Section 21D Citation System. Article 1, Section 5 of the bylaw states that a \$50 fine can be applied to each offense. Each day represents a separate offense.

Wood furnaces and wood stoves: Wood furnaces outside any residence need to be inspected. They require permits from 3 departments: the building, electrical and plumbing departments. These wood furnaces need to be placed appropriately so that they do not become a nuisance to the neighborhood. Also, wood burning stoves need to be permitted and inspected. Please don't forget. If something goes wrong because of an uninspected stove, it will be hard to collect from your insurance company for any losses.

Questionable Contractors: Protect yourself from unlicensed and uninsured contractors. All contractors need a C.S.L (Construction Supervisor License) as well as a H.I.C.R (Home Improvement and Contractors Registration). Contractors also need liability and workman's compensation insurance. All contracts \$1,000 or greater need to be in writing. That is state law.

Agenda

- 1) Welcome and Introductions
- 2) Discussion of the Scope of Work for the Royalston Zoning Project
- 3) Review of the Town's existing Zoning Bylaw
 - * What is good and not so good about the existing Zoning?
 - * What sections of the Zoning Bylaw need to be updated?
 - * What are some additions that could be made to strengthen our Zoning Bylaws and protect the rural character of our Town?
 - * A better definition for Home Occupations
 - * Allowing Accessory Dwelling Units
 - * A Village Center District for South Royalston
 - * Adopting regulations to protect existing trees and vegetation beyond the road right-of-way to maintain the "viewscape" along our roads and buffer the visual impact of new home construction
 - * Better Open Space and Back-lot Development regulations
- 4) Your concerns and ideas for improving our Zoning Bylaw
- 5) Next Steps

The Royalston Zoning Task Force and the Board of Selectmen hope that you participate in this process! It is guaranteed NOT to be easy, but it will be rewarding if we can arrive at some consensus on what we should do to make sure that new development does not alter what we love about Royalston.

Tree Department

Larry Siegel, Tree Warden

Perhaps the best way to encourage townspeople to think about trees is to write about trees...Royalston woods are not particularly diverse. Five species (red maple, white pine, hemlock, red oak, and beech) probably represent 90% of the trees one is likely to encounter. Most of the remaining 10% will be birch, spruce, ash, or cherry. Sugar maples, fairly common along the roadsides, are far less common in the woods.

April continues as an ideal time for tree-viewing. Unencumbered by leaves, their form and their bulk stand out. The trees at roadside, benefiting from the openness, are among the town's largest. Motoring along utility-free roadways is particularly attractive. Enjoy it while you can; utility-free roadways are a dying breed.

The monthly reminder: town land often extends far beyond the roadway. Contact me at 249-4260 if you are planning the removal of any tree sort-of near the road.

DPW Update

It's mudseason. Surface water is high and roads are vulnerable to frost and weight damage. Some roads have been posted for weight and driver cooperation is appreciated. The DPW asks for patience if roads are uncommonly rough or muddy this time of year. The road crew will do their best to smooth the roads as soon as practical. Be aware that the DPW is asking for funding for a new grader at the Annual Town Meeting on May 5. The old grader is 28 years old and it is difficult to get parts. Come vote at Town Meeting. Better roads are important for our community.

Phinehas S. Newton Library News

Kathy Morris, Library Director

Trustees: Polly Longsworth, Lisa Freden, Barbara Guiney

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

Saturdays: 9:00am - 12:00noon

978-249-3572 www.royalstonlibrary.org

Thank You

Jeff Hendricks, Jim and Pat Kelley, Naomi and Michael Voldahl-Corliss, Janet Bettey for book donations
Marcia Charest for movie passes and tickets and Janet Bettey for a gift card for National Library Week prizes
Ben West for volunteer work shelving biographies
Ferron Dooley Fairchild for doing whatever was needed
Barbara Willhite for delicious goodies for the Middle East program

Website Continues to Flourish

Jeff Mangum has increased the number of photos on the website and currently has a rotating photo gallery on the homepage. Soon we'll also have many more archival and new pictures on the site. Look for your picture there soon! There are also driving directions to the library for those out-of-towners who want to make the trek to the library and all the upcoming events. Check it out at www.royalstonlibrary.org.

1930 Royalston Census Available on CD

Adding to the 1910 and 1920 census reports, we now have a complete transcription of the 1930 census of Royalston. Even if you weren't here in 1930, there are names you'll recognize and it's interesting to see the change in demographics from the earlier two decades. CDs of each of the decades are available for \$10. They're great for genealogy work and for a historical perspective of the town. Of course, you can sit and browse the records in paper format – the original hand-written copies and the transcribed copies side-by-side – at the library.

In the Children's Room

Look behind the orange chair and underneath the torso of Hermes and what will you find?? Cootie, Uno, Scrabble, Dinosaur Monopoly and puzzles, puzzles, puzzles!! All of the games and puzzles kept in the corner cabinet are available to play at the Library or to take home. How about a puppet show?? There are many lovable characters ready to come alive and be borrowed. A shape sorter, a train set, an inchworm and the wonderful dollhouse, custom built by John Chencharik are kid favorites. So invite your family, friends and neighbors to a game night, courtesy of the PS Newton Library Children's Room

Story Hour Schedule

Free snacks, company, toys and stories for preschoolers every Monday at 10:30 a.m.

April 3	Foam Beads
April 10	Kite Making
April 17	School vacation...no story hour
April 24	Weather pictures

National Library Week April 2nd through April 8th

Would you like to receive a \$25.00 gift certificate from Bruce's Browser, donated by the Friends, or 4 movie passes to the Gardener Cinema, donated by Marsha Charest, or a \$25.00 gift certificate from Barnes & Noble Booksellers, donated by Janet Bettey, or lots of other prizes? All you have to do is come to the library on Monday, April 3rd, Thursday, April 6th, or Saturday, April 8th and earn a chance to enter to win one of all these great prizes. Even if you've never been to the library, this is your chance to get a library card, see what is available, check out a book, enter to win, and help us celebrate National Library week.

Let's Go Fly a Kite

What better way to celebrate spring than with your fist holding tight to the string of a kite?

This school vacation, come to the library on Thursday April 27 at 2 pm for a kite flying party. Bring a kite or the Friends of the Library will provide free kites. There will be kite stories and kite refreshments as well. All welcome.



Royalston Shakespeare Co.

Save the dates, 6/19-29 (more or less); the RSC will be presenting another Shakespearean classic this summer. In this whirlwind workshop, participants go from book to stage in less than two weeks: making sets, props, costumes and friends while learning lines, blocking, and Elizabethian culture. The RSC needs people age 8 and up to be our tech sound and light crew, musicians, stage crew and actors. The program is free but participants must commit to attending all of the rehearsals and performances. Adults who would like to tread the boards or help with sets, costumes or directing are also needed. Call the library for information.

Silver Lining Circus Coming to Royalston with Circus Skills Workshops

Ever wanted to run away and join the circus? Now you don't have to run away. Individuals of all ages are invited to train with world famous circus performers right here in Royalston. The Silver Lining Circus from Temple, New Hampshire will be here in May to teach how to form your own circus. The director, Rick Davis, began his circus career in 1974 with Ringling Brothers and is a consultant to Circus Smirkus. His wife Jacqueline studied mime with Marcel Marceau. In May, they'll show some basic tricks like clowning, tumbling, and juggling. This summer, participants can continue practicing skills and making circus props during the library's Summer Reading Program. The finale will be a stupendous performance at the end of July. There is no upper age limit, but you must be at least eight years old to participate. This wonderful opportunity is made possible by a generous grant from the Royalston Cultural Council. Watch for more information at the library and in backpacks.

Focus Group to Aid in Library Long Range Planning

Deb Blanchard, Director of the Athol Public Library, will be leading a public focus group on Thursday, April 20th at the Royalston Town Hall at 7:00 p.m. Specific invitations will be mailed to many people in town to garner a diverse set of perspectives on where you think the library should be headed in the next five years. If you would like to be included in the list and want to attend, please contact the library. The discussion will focus on goals that townspeople feel are important for the library to address. In the questionnaire done last spring, people felt that the library should focus on general enrichment, with current fiction and non-fiction books and media for adults and children. Also high on the priority list was genealogy and adult programming. This meeting will give people a chance to state their views on a multitude of issues including should the library engage in a building renovation program, automation, and types of formats to serve the public. Library staff will not be in attendance. Compiled results of the meeting will be available at the library and will be summarized in the newsletter. Of course, delicious refreshments will be served.

Understanding the Modern Middle East Program Continues

The final program in the "Understanding the Modern Middle East" reading and discussion group will be held Sunday, April 2nd at 2:00 p.m. at the library. Dr. David Mednicoff will give a lecture entitled, "Myths, Madmen, and Mullahs: Contemporary Arab Politics and US Policy Choices." Background material can be garnered from Chapter 4, *The Shaping of Foreign Policy: The Myth of the Middle East Madman* in R. Stephen Humphreys' book *Between Memory and Desire: The Middle East in a Troubled Age*, copies of which are available at the library. You don't have to read the book to attend the lecture.

Dr. Mednicoff is Assistant Professor of Legal Studies and Adjunct Assistant Professor in the Department of Judaic and Near Eastern Studies and the Program in Middle Eastern Studies at UMass Amherst. His A.B. in Public and International Affairs is from Princeton University's Woodrow Wilson School and his J.D. and Ph.D. are from Harvard. He is expert in Middle Eastern politics, international and comparative law, human rights and globalization theory. Professor Mednicoff's current research includes publications on the shifting nature of sovereignty and its relation to international humanitarian intervention, the stability of contemporary Middle Eastern monarchies and U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East, as well as a new comparative project of the connection of law and political liberalization in four contemporary Arab societies. A former Fulbright scholar in Morocco, he speaks six languages, and will have just returned from Egypt.

This series was developed and partially funded by the Massachusetts Foundation for the Humanities and Massachusetts scholars with matching funding from the Friends of the Library and Polly Longworth. The session is approximately two hours and delicious refreshments are provided. These discussions have been very well received and we are pleased to be able to provide this timely discourse on such an important topic. For more information or to purchase a book or borrow one, call the library.

Library to Automate Card Catalog

Kathy Morris, Library Director

Since the inception of the library, the card catalog has been a major problem. From the first hand written cards, to the typewritten cards, to the computer generated cards, trying to get the catalog up-to-date has always taken an inordinate amount of staff time because each card has to be produced, alphabetized and inserted and, then, removed when the book is withdrawn.

Early records of reports written by an "advisory visitor" from the Massachusetts Free Public Library Commission stated that on June 15, 1907 a visit to the Royalston library (then located in the present day selectmens' office) noted that, "A card catalogue seems to be the most pressing need." After the library moved to the present site, the 1911 Library Director grumbled in the Annual Report that classification and cataloguing was going to be done "to please the state." In 1931, an official report noted that the catalog "is in a most inefficient condition." When I began in 1994, Darlene Willhite, the Director at the time, had inherited a card catalog in boxes throughout the library. The Board of Library Commissioners had gotten a larger card catalog donated to the library and volunteers had removed all the cards and were going to redo the catalog. Darlene had gallantly undertaken the project and was entering all the new books and trying to reassemble the multitude of boxes of cards.

When I was hired, one of my priorities was to finish updating the card catalog. Almost twelve years later, library staff has accomplished a lot, but we still have a long way to go. Barbara Stowell created a computer database that has allowed us to create book labels and catalog cards. Thus, all the new books from the last five years are up to date in the catalog and we've made good progress cataloging the existing collection. However, many of the oldest books are still not in the system, and although we have tried to remove the cards for all the books that have been lost or removed, the task is still incomplete.

Five years ago, the library got serious about creating an automated on-line card catalog, but the cost was prohibitive. In fact, the cost for the first year of becoming a "mininet" member in the regional network, not including computers and staffing time, would have been \$11,000, about one-third of our total budget. Simultaneously, funds to offset the cost of automating dried up completely with the Big Dig fiscal fiasco. It just wasn't feasible.

Recently, the library has been investigating other on-line options with the help of Dodie Gaudet, an advisor from the Central Massachusetts Regional Library System. Some of the options were: (1) independent systems, which cost about \$4,000 just for the operating software; (2) a costly membership in CWMARS, the local regional system; (3) free web-based services, which are fine as long as there aren't any problems; (4) bar-coding our books and waiting for the state to find funding to subsidize our automation expenses; (5) doing nothing; or (6) joining a different web-based, state-funded system called MassCat. Recently, the trustees voted to join MassCat. It is subsidized by the state and costs about \$275 for our library; it has the advantage over the free systems of providing technical support and offering a network of services.

Staff begins training in early April. Stay tuned to learn how to browse our new online catalog. Links to the catalog will be on the library's cool website: www.royalstonlibrary.org.

Contributors to the Friends

The nonprofit Friends of the Phineas S Newton Library is a group of volunteers who donate time and/or money to support our Town library. This group helps purchase library supplies, facilitates many library programs, offers labor for library projects and publishes the Royalston Community Newsletter 10 times/ year. Many thanks to these RCN readers who recently joined or renewed their memberships to the Friends of the Library:

Theresa Quinn & Geo. Krasowski
Arline & Randall Vining
Boyd Estus & Liane Brandon
Dan & Cheryl Mahoney
Virginia & Bonny Moore
David & Shirley Putney
Bob & Lorraine Casinghino
Ruth Suyenaga & Mark Shoul
Phil Mickey & Nell Vaughn
Barbara & Enis Willhite
The Boucher Family
Jms & Maureen Meausky
Rev & Phoebe Jacobs
Lisa & Glenn Freden
Aaron Ellison & Elizabeth Farnsworth
Meryl & Marie Willhite
Dan & Elizabeth Shodek
Tom & Leslie Freudenheim
Kate Collins & Geo. Northrop
Raeann LeBlanc & Roger O'Donnell
Cindy & Steve Savoy
Chistine & Russ Long
Rick & Patty Carrier
Maba & Gene Cauthen
Donald & Elizabeth Denniston

Mary Barclay
Lillie D Dobson
Diane Lincoln
Celt Grant
The Short Family
Janet Willhite
Tom Musco
Helen Feliciano
Mary Dilg
Pat Jackson
Judy Carroll
The Vaccari Family
Paul Montero
Emma O'Connor
Alyce Mayo
Allen Young
The Village School
Ken & Andrea Lively
Paula & Rick Paul
John & Joan Nash
Ralph & Joy Cutter
Ginny Gingras
Pat Shea & Dan Igoe
Wm & Phyllis Clark
Bill & Sue Richard

If you'd like to join or renew with the Friends, stop by the library or mail a check in any amount to Box 133, Royalston 01368.

NEW BOOKS

ADULT FICTION

Ahern, Cecelia *PS, I Love You*
Beaton, M. C. *Death of a Dreamer*
Brown, Rita Mae *Sour Puss*
Crais, Robert *The Two Minute Rule*
Cunningham, Elizabeth *The Passion of Mary Magdalen: A Novel*
Foster, Lori *Judes Law*
Gardner, Lisa *Gone*
Goodman, Allegra *Intuition: A Novel*
Graham, Heather *Island*
Hannah, Kristin *Magic Hour*
Harrison, Lisi *Pretty Committee Strikes Back*
Hoag, Tami *Prior Bad Acts*
Hunter, Erin *Midnight*
Khoury, Raymond *The Last Templar*
Naylor Phyllis Reynolds *Lovingly*
Nix, Garth *Sir Thursday*
O'Shaughnessy, Perry *Presumption of Death*

Parker, T. Jefferson *Fallen*
Perry, Thomas *Nightlife*
Peters, Elizabeth *Tomb of the Golden Bird*
Proulx, Annie *Brokeback Mountain*
Rennison, Louise *It's OK, I'm Wearing Really Big Knickers!*
Robb, J. D. *Bump in the Night*
Springer, Nancy *The Case of the Missing Marquess*
Steel, Danielle *House*
Stewart, Paul *Freelancer*
Straight, Susan *A Million Nightingales*
Vine, Barbara *The Minotaur: A Novel*
Zahn, Timothy *Outbound Flight*
Zahn, Timothy *Star Wars: Outbound Flight*
Balliett, Blue *The Wrights 3*
Picoult, Jodi *10th Circle*

Mose Hudson Tapia Library

Royalston's Adopt-a-Library Receives Aid

Royalston "adopted" the Mose Hudson Tapia Library in Bayou LaBatre, Alabama after it was completely destroyed by Hurricane Katrina. The Friends of the Library has donated profits from its production of the Tempest and is planning a fundraising event this summer to benefit this Gulf Coast public library. Recently, the Mose Tapia Library received an unexpected gift from another source. The Czech government donated \$111,458. (This was part of their international aid plan to contribute over \$15 million to aid organizations destroyed or damaged by natural disasters). While the Czech donation to Mose Tapia is significant, it still isn't nearly enough to cover the hurricane damage. Royalston residents who would like to contribute to the rebuilding, can leave checks at the library made out to the Friends of the Library with Mose Tapia on the memo line. Thank you to the Barclay family and the Savoy family, who have already made kind donations.

Art Shows at the Library

Add art exhibits to the many reasons your local library is well worth a visit. In recent months, collections of work by Gary Lippincott, Elizabeth Farnsworth, ME Kane, Kate Collins and Norah Dooley have been featured. Here is the schedule for upcoming exhibits:

April: Noah Siegel -nature photography

May and June: Chris Lyons- illustrations

July and August: Laurie Truehart- Nature painting and carving

Local artists, if you'd like to be featured some month or if you know someone we should display, let us know at the library.

Multiple Sclerosis Walk

On Saturday, April 8th the library's own Gina Verrelli will again be undertaking the 6 mile walk at Burncoat High School in Worcester. Proceeds will benefit Multiple Sclerosis research. Donations to sponsor Gina in the walk may be left at the library. Checks may be made out to Gina with Multiple Sclerosis Walk on the memo line.

ADULT NONFICTION

Armstrong, Karen *The Great Transformation: The Beginning of Our Religious Traditions*
Nolen-Hoeksema, Susan *Eating, Drinking, Overthinking: The Toxic Triangle of Food, Alcohol, and Depression – and How Women Can Break Free*
Vincent, Norah *Self-Made Man: One Woman's Journey Into Manhood and Back Again*
The Silver Spoon
Tougas, Michael *Blizzard of 78*
Humphreys, R. Stephen *Between Memory and Desire: The Middle East in a Troubled Age*

BOOKS-ON-CD

Winchester, Simon *A Crack in the Edge of the World: America and the Great California Earthquake of 1906*

Royalston's 8th Annual Easter Egg Hunt and Chocolate Melting



Date: Saturday, April 15, 2006 (rain or shine)

Time: 10:00 a.m.

Location: Royalston Town Hall and Common

Ages: All who can enjoy

Things to bring: Something to carry your candy put your name on it. Dress for the weather – if it rains we'll use the 2nd floor of the Town Hall and lots of hay.

There will be plenty of plastic eggs filled with candy to hunt for throughout the Common. Don't forget the 20 pounds of chocolate that will be molded, bagged, and taken home after the egg hunt – fun, fun, fun!

Donations of plastic eggs, wrapped candy, or funding to purchase these items can be left at the Royalston library, the country store, or call Rene Lake at (978) 249-4639. Note: Once again we'll be recycling the plastic eggs.

Connecting Nature and Art Workshops

with Kerry Stone Mondays 3:30 to 4:30 pm at the Village School

April 3, 10, 24 for grades K-2 May 1, 8, 15 for grades 3-6

Using large rocks as molds, create a beautiful bowl out of clay. Make your own clay stamps to press into the clay, creating exciting textures. There will be time for doing individual explorations as well. There is a limit of 12 children for each series. To sign up, send a check with the child's name and age to The Village School P.O. Box 122 Royalston MA 01368. 978 249-3505. cost : \$30

Bullock Park Extreme Make-Over: Is it time?

It's spring, and some young fancies are turning to baseball. Bullock Park, the soggy, blueberry lined field behind the Post Office, was given to the Town decades ago with the stipulation it be used for recreation. It has been the heart of Royalston baseball ever since. The trouble is that brush has grown up to circumscribe the outfield and the puddles at short stop rarely dry up.

Meanwhile, the Open Space Committee was approached about making a simple, low tech skating rink in the field during the frozen winter months. It turns out that the DPW had the foresight to run a pipe that could be used for electric and water lines under the road from the fire station to the field many years ago. Russ Long, who directed a rink for over 20 years is willing to lend his expertise. He thinks the field is a perfect size, location and bowl shape. The problem is drainage.

In recent years, the park has hosted the Royalston Music Fest. It is a sweet central location in the picturesque historic district. Wet spots can be a problem, however.

The DPW thinks that with public support, some physical labor and a reasonable amount of money, Bullock Field could become a lovely year round recreation site for all these purposes. A loose committee of interested residents has started forming. If you support this idea of improving the park's drainage, improving the baseball field and/or adding a seasonal hockey rink, let us know. Call Beth Gospodarek at 249-0358 or e-mail: info@royalstonopenspace.org

Christian Holy Week: Church Services in Royalston

The Holiest season of the Christian calendar comes to a climax this month. Royalston's houses of worship are commemorating with a number of events. Of special note:

Palm fronds will be distributed on **Palm Sunday** at Our Lady Queen of Heaven's 8:15 a.m. Mass, and at the 9 a.m. and 11 a.m. services at the Second and First (respectively) Congregational Churches.

An **Ecumenical Good Friday healing service** is being conducted at the First Congregational Church on Friday, April 14, at 7 p.m. There will be singing, scriptural readings of healings, and prayers for healing the ill and injured. **Good Friday Mass** will be offered at Our Lady Immaculate in Athol; contact 978-249-2738 for that schedule.

An **Easter Sunday Sunrise Service** will begin just in time to greet the 6:02 a.m. sunrise (please arrive a little early); it's outside the First Congregational Church and led by John Divoll. Afterwards, warm up in Fellowship Hall with a cup of coffee, tea or cocoa, and some of Mrs. Helen Divoll's fresh donuts. There are also Easter Sunday celebrations at 8:15 a.m. at Our Lady Queen of Heaven, 9:00 am. at the First Congregational and 11:00 a.m. at the Second Congregational Churches.

New Congregational Youth Group

Plans Monadnock Hike & Mother's Day Breakfast

The recently revived Congregational Churches' Youth Group has met the past few weeks. Young men and women between the ages of 12 and 16, affiliated with both the First and Second Congregational Churches, gather at The Parsonage each Sunday evening at 6 p.m. The group will enjoy a Mt. Monadnock hike on Sunday, April 23 (foul weather date April 30), leaving from the First Congregational Church following 11 a.m. services and coffee hour. All interested teens and adults are encouraged to attend; bring a day pack, broken-in hiking shoes, lunch and plenty of drinking water. Youth Group is also organizing a **Mother's Day Breakfast** for Sun., May 14, from 8 a.m. – 10 a.m. at the Royalston Town Hall.

LBS Presents: Town Zoning Project

Vyto Andreliunas and LBS President Kim MacPhee are guest speakers at the May 31 program for the Ladies' Benevolent Society of Royalston. The pair will provide information and answer any questions on the Town Zoning Project. The presentation begins immediately following the 7:30 p.m. meeting, at the North Fitzwilliam Road home of member Rebecca Krause-Hardie. The group will also be making plans for their annual Royalston Blood Donor Day, held just prior to the long Independence Day weekend, when blood bank supplies are critically low. Light refreshments will follow the program. Interested non-members are welcome to attend, and should RSVP at 978-575-1454.

South Royalston School Reunion Association News

The SRS Reunion Association is planning a website for their organization, in hopes of keeping in contact with members near and far. If you have some expertise in this area, some photos or information you'd like to supply for the new web site, contact President Luann (LaRoche) Simula at 978-249-8746.

A Letter from the Superintendent

Anthony T Polito, ARRSD Superintendent

The Athol-Royalston Regional School District has requested an increase in funds from its member towns for the FY07 School Year. This budget was developed collaboratively with administrators, teachers, staff, parents and community members. It was also presented at two public hearings. This increase is intended to maintain the current level of service to our students. It is also intended to address specific target areas of improvement as mandated by the Massachusetts Department of Education (DOE), the Massachusetts Office of Educational Quality and Accountability (EQA), the New England Association of Schools and Colleges, and the United States Department of Education. You may receive a copy of these mandates by calling the Central Office. You may also receive a copy of the FY07 budget by calling as well. These mandates and the FY07 budget should be posted on the District's web-site by April 1, 2006.

If the District fails to make adequate progress in meeting these mandates, it will be declared underperforming by the State. The District will also be declared underperforming if it is forced to cut any staff or student services next year. The State (DOE) would consider any staff or service cuts next year as a breach of trust in our agreement to meet our mandates. This would come about if the District does not have the resources to meet its \$21,535,628 budget for next year.

As most of you know, the District needed a \$1,000,000 "bailout bill" from the State to get through this year. After budget cuts were made last August, the budget was doomed to fail. We will now have a Financial Control Board, primarily run by State officials that will oversee our District's finances for the next three years. All of the major budget decisions of the School Committee will be recommendations made to the Financial Control Board for final approval.

It is my pledge that our District will stabilize its financial situation next year. I also pledge to lead a continuous effort to follow a very ambitious improvement plan that has been collaboratively developed for our District with the school administrators, teachers, staff, parents and most importantly community members. All of us have a responsibility to our students to provide an education that allows them to achieve at the highest levels. To paraphrase a quote of George Peabody, an 18th century philanthropist: Education is a debt that all educated people owe the future.

Monty Tech Budget Set

The 22-member Monty Tech School Committee recently completed an extensive, annual performance review of Superintendent-Director James R. Culkeen. It was investigating fiscal, personnel, curriculum, physical plant management, as well as public relations. Culkeen earned an over all average of six out of a possible seven, and glowing comments in many areas. The Monty Tech School Committee unanimously passed the Budget Subcommittee's recommendation FY 2007. Royalston's student population at MT remains stable at 28 for both 2004 and 2005, the years used to calculate our per capita assessment. Royalston's assessment is up \$3,654 more than last year, to a total assessment of \$58,016. The increase is due to: the three percent raise for teachers and other staff raises; the addition of faculty due to increasing enrollment; and the reinstatement of spending on capital equipment improvements. The biggest unexpected rise was in health insurance, and of course, fuel costs have risen much faster than anticipated.

Town Clerk News

Melanie Mangum, Town Clerk

Annual Town Election Update

The Annual Town Election will be held Monday, April 3, from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. Precinct 1 is located at the Town Hall on the Common. Precinct 2 is located at Whitney Hall, 5 School St. If unsure where to vote, contact me at the office – 978-249-2093.

Contests this year: **Werner Bundschuh** and **Linda Alger** are running for a 3-year seat on the Board of Selectmen. **Vyto Andreliunas** and **Gary Winitzer** are running for a 5-year seat on the Planning Board. Also, voters will choose among four candidates, Matt Alden, Mary Forristall, Sue Gatautis, and Ranee LaPointe, who are vying for two **Athol** terms of three years each on the Athol-Royalston Regional School Committee.

Positions on the ballot with no candidates: A 3-year term for Assessor, a 3-year term for Moderator, a 3-year term for the Board of Health and a 1-year term for the Trustees of the J.N. Bartlett Fund are open positions. The two-year, **Athol** position to the Athol-Royalston Regional School Committee also has no candidate on the ballot. Write-in campaigns are possible in all these positions.

(Ed note: Both Wayne Newton and George Northrop would like to be written in for Moderator; George Vaccari is seeking write in votes for Board of Health, and Ed Thompson is running a write in campaign for the 2 year Athol seat on the ARRSD)

Running Unopposed:

Town Clerk, 1 year - **Melanie Mangum**

Tree Warden - 3 years - **Larry Siegel**

Cemetery Commission - 3 years - **John McClure**

Constable - 3 years - **John Chencharik**

Board of Library Trustees - 3 years - **Barbara Guiney**

4 Positions each of 1 year for the J. N. Bartlett Fund - **Mary Barclay, Barbara Richardson, Brenda Putney.** (The fourth position has no candidate, as mentioned above.)

Board of Public Welfare - **Mary Barclay**

Sewer Commission: - 3 years- **Gary Winitzer**; 2 years- **Gary Winslow**

Athol-Royalston Regional School Committee – 3 years- **Roberta Newman.**

Census: Census forms will be arriving in your mail soon. It is important to review and update the information; then, sign and return the form as soon as possible. Please note that registered voters who have changed residence need to submit in writing that they would like to be removed from that residence on our records. Otherwise, those voters stay on the register as an inactive voter until they have not voted in a state election for two years. I am working hard to make sure we have a more accurate street list. Among other vital reasons to have accurate census information is the calculation of state aid for the Town and the public safety need for accurate addresses.

Upcoming Town Meetings Selectmen may call a special town meeting, with a possible date of April 21. Two weeks later, we will have our Annual Town Meeting, on Friday, May 5. Selectmen are busy preparing the warrant and I am busy preparing the Annual Report for the Annual Meeting. I will be posting the last day to register to vote for both these meetings around Town. If you are unsure if you are registered to vote, please call for verification or to get an application to register.

Candidates' Statements for Contested Seats

Selectboard

Werner Bundschuh

I am seeking your vote for a 2nd term on the Royalston Board of Selectmen.

A Navy veteran, I graduated from Boston University and worked as a producer of documentary films, mostly for public television. My family moved to Royalston in 1979. My children attended the Royalston schools and Athol High School. Also, I have served on the Planning Board and as chair of the Athol-Royalston Regional School Committee.

I think it is important for the Selectmen to conduct their meetings in an atmosphere of courtesy, where issues are resolved with consideration of all points of view.

Royalston has always supported our children's education. When the 6th grade was threatened with removal to Athol, the Selectmen acted quickly to resolve the crisis by organizing a Town Meeting vote.

The Selectmen actively seek grants to lighten the financial burden on taxpayers. Last year we received a grant to help residents repair houses and septic systems and we expect a similar one this year.

Royalston has also applied for a grant to rebuild Route 32. Unlike a former plan, this design calls for complete rebuilding without extensive straightening and widening, and includes a bike-path.

Preserving Royalston's natural beauty and rural character is important to all of us. The Selectmen created a Task Force to suggest improvements to our Zoning By-law. The group has already received a state grant and hired a consultant to help with the work.

The Selectmen also hope to fund several summer jobs to assist in clean-up projects. In South Royalston we are seeking ways to restore the river area to a place of beauty and source of pride.

Planning Board

Vyto L. Andreliunas

If you consider what things in life you value most, there's a good chance that where you live, your community, and its surroundings rate near the top. Pat and I love Royalston because it has the qualities we most admire in a small town, natural qualities that deserve wise stewardship and protection.

I've served continuously on the Planning Board for four terms and have represented the Town on the Montachusett Regional Planning Commission for most of those years. Coming from having served a dozen years on the planning board of a fast growing town, I was keenly aware of how qualities could be lost to unregulated or careless development. In my professional life, I oversaw the management and protection of 55,000 acres of lands for public benefit, which gave me a sense of which public policies work. Today, we see our next door neighbors confronted with what looks like the worst textbook example of build for profit. This should be a wake up call.

I feel, now as I did back then, that my planning board experience and civil engineering background would benefit the Town as we continue to upgrade our zoning bylaws through our current project, and as laws and other conditions change, take measures to ensure that the values we treasure in this community will be protected to the fullest extent possible. Land use laws and the issues that are generated are complex and demanding, and they affect each and every property owner. It makes good sense to anticipate problems instead of reacting once they come upon us. Thank you for your help over the years, and I hope you will let me continue working with you in reaching our mutual goals.

Linda Alger

I am a candidate for Selectman in the Town of Royalston. I grew up in Royalston and returned to my roots in the south village when I purchased my family homestead in 1990. Having spent all of my life here I am familiar with the community's history and am passionate about its future.

I previously served as Selectman from 1997- 2003, and of those six years, I served as Chairman for three of them. As a result I am well versed and have the experience to fulfill this role with confidence and competence. Three years ago I had decided not to run for re-election because I was not willing to give less than 100% commitment to the citizens of Royalston. I was completing my Interdisciplinary Studies degree at Fitchburg State College, I had become a foster parent, and was assisting two elderly family members. At that time my decision was in the Town's best interest. My personal time constraints have lessened and I am ready and able to give back to our community.

My past record while on the Board speaks for itself. I have no regrets as to decisions I made during my previous service. There were times when my opinions differed from others but I can say with certainty that I based all of my decisions on what I believed was in Royalston's best interest. I won't insult your intelligence by stating that I never made any mistakes. I can however say that if a mistake was made it was without malice, and part of a learning process in which I grew. While serving Royalston in the past I was involved with the completion of the water and sewer projects, the Rte. 68 bridge replacement, pursuit of the repair to School Street, the capping and closing of the landfill, obtaining a tree grant, and attempting to get Whitney Hall registered as a historic site to name a few.

While I am not aware of all of the issues that we are facing I am a quick study. We are faced with some important projects and issues; the financial and educational status of the school district and the impact that will have on the students and taxpayers, the Rte 32 road repair project, frugal financial resource management in all departments, taking of tax title properties, and the completion of Zoning Bi-Law revisions. I am proactive and would very much like to be part of the solutions. I am asking for your support on April 3rd. I am eager to serve the residents of Royalston.

Gary Winitzer

As a candidate for Planning Board, I want you to know that I understand the duties of the Board and am ready to serve the community as a new member. The Planning Board not only makes decisions as required by the Bylaws, but also participates in updating the Town's Master Plan, holds hearing and gives recommendations on changes to the Zoning By-Laws, decides on subdivision plans and deals with implications of the State's housing and development laws. Currently, the Zoning By-Laws are in the process of being updated and expanded, and the planning Board recently heard from people concerned about the proposed development adjacent to Tully Lake and abutting our Town. Please vote, on April 3rd, for Gary Winitzer for Planning Board so that I can continue to serve you, the residents of Royalston, and those who might visit or make this community the place we call home



Memorials:



Townspople are stunned and saddened by the unexpected passing of **John S. Kirkman**, 50, who lived most of his life on Fernald Road in South Royalston. John, the son of the late Waino and Martha (Rinta) Kirkman, was very active in community affairs and served numerous appointed and elected terms throughout his life, including as selectman. He was one of five

Eagle Scouts earning the honor as a member of Royalston's former Boy Scout Troop 32. He was also a member of the Second Congregational Church of Royalston and the South Royalston Reunion Association. He played football in high school and enjoyed skiing, golf and suffering with the Red Sox. He leaves his sister Christina Mahoney and her husband Peter, and their son, Peter J. Mahoney, III. Memorial contributions are being accepted for the Memorial Fund of the Second Congregational Church, in c/o Luann Simula; 50 Main Road; Royalston, MA 01331.

Condolences to the John C. Scribner family: Charlie, Maryellen, Jeff and Patrick of Laurel Lake Rd, on the passing of Charlie's mother, **Myrtle E. (Turner) Scribner**, 86, who died March 17, 2006. She was known to many through her work with Athol scouts and elder groups and was the children's librarian at the Athol Public Library for 35 years.

Sylvia (Paganetti) McLure, 91, died February 19, 2006. She was born in South Royalston August 14, 1914 to Arthur and Alina Paganetti. She attended Templeton schools and was later employed with the former Simplex Time Recorder company of Gardner. She was a resident of Baldwinville for 55 years. Her husband Edwin McLure died in 1989. Friends and family fondly remember her love of animals as well as her interest in traveling, sports and crafts. She was predeceased by a sister and two brothers, including Alfred Paganetti of South Royalston and she is survived by several nieces and nephews including Kay Paganetti of Royalston. Contributions in her memory can be made to the Templeton Rescue Squad, 2 School St, Baldwinville 01436.

Recipe of the Month:

In 1997, the Ladies' Benevolent Society compiled a cookbook called *Mostly Scratch*, which raised money for LBS scholarships and other charitable works. It featured recipes from its members as well as fantastic pen and ink doodles in the margins by Sonia Vaccari, Karen Otto, and Lydia Musco. This recipe was submitted to that cookbook by long time treasurer Nancy Newton:

Cranberry (or Blueberry) Festival Cake:

- | | |
|---------------------|-----------------------|
| 1/2 cup shortening | 1/4 tsp salt |
| 1 cup sugar | 3/4 cup milk |
| 1 egg | 1/2 tsp vanilla |
| 2 cups flour | 1 cup blueberries |
| 2 tsp baking powder | or halved cranberries |

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Mix shortening and sugar; add egg and vanilla. Then, add sifted dry ingredients alternately with milk. Fold in berries. Pour into greased 8x8" pan. Sprinkle sugar on top of batter. Bake for 45 - 50 minutes.

Nancy W Newton, 77, of Pike Rd died February 21. Her dry wit and competent manner will be missed in this town. She was born in Englewood, N.J. on April 25, 1928. She grew up in New Jersey and graduated from Bay Path College in Longmeadow, Massachusetts. She worked as a secretary for many years at several companies in New Jersey as well as at Union Twist Drill in Athol. For the past 25 years, she has resided in Royalston and was an active participant in our community. She was a member of the 1st Congregational Church, and a long time treasurer of the Ladies' Benevolent Society. She volunteered at the senior meal site and at Town elections. She enjoyed bowling, hiking, and especially enjoyed watching bluebirds. Her husband, Harold Newton, died in 1992. She leaves a stepson, Bruce Newton of Fitzwilliam N.H., a stepdaughter, Pamela Osborne of Orange, four grandchildren; her brother and many nephews and grand nieces and nephews. There will be a burial held at Lawrence Brook Cemetery in the spring. In lieu of flowers the family suggests contributions to the Ladies' Benevolent Society Scholarship Fund/ c/o Putney/ 185 North Fitzwilliam Rd/ Royalston 01368.

Kate Collins remembers Nancy Newton: Whenever I drive Northeast Fitzwilliam Road, I anticipate seeing Nancy Newton with her dog, Katie, pulling her along on a walk. It's a hard image to lose and I miss her. I knew Nancy Wheeler a little before she married Harold Newton. After I was elected Selectman we became friends. She was secretary to the Board and brought all of her professional skills as secretary to that job. She was excellent and worked extra time whenever we needed her; all of this was for minimal pay and really as a gift of service to our town. As part of her job, she kept a scrapbook filling it with all the local newspaper articles concerning the town. She loved the Town of Royalston and helped make it the special place it is. She was a friend to many of us and gave a lot to us all through her many years of work for the town.

Ann Erich, who summered on Prospect Hill Road for over 40 years, died at age 98 on February 28 at River Mead in Peterborough, NH. There will be a memorial service on April 30th at 150 River Mead Road, Peterborough in the Community Center Dining Room in Peterborough from 1:30-4:00 p.m. RSVP to her daughter, Holly, at hollyIO.cs.com (that's I as in ice) or by calling 808-351-3583 (Hawaii) For more information call Jenny at 603-924-4452

Births:



Congratulations to **Jim and Janice Draper** of Prospect Hill on their new great granddaughter, **Kayla Marie**.



Congratulations and Good News

Got something to crow about? Drop the news by the library or e-mail chasegos@gis.net .

Awarded: Diane ‘LINQ’ Lincoln and her compact disc “*Journey*” have been nominated for the 2006 Kweevak Music Magazine Music Awards. In addition to the “Editor’s Choice” awards, there are also “Reader’s Survey” awards. If you think

LINQ’s *Journey* is tops, you’ll want to go to www.linqmusic.com and see how you can register your vote! Voting is ongoing through May 15; only one vote per ISP will be accepted.

Wedding Plans:

Werner and Patience Bundschuh are very happy to announce the engagement of their daughter Emily Bundschuh to Christopher Santillo. A September wedding is planned. Emily and Chris both work in Boston for EF Education, an international company promoting education through cultural exchange.



Emily Bundschuh with her fiancé Christopher Santillo

Happy 85th. Many happy returns of the day!

A very surprised **Marguerite (Clark) Langlois** was the guest of honor recently at a surprise 85th birthday party at the Athol American Legion Hall. The event was well attended by family and friends, who enjoyed a pot luck luncheon. Mrs. Langlois received many gifts and posed for numerous photos, Mrs. Langlois’ birthday was also celebrated at a recent meeting of the Pomona Grange. (She has been a member of the Grange for 71 years.)

March 14 Twin birthdays were celebrated by 85 year old brother and sister **Ralph Kirkman** and **Lillie (Kirkman) Dobson** recently at Mrs. Dobson’s home. Family and friends commemorated the event with refreshments, including a birthday cake made by Donna (Dobson) White. Ralph and Lillie aren’t the only twins in the family...Lillie’s granddaughter Tricia (Neale) Cummings, and niece Susan (Kirkman) Perkins, are also mothers of twins.



Happy Birthday Peg Langlois (center), shown smiling with her sisters, Virginia Gingras and Patricia Berry Lamb.



Twins Lillie Kirkman Dobson and Ralph Kirkman celebrated their 85th birthday on March 14.

..and an awful lot of the children are above average...

The **Royalston Community School Chess Club** has just completed its 2006 tournament. With 20 students participating, the top finishers were: 1st -Ben Boudreau; 2nd:- Francisco Carra; 3rd- Mike Brousseau. Other awards included: 1st place B Division - Andrew Demboske; most improved- Ryan Deegan and Good Sportsmanship- Tobey Chase. Many thanks to Noah Siegel for facilitating the club, Kingsman Chess Club for lending equipment , parents for donating snacks, and the PTG for sponsoring this popular after school club.

World Travelers

Welcome back, Village School 4-6 graders! This lucky group of students enjoyed a whirlwind, **six-day trip to England and Wales** that included tours of four castles, a Medieval cathedral, two abbeys and Stonehenge.

Poetry Club

There was a green leprechaun boyo
who played with a wee green toyo.
He said to his sister,
“I have a big blister.
Now I need to see Dr. O’Royo.
*by Allyana and Kadaisia LaJoie,
Allisyn Mowrey, Kiley LBlanc,
Derek Bates and Anna Deegan*



The Village School 4-6 grade is just back from accross the pond

In Your Own Backyard

Jeff Mangum

Why do you like living in Royalston? Whether your family has lived here for generations or you just arrived, you probably relish the small town atmosphere, the friendly faces, the familiar waves. Probably you also deeply enjoy the natural beauty. Personally, I love the forests. So when I read Harvard Forest's booklet *Wildlands and Woodlands, A Vision for the Forests of Massachusetts* (["http://harvardforest.fas.harvard.edu/wandw/"](http://harvardforest.fas.harvard.edu/wandw/)<http://harvardforest.fas.harvard.edu/wandw/>), I was excited by their proposal to protect them.

The problem with development is that many uncoordinated decisions are fragmenting our natural areas. Harvard Forest proposes a strategic effort to protect half of the state's natural landscape in perpetuity, allowing the other half for development. The protected areas would consist of 250,000 acres of "wildland reserves" in large chunks no smaller than 5,000 acres, and 2.25 million acres of "managed woodlands". Some benefits of protection are ecological health and biodiversity, protection of water supplies and old-growth forests, scientific study, sustainable timber and wildlife production, and extensive recreational, educational, aesthetic and spiritual experiences. But Massachusetts only has about 20 years to achieve this goal at the current rate of development.

After reading the booklet I was curious how Royalston compares to this vision. According to state geographic data (["http://www.mass.gov/mgis"](http://www.mass.gov/mgis)www.mass.gov/mgis), in January 2002 the town was 87% forest, 4% wetland, 3% agriculture, 3% residential, 2% open water, and 1% otherwise developed. And how much of this is protected? In February 2006, about 40% was. Who's protecting it? The state (20%), private landowner conservation restrictions (11%), the Army Corps of Engineers (6%), The Trustees of Reservations (2%), and the New England Forestry Foundation (1%). Those are pretty good numbers—no wonder Royalston is so beautiful!

But that was just a snapshot in time, and things are changing. To preserve our scenery, wildlife, and rural character—our quality of life—we need to think ahead. To get involved, visit the Royalston Open Space Committee website "<http://www.royalstonopenspace.org/>"www.royalstonopenspace.org, or come to the next meeting on April 13 at Town Hall. Also visit the Harvard Forest web site above, and click on Woodland Councils.

Wildlife Signs and Sightings

Lynn Anair reports hearing a **Northern Saw-Whet Owl** for the past week or so on Norcross Rd. She suggests going to <http://www.owlpages.com/owls.php?genus=Aegolius&species=acadicus> for more info and a sound file helpful in identifying owl calls.

Sharon Harmon saw a young **fisher-cat** near Norcross road two weeks ago and then another one last week on Rt. 32. Both were in the morning.

The **male moose** that frequented **Elizabeth Leonard's yard** on Laurel Lake Road last summer was back in March. Also, on March 12, **Sherri Landry** and her daughter were on their way to church when they came across a **moose** in the middle of the road just past the railroad tracks in South Royalston. It froze for a couple of minutes then meandered to the side of the road. **Kathy Chencharik** spotted a young moose in South Royalston recently as well.

Garden Notes

Larry Siegel



We experienced, finally, a touch of winter. Fortunately, I was off visiting family for most of its duration. Even more fortunately, my family lives in South Florida and not northern Minnesota. I returned, itching to engage in some outdoor garden task, but was obliged to wait a week until the weather moderated in March. I peeked under the mulch: the alliums (garlic, shallots, scallions) had emerged, islands of green amid the sea of brown hay and leaves. Only two parsley plants survived, despite the fact that many were covered by those versatile fish tanks. The spinach, regrettably, fared poorly, most having rotted under the mulch (victims, perhaps, of the rainy winter). The fall-planted spinach typically provides us with the season's first green vegetable. Not this year. Sometime between April 1 and April 15 I will plant our spring spinach. There was, as well, food resulting from my early March tour of the garden. I extracted a meal's worth of parsnips, though the task was a bit more formidable than the December and January harvests. There is, indeed, frost in the ground, and it goes down at least as far as the parsnips.

March 20. The calendar says spring. The sun, rising before 6:00 a.m. setting after 6:00 p.m., says spring. The elements, alas, suggest otherwise. For six days now (with several more predicted) the thermometer has not climbed much beyond freezing. With overnight readings in the low teens, it is all I can do to motivate myself to undertake my morning walk. (Large amounts of caffeine assist me in this task.) Throughout, the winds have been brisk to bracing, contributing mightily to the general feeling of cold, and discouraging any form of outdoor activity. Notwithstanding, any day the temperature creeps above freezing finds me raking leaves and picking up the latest crop of twigs. The task seems unending. Regardless of how much I've accomplished the previous fall, late winter finds the yard encased with leaves and twigs. Gathering, hauling, piling. Compost in progress.

Indoors, the onions, leek, celery, and parsley have emerged. Peppers and an assortment of flowers have been seeded. By mid-April most everything to be transplanted to the June garden will have been started. My planting-mix formula is decidedly unscientific. A quantity of compost (perhaps two-thirds of the total) is mixed with equal parts of vermiculite, perlite, and peat moss (the remaining one-third). There are enough nutrients in the compost to feed the plants through their seedling stage. There are, also, enough weed seeds to provide me with my first weeding opportunity of the season.

Blustery weather be damned. In a few days' time I will be outdoors, re-opening the garden, jostling the soil, perhaps even dropping a seed or two into the ground. It is time.

Classifieds

Housecleaning Service: done in your home for Royalston and surrounding towns; 4 hrs - \$60. Call Fran: 1-978-895-0817

Summer Childcare offered: South Royalston mom will care for school-age children this summer. Bachelor's degree in elementary education, 5 years experience working with children with special needs. Before and after school and holidays also available. Call Shelly Bates, 978-249-2117.

Teaching Opportunity: The Village School has an opening for a combined 1st -3rd Grade Teacher starting September 2006. Call director Rise Richardson at 978-249-3505 or click www.villageschool.to for details.

Babysitter needed : Seeking a teenager with babysitting experience to care for two girls aged, 10 and 4 at my home. Babysitting would be one evening weekly during the school year with opportunity for more hours during school vacations. Call 249-2713 for info.

For sale:

Two wooden single beds - the bottom bunk is free standing on wheels and may be moved: placed either under the top bunk or wherever needed; includes two mattresses, ladder, built in shelving unit, set of drawers and an attached desk with corkboard and upholstered chair. Excellent, like-new condition. Asking for \$500. It was new at \$900 three years ago, rarely used. Call: Royalston - 978.248.9836 or Andover - 978.749.4861

Two twin beds with headboards and rails. A bargain at \$20 for both. Call Fran: 1-978-895-0817

Bagged sawdust (\$3/bag; deals on larger quantities) available -good for pet cages, mulch and stalls. Contact Amy or Amanda Putney, 978-249-7787.

The Royalston Community Newsletter
Friends of the Phinehas S. Newton Library
PO Box 133
Royalston MA 01368

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