## Calendar of Events

### April 1 Tuesday
**All Fools’ Day**

### April 2 Wednesday
7 - 8:30 p.m.  **Public invited to Zoning By-law Committee meeting at the Town Hall.** Discuss the work completed over the last several years, current status, goals, and schedule. April 16 will be a meeting for public comment on the draft of the zoning by-laws recommended by the committee.

### April 3 Thursday
7 pm  **Public discussion about proposed override of $50,000 to create a Capital Stabilization Account.** Members of the Selectboard will be there to share accurate information with voters.

### April 4 Friday
7 - 10 p.m.  **Open mic at Town Hall**

### April 7 Monday
10 am - 8 pm  **Annual Town Election.** Precinct 1 is located at Town Hall, 13 The Common, Precinct 2 is located at Whitney Hall, 5 School St.

### April 12 - 13 Saturday - Sunday  **River Rat Weekend**
The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers cautions that both Birch Hill Dam and Tully Lake are storing water for the Athol River Rat Race, so park trails may be flooded until that time. For more information, visit each dam’s website at http://www.nae.usace.army.mil/Missions/Recreation.aspx.

### April 14 Monday
3:45  **Friends of the Library meeting.** All welcome.

### April 15 Tuesday  **Passover**
12:55 am  **Total Eclipse of Full Worm Moon begins**
(Taxes and local scholarship applications due)

### April 17 Thursday
5:30 pm  **Athol-Royalston Education Foundation annual meeting** at Athol Public Library. Stop by for appetizers and desserts and find out what AREF has been doing for kids in our community lately!

### April 18 Good Friday

### April 19 Saturday
10 a.m., sharp!  **16th Annual Royalston community egg hunt on the Common and chocolate molding inside Town Hall.** (Free!) All welcome to search for the 2000 eggs stuffed with candy, melt and mold chocolates to take home, and meet Mr. Bunny. Dress for the weather. Donations of individually wrapped candies to fit in plastic eggs needed. Cash donations helpful too. Bring donations to the Royalston Store or the Phinehas Newton Library. For information or to volunteer help, contact Rene’ at 249-4639.

### April 20 Sunday  **Easter**

### April 21 Monday  **Patriots’ Day**

### April 23 Thursday
11:30 a.m.  **Steve Henderson and friend will present a 35 minute show “Jerry and Mabel,” an original hilarious love story. Think Romeo and Juliet meet Burns and Allen!** Free and open to the public. Funded by the Royalston Cultural Council in association with the Council on Aging. Call Deb Nunes at 249-4000 for info.

### April 24 Thursday
1:30 pm  **Kite flying and poetry writing** at the library. Bring your own kite or use one of ours. Kite cake served. Opportunities to write poetry.

### April 25 Friday
6:30 pm  **Historical Society pot luck supper and meeting** at Peter Krania’s home, corner of Stone and Winchendon Rds. (Feel free to come for supper or just show up for the meeting and dessert around 7 pm).

### April 26 Saturday
6:30 pm  **Concert at the Royalston Town Hall by The Guitar Circle of New England.** Donation $5. They are students of Robert Fripp.

### April 27 Sunday
8 - 11 am  **RFD Annual Pancake Breakfast** at Town Hall

### April 28 Monday
4:30 pm  **Library book discussion group meets** to discuss Mark Kurlanksy’s, *The Big Oyster: History on a Half Shell.* All welcome.

### April 30 Wednesday
**Last Day for residents with permits to burn brush,** weather permitting.

### May 1 Thursday
9:00 am  **May Pole and Morris Dancers** at the Village School. Community welcome!
Selectboard Notes

Linda Alger, Chair

Royalston Voters and Taxpayers

April 7th is Royalston’s town election, and the Board of Selectman is urging voters to support an **override of $50,000 to create a Capital Stabilization Account.**

The reality is a simple math equation. Often I hear the rhetoric “each of us taxpayers has to live within our budgets, and so should the town.” This comparison is similar to comparing apples and watermelons. As a homeowner I can adjust my budget by working an extra shift, using my savings, or squeezing my day-to-day finances for that one-time oil fill up. As a municipal leader, this is not an option. The town is limited by Proposition 2.5, and our basic expenses increase well beyond the 2.5% allowed annually.

Just a few examples (apples vs. watermelons). In the last five years heating oil has increased in cost almost 100% while the town in those same five years has been allowed to increase its budget at 12.5%. This is not just that a one-time fill-up; this is thousands of gallons of fuel at an 87% increase. Similar percentages apply to salt and sand, insurance, electricity, maintenance, technology, diesel fuel, and the list continues. In the last several years we have spent at least $30,000 on capital equipment (police cruiser, DPW truck, various other major projects).

No one wants an increase in taxes, but small municipalities such as ours can no longer keep pace. On an annual basis the Board has to recommend against funding necessary projects. We have two hearse houses that are literally falling down, and in my 14 years on the Board, I have fielded hundreds of calls on #1 School Street. The Board is constantly faced with fact that there is just not enough cash.

We apply for grants that are available and YES, we understand that these funds are still taxpayer monies. That said, it comes from taxes that each of you pay anyway and if Royalston doesn’t receive the money some other town will.

The town is not spending money frivolously. I would be happy to show anyone the information on items that we have cut or not funded. I don’t think the $50,000 we are requesting will solve all of the problems, but it will certainly allow us to develop a plan for equipment purchases based on the life expectancy of that equipment.

The current situation has no chance of improvement without your yes vote on April 7th. There’s a famous quote: “Doing what is easy is not always right. Doing what is right is not always easy.” Please do what is right and vote Yes on April 7th.

For more information please attend a discussion forum on April 3rd at 7pm in the Town Hall Dining Room.

Open Mic Series 13/14 Wraps-up in April

As we head into our final Open Mic session, Royalston Cultural Council, especially Jim Bennett and Phil Leger, would like to thank all who attended and performed at an extraordinary Open Mic season. We would like to thank the following house bands who brought their equipment and entertained folks with some excellent music.

Melanie and the Blue Shots  Nobody’s Fat  Crawdad E Creek
Mike Patterson and Company  Sidestreet Band

Town Clerk News

Melanie Mangum, Town Clerk

**ANNUAL TOWN ELECTION: MONDAY, APRIL 7, 2014**

Polls are open from 10 a.m. – 8 p.m. Precinct 1 is located at Town Hall, 13 The Common, Precinct 2 is located at Whitney Hall, 5 School St.

The following is a listing of the offices/terms and question that will appear on the ballot, and the candidates (or lack thereof) for each office.

There is one contest on the ballot this year. Gary Winitzer is challenging Christine Long for a 3-year seat on the Board of Selectmen.

**Selectman – 3 years – Christine Long, Gary Winitzer**

**Assessor - 3 years – No candidate**

**Cemetery Commission – 3 years – Roland Hamel**

**Board of Health – 3 years – Philip Leger**

**Library Trustee – 3 years – Mary Longsworth**

**Board of Public Welfare – 3 years – Nancy D. Melbourne**

**Planning Board – 5 years – no candidate**

**Sewer Commission – 2 years – no candidate**

**Sewer Commission – 3 years – Marie Mello**

**Trustees of J.N. Bartlett Fund – 4, 1-year terms – Wayne Newton, Roland Hamel, Roy Smith, Jr. and Gary Winitzer.**

**Athol-Royalston Regional School Committee – Royalston seat – 3 years – Nancy Melbourne**

**Athol-Royalston Regional School Committee – Two, 3-year seats – Lee Chauvette and Mitchell Grosky**

Question:

**Shall the Town of Royalston be allowed to assess an additional $50,000 in real estate and personal property taxes for the purpose of funding a capital projects stabilization fund for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2014?**

**ANNUAL TOWN MEETING DATE: MAY 9, 2014.**

As of this writing, the Board of Selectmen is still finalizing the warrant articles for the Annual Town Meeting. A special voter registration session will be held on Friday, April 18, from 2-4 p.m. and 7-8 p.m at the Town Clerk’s Office at Whitney Hall.

Open Burning Permits Available

Keith R. Newton, Fire Chief

The Fire Department will issue **Open Burning Permits** at the Royalston Fire Station #1, located at Athol Road, on the 2nd, 3rd and 4th Mondays of every month at 7:00 PM until May. The burning season starts January 15, 2014 and extends through May 1, 2014.

All fires must be at least 75 feet from any building, can only be burnt after 10:00 a.m. and must be out by 4:00 p.m. The Department of Environmental Protection also urges that you burn only on clear days to allow smoke to rise up and away from residences minimizing the effects of the smoke. On the day you wish to burn, call and listen for a recorded message that will give the information about safe burning. The non-emergency telephone number at the fire station is 978-249-8138. Thank you all for your full cooperation.
Candidates’ Statements for the Contested Selectboard Seat

Incumbent Chris Long: During my first term on the Select Board, I worked collaboratively with Linda Alger and John Morse, interacted positively with town employees and other town officials, wrote many of the Select Board notes for the town newsletter, and “pulled my weight” in routine matters. I listened and learned. In addition, however, I believe I have made real contributions. I wrote and won a state grant for a physical assessment of town hall that will yield a 20-year capital plan for this significant building, acted as liaison between the town and a consulting firm in the creation of a Housing Production Plan, followed up on obtaining and implementing a town ID system, clarified and recorded a significant number of SOPs (standard operating procedures) voted on by the full board, served as liaison between the board and the Energy Committee and helped with that group’s efforts to have Royalston earn Green Community status, secured the donation to the town of an American elm (yet to be planted) and spearheaded the creation of a Common Restoration Committee whose work will bear fruit in the coming year.

I ask for your vote at the annual town election on April 7.

Challenger Gary Winitzer: I made Royalston my home over 30 years ago and want to keep the natural beauty we all enjoy. I am proud of my service for more than twenty years as a member of the Fire Department and Rescue Squad, and as a Selectman from 2003 - 2005. I continue to contribute by serving on the Sewer Commission, a Trustee of the J. N. Bartlett Fund and volunteering for the Senior Luncheon Club every Wednesday.

As a successful manager, I have used my knowledge, experience and energy to complete any task I am given. I enjoy the opportunity to analyze information, carefully listen to others, and then hone in on the most practical solution to any challenge.

Honesty, hard work, and generosity are the principles I learned from my family, and it is the way I still govern my life. Indeed, helping the Board accomplish its duties in a timely, fair manner, consistent with State laws and decisions made by Town meetings is the only way I know how to do the job. My father taught me the value of injecting humor into a serious problem, and my mother still corrects my grammar.

As the election nears, I wish that everyone would consider that I have the ability to move the Town forward in a financially responsible way, to find new sources of revenue and to help maintain the character of our Town that was incorporated almost 250 years ago.

I am HONEST. You can TRUST me to do what I say. You can depend on me to represent you, your family, and our Town with INTEGRITY and COMPASSION.

Pipeline Events

On April 16, 2014, Bruce Winn of the Berkshire Environmental Action Team will give a slide show presentation on the natural gas pipeline proposed by the Tennessee Gas Pipeline Co. of Kinder Morgan that is slated to run through northern Mass., including Royalston and most North Quabbin towns. He will address environmental and health issues as well as economic and regulatory ones. A question and answer period will follow the slideshow. This should be especially relevant to people whose land is directly affected. The event is sponsored by North Quabbin Energy and will be held at 7pm at the Athol Town Hall. North Quabbin Energy is also hosting a strategy meeting on April 8th at the Millers River Environmental Center, 100 Main St Athol. Everyone is welcome.

Board of Health News

Phil Leger, Chairperson

Chet Hall IV has been appointed to fill the remaining year on his late father’s seat on the RBOH. Chet is a UMASS graduate with a Natural Resources degree. He worked for the Trustees of Reservation in Royalston and is currently employed by the town of Amherst. We welcome him on board.

Now that spring is in the air and folks will be cleaning up their yards, a reminder that bulky waste and construction and demolition material go in the demo roll off and there is a fee for this. Metal items are free to deposit in the metal roll off. So, if you have some of this material and want to dump it, please see attendant Tony prior to disposing for a cost assessment. The town offers this service as a break even proposition, so if you dump for free, the rest of us pay for it. Thank you very much for your attention to this detail.

Town Hall Stage Curtain Update:

It’s not yet curtains for the town hall stage curtain

The town hall stage curtain was recently assessed by Chris Hadsel, who restores these types of historic stage curtains. The good news is that the Royalston curtain does not contain asbestos. The bad news is the pulley system that raises and lowers the curtain actually damages the curtain. There is a proposal to install a new raising system that would roll the curtain instead of pulling it up and folding it as it is now. The proposal would also repair the tears in the curtain and clean it. There will be a proposal to the Community Preservation Committee for the estimated $4000 to do the job. In order to keep the cost down, volunteers are needed to help with the moving and installation of the curtain. Also, local housing will be sought for the workers during the estimated 3-day process. Please support this important restoration effort when it comes to town meeting floor for a vote.
Phinehas S. Newton Library News
Kathy Morris, Library Director
Trustees: Polly Longsworth, Lisa Freden, Barbara Guiney
Mondays: 10:00 am- 8:30 pm. Thursdays 1:00pm - 5:00pm and 6:30 - 8:30pm
Saturdays: 9:00am - 12:noon
978-249-3572  www.royalstonlibrary.org

Donations to the Friends - Thank You!
Marie and Gerald Lajoie
Allen Young
Leslie Williams
John and Steph McClure
Ralph and Joy Cutter
Shirley Anderson
Stephen and Donna Carter
Michael and Sara Dilg
Chuck and Anita McDowell
Tom and Lynne Kellner
George Dyer
Don Shambroom
Phil and Carla Rabinowitz
Aaron Ellison and Elizabeth Farnsworth
Elizabeth and Clarence Rabideau

April Vacation Programs

The Big Oyster: History on the Half Shell.
by Mark Kurlansky.

Draw with Gordon Morrison: On Wednesday, April 23, at 1:30 p.m. at the Town Hall, botanical illustrator Gordon Morrison will lead a drawing workshop for children age 9 and older and young adults. He will focus on the basics of drawing and help participants create a nature drawing from specimens on hand. This is a opportunity to hone skills and learn by seeing the basic shapes in all things. This program is made possible by funding from the Royalston Academy. Class size is limited; you must sign up by calling the library or emailing us at royalstonlibrary@gmail.com. Gordon is the author and illustrator of several books for children, the illustrator for many of the Peterson Field Guides, the Newcomb’s Wildflower Guide, as well as many other book and articles. Don’t miss this great opportunity to draw with a famous illustrator and author!

A Rug, A Rug….
A 9’ x 12’ (or 10’ x 14’ foot) dark colored rug needed
Kathy Morris

About fifteen years ago, Halima and Abraham Sussman donated a very nice Oriental rug. It has graced the library’s children’s room ever since. Generations of young patrons grew up reading on that rug. A few years ago, the foot traffic had frayed the edges and Maureen Blasco came to the rescue binding the edges with her industrial sewing machine, brute strength, and great skill. However, at this point, the rug gives clear meaning to the word ‘threadbare’. The Friends and I went on a hunt for a replacement. Unfortunately, our tastes have been spoiled by the grandeur of this old rug, and after several months, we have not found an acceptable rug that we can afford. Rug merchants suggest that sometimes people want to donate a rug to a tax deductible charity (such as the Friends of the Library), so although a bit squeamish, we thought we would at least ask… If you have a large, lovely rug, which you are planning to part with, and which would fit the children’s room, please call the library. Thank you.

Drop in Crafts: On Saturday, April 26 from 10 a.m. to noon, select from a variety of whimsical wooden items to paint and decorate. Gina Verelli will be the muse for this free, family friendly event.

Art Exhibit: During April and May Marjorie Bassett will display photographs from her flower gardens. Marjorie has spent her life in Royalston, raising 4 children and now sharing her love of gardening with her 7 grandchildren. She wants her photos to encourage people to share plants with one another. (Speaking of which... watch for the library plant sale in early June.)

Library Book Group meets at 4:30 the 3rd Monday of most months, (the fourth if it’s a holiday).
All welcome for cozy literary chat and a cuppa with a couple cookies. On April 28, the book group will discuss The Big Oyster: History on the Half Shell, by Mark Kurlansky.

Zumba on all Mondays at 6 p.m.
Fun and friendly workout at Town Hall. Sponsored by the Friends but donations welcome. If the weather is inclement, call the library to confirm. Otherwise, just show up to dance away mud-season blahs.

Yoga on Tuesdays at 10 a.m.
The morning yoga class led by Melanie Miller of Westminster and held on Tuesdays at 10:00 a.m., in the upstairs of the Town Hall will continue. This free class (donations accepted) provides a relaxed, stretch workout for every level and is funded by the Friends of the Library. No pre-registration is necessary but bring your own mat and blanket to lie on and a cover (small blanket) for the cool-down/relaxation.
Some of the New Materials at Your Library

Adult Non-fiction
Barry, Dave You can Date Boys when You’re Forty
Fuhrman, Joel Eat to Live Cookbook
Hand, D.J. The Improbability Principle
Horowitz, Debra Decoding Your Dog
Katzen, Mollie The Heart of the Plate
Muir, Nancy Ipad all-in-one for Dummies
O’Rourke, P.J. The Baby Boom
Pauley, Jane Your Life Calling
Sims, Micheal The Adventures of Henry Thoreau
Zoellner, Tom Train

Adult Fiction
Archer, Jeffrey Be Careful What You Wish For
Beaton, M.C. Death of a Policeman
Black, Benjamin The Black-eyed Blonde
Box, C.J. Stone Cold
Coben, Harlan Missing You
Evanovich, Janet The Chase
Greene, Amy Long Man
Harrison, Kim The Undead Pool
Moore, Lorrie Bark
Pavone, Chris The Accident
Shacochis, Bob The Woman who Lost her Soul
Steel, Danielle Power Play
Swanson, Peter The Girl with a Clock for a Heart
Weir, Andy The Martian

Young Adult
Baggott, Julianna Burn
Meloy, Colin Wildwood Imperium

Audio Books:
Crystal, Billy Still Foolin’ Em’

CDs:
2014 Grammy Nominees
Now that’s what I call Music 49
Church, Eric The Outsiders

Scholarships for Royalston Residents
Royalston Academy Scholarships: Deadline April 15, 2014. Forms are available through high school guidance counselors, Phinehas Newton Library, or Kristen West c/o Royalston Academy Scholarship Committee, Box 35, Royalston, Mass. 01368. The Katherine Seymour Bullock Cole Memorial Scholarship (up to $1000) is available to graduating high school residents of Royalston going on to a higher education. The Judy Jenkins Musco Scholarship is available for Royalston residents interested in pursuing educational activities including college, home schooling, educational travel, and educational and literacy programs.

Ladies’ Benevolent Society Scholarships: Deadline April 15, 2014. Funds awarded to residents of all ages pursuing higher education. Forms are available through high school guidance counselors at the Phinehas Newton Library. Contact Theresa Quinn with questions at 978-249-3819.

Children’s fiction
Chabot, Jacob Hello Kitty
Cousins, Lucy Maisy Goes to the Movies
DePalma, Mary Two Little Birds
Gantos, Jack Rotten Ralph’s Rotten Family
Kibuishi, Kazu Amulet
Lowry, Lois Guiney Bird Greene
Lowry, Lois Guiney Bird is so Absurd
Meadows, Daisy Addison the April Fool’s Day Fairy
Meadows, Daisy Coca the Cupcake Fairy
Meadows, Daisy Esme the Ice Cream Fairy
Meadows, Daisy Keira the Movie Star Fairy
Offil, Jenny Sparky
Osborne, Mary High Times for Heroes
Pierce, Lincoln Big Nate: In the Zone
Snicket, Lemony 29 Myths on the Swinster Pharmacy
Tarshis, Lauren I Survived the Nazi Invasion, 1944
Underwood, Deborah Here Comes the Easter Cat
Wells, Rosemary Sophie’s Terrible Twos

Children’s Non-Fiction
Carson, Mary How many Planets Circle the Sun?
Carson, Mary Why Does Earth Spin?
Ehler, Lois The Scraps Book
Hanson, Anders Cool Flexagon Art
Houran, Lori A Trip into Space
Janeczko, Paul Firefly July and Other Very Short Poems
Kalman, Maria Thomas Jefferson
Lapham, Steven Philip Reid Saves the Statue of Freedom
Meltzer, Brad I Am Amelia Earhart
Mizielsinska, Alek Maps
Muth, Jon Hi, Koo!
Sandler, Martin What was America’s Deadliest War?
Stewart, Melissa How Does a Seed Sprout?
Stewart, Melissa How does the Ear Hear?

DVDs: 12 Years a Slave, All is Lost, American Hustle, The Book Thief, Catching Fire (The Hunger Games), Game of Thrones: Season 3, Gravity, Homefront, Inside Llewyn Davis, Last Vegas. Nebraska, Saving Mr. Banks, and Thor: The Dark World

Calling All Authors!
Marcia Gagliardi, the publisher at Haley’s, is asking interested people to submit 900-1500 words about something or many things unique about our area for a book about the Unique North Quabbin area intended for publication as early as autumn 2014. Submissions of digital files, preferably in Microsoft Word, are due by June 15, 2014. Selected authors will retain rights to their own words but will sign a release permitting our publication of those words in this collection. Each author will receive two copies of the resulting book. Photos are welcome (at 7” wide resolved to 200 dpi) with submissions. Haley’s will present a workshop about this call for submission at 6 p.m. Wednesday, April 2, at the Athol Public Library.
25th Committee Update

Good luck to all who bought calendar raffle tickets. There is a winner each day in April. The committee will put a check in the mail when you win. Thanks to Marlene Jarvenpaa for organizing the raffle. She is a part of the glue that holds this community together.

Cooks Sought: In May, watch for the “Foods our Mother’s Made Supper” on May 17. Sign up to bring a favorite veggie, casserole, comfort food, or main course of your mom’s by contacting Beth Gospodarek at 978-249-0358. Bring a photo of your mother to the dinner, where the crowd will guess to match the mother to the cook. All mothers attending will receive a carnation.

Survey Says... Forty-six responded to the 25th Celebration Committee’s community input survey, included in this newsletter last fall. Their answers give some guidance as to what Royalston residents would like to see as part of the celebration, scheduled for February 15 and the weekend of September 11 - 13, 2015.

With these results as a guide, several local groups have stepped forward to help out with activities for the September weekend. The Ladies’ Benevolent Society has volunteered to take charge of the Local Foods Dinner on Sunday. The Friends of the Library will be organizing old-fashioned games on the Common on Saturday afternoon. The Cultural Council will be showcasing works of our many talented Royalston artists in the Town Hall, as well as some combination (yet to be determined) of a Royalston history play and interactive tours by Royalston historical characters. Local musicians are being sought, and there are possibilities for interesting collaboration on the guided waterfall hikes.

Plans for a carnival and a gathering of craft vendors are currently underway. The dinner dance will be taking place at the Elks Club on February 15, and some of the participants in the 1989 Miss Royalston Pageant are exploring the possibility of a repeat.

Even with all of these organizations participating, VOLUNTEERS ARE STILL DESPERATELY NEEDED! The Celebration Committee is small, and members will be busy from morning till night for three days with organization and setup. Anyone willing to help out please call Geoff Newton, 978-249-3726.

Here are the survey results:
Ideas that were picked by at least half of those answering:
Parade 37
Fireworks 34
Dinner Dance 34
Local musicians 28
Local Foods Dinner on Sunday 25
History tours by historical characters 26
Art show 24
More musical groups 23∗
(∗ 17 of these people ALSO picked “local musicians”)
C&W bands 22

Ideas that were picked by 1/3 to 1/2 of those answering
Royalston History Play 21
Guided hikes to waterfalls 20
Old-fashioned games, softball etc 20
Film fest of Royalston video 18
Carnival 18
Craft vendors 17
Antique show 17
Ideas that received votes from fewer than 1/3 of those answering
Pet show 12
Beard contest 11
Miss Royalston contest∗ 10
(∗ this was the only item to receive several strongly negative comments.)
Mr. & Mrs. Royalston contest 7

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(∗ this was the only item to receive several strongly negative comments.)
Mr. & Mrs. Royalston contest 7

BTW... You didn't miss the LBS 11th Annual Memorial Piano Concert. It will be held Sunday, September 21 at 4:00 pm in the ballroom. To participate, please call Deb Nunes 249-4000.

Sunday Jazz Brunch
In honor of Royalston Jazzman Gerry Chaisson
Enjoy delectable delicacies and delicious drinks
Featuring - by special request
The Maples Jazz Band
At the Maples on the Common
(Patience Bundsuh’s House)

This event benefits the Royalston Historical Society’s Fund drive to repair and restore its building, formerly Old School House #1 and now the Historical Society Museum and Royalston Post Office.

Please make a reservation by mailing your check for $25/ person to The Royalston historical Society/ PO Box 203/ Royalston, MA 01368. (Tables for 4 may be reserved for $100)

Please confirm the reservation by e-mailing Patience at goodshoe@earthlink.net. Capacity is limited, so please respond before April 20, 2014.

Thanks so Much for the Support of the Recent Auction! Lovely items were kindly donated. Many turned out to bid. Among those who worked hard were Steff McClure who set the operation up, Phil Leger for being MC, and Sue and Mark Smith for taking the info from the audience as well as the money. Thanks to Marie Humblet, Barbara and Abigail Stowell, Beth Gospodarek, Patience Bundsuh, and Lorraine Casighino, who worked on getting the food together for this event. Lorraine also did double duty as Phil’s right hand during the auction. It was a success and we hope to put a few more together so look for news here, or posted on the internet. Again thank you.
**Recipe of the Month**

*Here is a recipe from Kristin and Ben Scott.* Ben grew up in Royalston and moved back almost ten years ago. (They live in the house that many, a decade later, still call Maxine Wilcox’s home.) The have a grown son, Nick, and a grandson, Luca, who live in Winchendon. Kristin is a faithful practitioner of yoga (every Tues. at 10 am at Town Hall.) She loves to read. She says she gets people who don’t like spinach to eat this!

**Spinach Quiche**

- 3 pkgs frozen chopped spinach
- 1 large onion, chopped
- 1 pound bacon
- 3 cups shredded Swiss cheese
- 6 eggs
- 1 pint heavy cream
- 2 graham cracker crusts

**Directions:**
1. Defrost spinach in strainer; drain all water. Return to a bowl.
2. Fry bacon nice and crisp - crumble over spinach.
4. Spread 1 cup Swiss cheese on each pie crust. Then, spoon 1/2 of spinach, bacon and onion on top of the cheese in each quiche.
5. In a small bowl, beat 3 eggs with a fork; mix in 1/2 pint heavy cream and pour over spinach mixture in one quiche. Sprinkle 1/2 cup cheese on top.
6. Repeat step 5 for the other quiche. Bake at 325 for about 45 minutes. Dinner is done when the pie feels nice and firm to the touch.

**Poetry Event**

*April is National Poetry Month, and “the back corner” at Bruce’s Browser in Athol is hosting two events that may be of interest to Royalston residents. The first features well-known poet Verandah Porche from Guilford, Vermont, followed by a spoken word open mic on Friday, April 4th at 7 PM. Aspiring poets are encouraged to participate.*

Second will be on Monday, April 21st at 7 PM, bringing back nationally-known author, poet, playwright, artist and activist Lenelle Moïse for a presentation of her new release Haiti Glass. Note: Her topics contain mature content which may not be suitable for children.


**CONGRATULATIONS AND GOOD NEWS**

**Got something to crow about? Send all the news along to the RCN. Zap to chasegos2@gmail.com or drop at the library.**

Teddy Laakkonen and Cathy Offutt are thrilled to announce the birth of their 2nd grandson Maximus Warren Corso on 3/2/14. Max joins his big brother Giacomo (Jack) and his mom and dad Molly McGill and Andrew Corso.

Samantha Hutchins was accepted at Westfield State. She will be majoring in Environmental Studies in the fall.

Congratulations to Rhiannon Fletcher, Taryne Swan, Lainey Wright and Eric Duffin of the Monty Tech Bulldogs Varsity Field Hockey team! They helped their team make school history by winning the first round of the District Playoffs! Fletcher ended her season as the top goal tender in the league and Swan finished among the top scorers. Wright was a standout on the defense and this was Duffin’s first year playing field hockey and he played well between the pipes. The families of Fletcher and Swan would like to wish Lainey all the best as this was her last year playing field hockey for the Bulldogs. The classy senior has been a tremendous support and fantastic role model for the younger Bulldogs both on and off the field, all the way back to their days together at RCS! We love you Laniey!

**Monty Tech Academic Honor Roll:** Melissa Persson, Marnie Anair, Corey Baker, Loryn Killay, Dahlia Wright, Sarah Arsenault, Alyana LaJoie and Ivers Lawrence

**More Local Music:**

**Surly Temple in Warwick**

7:00pm Saturday, April 12th, 2014 at the Warwick Town Hall

Take 3 veteran musicians who have gigged with dozens of other players, a pun for a band name, and what do you get? Surly Temple is Jim Henry and long time buddies Guy DeVito and Doug Plavin. They play songs by songwriters and musicians they admire – Nick Lowe, Richard Thompson, Los Lobos, Ry Cooder and David Lindley - to name a few. Put on your your dancing shoes or just kick back and enjoy the music. (Entry donation: $5 minimum suggested) Come early and enjoy the Lasagna Dinner to benefit the Warwick Beach Committee.

**Melanie and the Blue Shots Spring Tour:**

April 21st Gardner Ale House
June 14th Fitzwilliam Inn

**Guitar Circle of New England Concert**

There will be a concert at the Royalston Town Hall April 26th performed by The Guitar Circle of New England. Doors open at 6pm and concert begins at 6:30. Suggested donation is $5. GCNE has a website for more information about this type of music. They are students of Robert Fripp.
“Why is My Computer So Slow?”
Jon Hardie

Remember all that surfing the internet for Christmas bargains? If you are surfing the net, without basic updated & current (every day updates) anti-virus or malware security in place, you can expect to have already compromised your personal identity and other financial information … in just the first … 15 minutes.

Check your credit cards and bank acct and get anti-virus protection. The Town has recently updated its security and threat protection on its computers, in light of successful computer virus attacks in a number of nearby small towns … So Should You!

Here are a few basic best practices computer rules as well as specific actions to keep your computer healthy and your personal information secure while still enjoying the internet.

Rule #1 if it’s Free - you pay with your loss of privacy. You’re the one paying for the service with your own data and personal information. Free software companies like Facebook, Google, Twitter, Yahoo, MSN and Online Merchants, assemble and sell pieces of your personal data and tracking cookies, and then use it to market merchant goods and services to you. Some online software companies also install malware software along with the free software – you know, all that new stuff on your screen and on your computer, when you download their “free program.” When you open them - Oops, you infect your computer.

Rule #2 Emails: If you don’t know the email sender:
A. Don’t open the email,
B. Don’t open attachments,
AND C. don’t provide ANY personal financial information. PERIOD.
No reputable company or organization will EVER ask you for this info - via email.

Open Space and Recreation Committee
Paul A. Montero, Chairperson

Oddly enough, it was through the pages of Facebook that I first learned about the proposed natural gas transmission line. A friend posted that there had been representatives of the gas company in town talking with land owners about surveying their land for the purposes of providing an easement for the transmission line. The news had traveled through Facebook and not as public information because the gas company is not seeking public opinion. They already know that the publicity would be bad.

A transmission line does not serve residents of Royalston. The purpose of the transmission line is a route to terminals which I have heard are in New York and Dracut, Massachusetts. A major concern is that the transmission line crosses open spaces that are now in a natural state, disturbing existing forests, fields and habitat for wildlife.

Open space is at a premium (though that may not be evident in Royalston, which has abundant areas of forest that accommodates wildlife and other ecological concerns.) Large areas of contiguous open space are important as wildlife corridors and habitat. Large open spaces are much more important than small discontinuous areas that may not be preferred by wildlife and cause their decline.

There are many more practical reasons that the disturbance of our wild lands proposed by the gas pipeline would be a detriment and a safety hazard. Once constructed, a large transmission line would be isolated. Access to the transmission line would be limited to special purpose vehicles and even then may require the construction of temporary roads to ford soft swampy areas of the route. If an accident were to occur, considerable time would be necessary to mobilize people and vehicles in such an isolated area.

Many corridors already exist, such as highway rights of way, railroads and easements for electrical transmission, which could provide a route for the proposed natural gas transmission line causing fewer disturbances and providing greater access for maintenance. Existing highway rights of way, for example, are purposely designed for expansion by utility companies, would not require easements, and would be accessible by emergency vehicles in an expedient manner.

Preserving open space is a major goal of the Open Space and Recreation Committee. The committee meets on the first Monday of each odd month at the Town Hall. Our next meeting will be May 5, 2014 at 7 PM and as always all are welcome to attend.
Community School News

Noah Michelson

MCAS Season

Through the last two months, all students have been working hard, but unfortunately with MCAS, vacation and many school assemblies and meetings, it has been difficult to get reports, so I decided to highlight the upper grades (3-6) on MCAS standardized test experience.

The MCAS exam results are determined by questions which you “should know” even if throughout the year you do not have time to get to those kinds of subjects. From what I know, 3rd grade has done very well and 4th grade (I was told) “put in exceptional effort”. A 5th grade student stated, “So far it has been long...but I truly believe the results will be high.” Finally, grade 6 put in so much effort and time it took the students more than two and a half hours! So I believe overall R.C.S. has done an astounding job on something once again. I would also like to mention a thank you to the kindergarten, first and second graders for rooting for us the whole time!

We have had many assemblies and other gatherings, such as the National Book Day. This is where each teacher at R.C.S. reads one of their favorite books or only a part of it and then right before a good part in a book (climax), stops and says “And do you want to know what happened next... Read the book and find out!” At other assemblies, the students were being recognized for hard work and effort they have been putting in throughout the school. I really enjoyed this a lot and have new books to look forward to reading.

When we got back to school after February vacation, ironically, we all seemed tired and worn out from our “restful” break. However, once we got going again, we all found our groove and seemed like our old selves again.

And that is a heads up on what’s been going on over the past seven weeks at Royalston Community School!

Discussion about the Proposed Gas Pipeline is Expanding

Peter Gagliardi

A number of local residents have been participating in a growing list of community discussions about the proposed high pressure gas pipeline, attending recent related meetings and events in Ashburnham, Northampton, Hadley, and Athol. As those whose properties may ultimately be directly affected become known to each other, a picture is evolving relative to the path being planned by the Tennessee Pipeline Company. It appears that it will come to our area via Warwick, Orange, and Athol, passing through South Royalston on the way to Winchendon and beyond.

Though the number of property owners directly affected is small, others are joining in objecting to the proposed pipeline as they become aware of the environmental risks associated with the source of the gas, much of which will be produced by the hydraulic fracturing (fracking) method.

There is a growing chorus of voices warning us that New England’s electricity supply is threatened by the closing of coal-fired generating plants and nuclear power facilities. Utility companies, often through ISO New England, based in Holyoke, and state governments have raised this concern. Natural gas is being touted by pipeline proponents as our salvation -- but only if there is additional pipeline capacity. In a world overwhelmed with conflict surrounding oil and gas deposits, the lure of a cheap domestic fuel source is significant -- especially a fuel source being billed as “greener” than coal or oil and safer than nuclear. Both of these assertions are being challenged by opponents of the project.

Federal legislation designed to clear the way for interstate transmission lines and oil and gas pipelines is a potent force, capable of overriding state and local conservation restrictions, zoning, and environmental laws and regulations. Attorneys familiar with the federal process, governed by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, have cautioned that once a permit is issued, a pipeline will be nearly impossible to stop. The time to seek changes, either to halt the project or to adjust the path of the pipeline, is now while the application to FERC is being prepared or immediately after the application is filed.

What’s Happening at the Village School:

This month, classes are visiting Sweetwater Farm in Petersham. And if on a warm sunny day, you see a big circle of children on the front lawn of the school with teddy bears in their laps, then you have chanced upon the annual Teddy Bear picnic, when all bring bears to school, sing Teddy Bear songs and go on a bear hunt!

Tuesday April 15 Biodiversity Day: Each class visits a local habitat and surveys the flora and fauna. One class will go to Lawrence Brook, another class to the Camp Caravan pond, and other classes will visit the woods. The classes visit the same habitats each year and keep a log of the species of plants and animals that they find. They record observations with drawings. Results are displayed in the hallway.

There are openings in preschool for the next school year at the Village School

On Thursday May 1st, at 9:00 a.m., the Village School will host an old fashioned May Day celebration. The public is invited. Children can join in May Pole weaving and dancing. There will be singing of traditional songs, and rounds, and local musicians. Rumor has it that the aging Millers River Morris Men will appear, unable to contain themselves, and leap and pound the earth to drive out winter and awaken the earth, and bring fertility to the crops, the fields, the animals and the people! Young and old will join in the uplifting “Shepherds’ Hay” to complete the event. This event will last until an hour.

Save the Date: Summer Programs at the Village School

(check the website soon for info)

Nature Arts and Play for ages 4-10 9-1:00 Choose 1 or 2 weeks: July 7-11 and /or July 14-18

The Science and Art Experience for ages 8-13 July 7-11 9 to 1

Woodworking for Children for ages 8 and up July 21-25 9 to 3

This information has spurred many people into action, hence the flurry of meetings currently and likely in the near future.
March 20, 2014

It is the onset of spring, though I cannot imagine a more inappropriate word to describe current weather conditions. It is four weeks since I last wrote, but I feel no closer to the world of gardening. Yes, the sun rises forty-six minutes earlier and sets thirty-four minutes later and travels a higher arc in the sky (those days when it graces us with an appearance), but I do not notice any of us scampering about outdoors in shirtsleeves. There are patches of open ground (at least until the forecasted snow next week), but they are few and far between and none, alas, appear in the garden. An early casualty of this wretched state of affairs is maple syrup production. Unless conditions change dramatically (and quickly), our yield (and, I assume, most everyone else’s hereabout) will be its lowest ever (in this, our thirty-fourth year).

Once again, I play ‘musical flats’, moving the onions and leeks from the east windows to the south windows to the west windows. Many days it is a futile undertaking since the sun is not shining into any of them but it keeps me at least momentarily engaged in matters agricultural. So too, is the matter of weeding the flats. This year’s compost (which comprises two-thirds of my potting mix, the remaining one-third being divided equally among perlite, vermiculite, and peat moss) has provided a prodigious number of weed seedlings, which, left to their own devises, would rapidly dwarf the onions and leeks. There is one more ‘environmental’ hazard: the matter of cats, which consider basking in the sun at any available window their birthright. The presence of a flat provides no encumbrance; in fact, it is an ideal bed to bask upon. When one cat was present, it was challenge enough; now with three (all ‘on loan’, I might add less than gleefully) I’ve taken to erecting barricades to discourage (it would be too much to suggest they are preventing) such activities.

The peppers, parsley, celery/celeriac, and a few flowers were started a week ago, and despite being nestled in the warming oven of our wood cookstove, have yet to emerge. In time. In time seems to be the rallying cry for most everything this spring. With so little sap to boil off, the cookstove is also serving as our maple syrup processing center, the contents of three large pots simmering day and night.

There remains one bright feature to the blanket of snow: it cleverly conceals what lies beneath. What lies beneath our blanket are tree droppings, unraked leaves, unturned beds, toppled fencing (perhaps even a garden tool or two). Winter conditions seriously curtailed my wood-cutting activities and current conditions are discouraging me from my customary activity at this time of year: fruit tree pruning. All will be dealt with, of course, but I suspect April will bring on a frenetic state of affairs. I continue to bide my time.

Larry Siegel

North Quabbin Garden Club
Thursday, April 17, 2014 7 p.m.
Millers River Environmental Center! 100 Main Street, Athol, MA 01331
Eat From Your Garden Year Round!
Diane Salcedo was a commercial vegetable and greenhouse grower in North Orange for 20 years until 1999. She grows a large vegetable garden which provides her family with most of their vegetables throughout the year, fresh from May to October, and frozen the rest of the year. This spring she plans to reopen a commercial greenhouse, raising vegetable and herb seedlings to sell to local gardeners. She will talk about how to plan a garden to provide fresh vegetables for the longest possible season.

Classifieds
Help wanted: Story Time Substitute at the town library - rare to occasional Monday mornings. $9/hour. Call 978-249-3572 for information or stop in an application.

Large box of material: cotton, velour, polyester, etc., solids and prints. Each piece 2-4 yards. Great bargain - $25 for the lot. 978-249-4013.

Royalston resident, 17 year old guy, looking for work. Will do any odd or outdoor jobs, including snow shoveling or snowblowing etc. asking 10 dollars a hour. (603) 852-8094.

Horse Board: Closed shed w. turnout available in Royalston at Black Horse Farm for one or two horses. $300 monthly per horse, advance pay discounts available - secure space, arena, nearby trails. Call 978-249-9880 or email suzannagaits@gmail.com

Laurie Truehart: private wood carving lessons. 978-249-3291.

Sharpening: knives and scissors. Also, custom knife making. Call Rob 978-320-9982.

Little Farmers Child Care, located next to RCS, now has full and part-time openings! It also has before and after school child care. Hours are 6am-5pm Call Joni @ 978-575-1083

Graphic digital artist for hire. Websites, print materials - posters, flyers, brochures, business cards, invitations, etc... Also photo and slide scanning offered. Call Barbara at 508.364.3339 or email brguiney@wildblue.net.


House cleaning. 4 hr - $60.00. Royalston resident. Call Fran: home 978-249-4596 or cell 895-0817. References available.

Housekeeping, outdoor work, or other odd jobs? $15/hour. Call Kathleen Lawrence Pirro at 978-249-9774.


For sale:

Dean’s Beans Coffee - Order form at www.villageschoolma.org. Pick up the coffee in the Village School hallway.

Eggs: $2.00 per dozen. Best time to call or stop by: after 4 p.m. 978-249-5548.

Birch Knoll Farm - Hay for sale. Goats for sale: for meat or pets or rent them for brush clearing. Contact Helen at 978-249-3163 or 774-239-5062

Royalston Maple Syrup from Divoll’s sugar house. Prices $9/pint; $15/qt; $28/half gal.; $50/gal. Call Randy at 978-602-5583.

Grass-fed Beef: All cuts available. Call Kathy at 978-249-4260.


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Rich DeMar

The Royalston Community Newsletter is printed by:
Wildlife Sightings

March 5: Deb D’Amico spotted a pileated woodpecker in the yard of her North Fitzwilliam home. These are shy birds, so it's unusual to see them other than in the forest.

April 1: Tree warden Larry Siegel with what he considers to be the largest tree in town. Its whereabouts will remain undisclosed.