Calendar of Events

May 1 Friday
9:00 a.m. the Village School old fashioned May Day celebration. The public is invited. Children can join in May Pole weaving. The Millers River Morris Men will appear to drive out winter.

May 2 Saturday
11 a.m. Friends of the Library meeting. All welcome.

May 3 Sunday
10 a.m. - noon Youth (14 and under) Fishing Derby at the Royalston Fish and Game Club. Adult derby to follow. Prizes based on length of fish.

11:42 p.m. Full Flower Moon

May 8 Friday
7 p.m. Annual Town Meeting at Royalston Community School

May 10 Sunday Mother’s Day

May 12 Tuesday
7 p.m. The Royalston Town Democratic committee will caucus in the town hall. All registered Democrats in town are eligible to attend. Delegates will be selected for the September convention in Worcester.

May 15 Friday
2 performances: 10:00 a.m. and 7 p.m. The Village School Annual Original Play at the Royalston Town Hall. Based on its year-long study of the Middle Ages, the 4th-6th grade students have written an original 3 act script to produce and perform. The young actors also sing and play music. (The students saw the Royal Shakespeare Company’s Love’s Labor’s Lost in February, which influenced the writing and acting of the play.) All welcome. Free; donations accepted. Best seats are available at the morning performance.

7 - 8:30 p.m. AREF’s Father Daughter-Dance at Athol Town Hall. $20/couple with advanced purchase. Watch for information in student backpacks or visit www.atholroyalstoneducationfoundation.org Raises money for enrichment and community involvement in the local public schools.

May 18 Monday
12:13 a.m. New Strawberry Moon
4:30 p.m. Library book group meets to discuss The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao by Junot Diaz. All welcome. Books available to be checked out at the library.

May 24 Sunday
noon - 2 p.m. Jazz in the Ballroom funds the Royalston Historical Society’s drive to repair and restore its building, Old School House #1 (now the Historical Society Museum and Royalston Post Office.) Reserve by mailing a check for $25 per person to the Royalston Historical Society/ PO Box 203/ Royalston 01368. Confirm reservation by emailing Patience at goodshoe@earthlink.net by May 17, 2015.

May 25 Monday Memorial Day (Observed)
2 p.m. Memorial Day Observance on the Common, including wreath laying and honor guard, followed by a luncheon. Call Bobbi Newman for details.

May 27 Wednesday
7:30 p.m. LBS Meeting “Reborn Dolls” with Vicki Kennedy at the home of Barbara Stowell. Refreshments. All welcome.

May 30 Saturday Morning on Royalston Common
7:30 - noon pancake breakfast, silent auction plant sale, tag sale, birds of prey program and more.

Save the date
June 6 Saturday
7 - 10 p.m. Royalston Follies talent show at Town Hall. Beer, wine, and soda will be available for purchase. Tickets are $10.00. Seating is limited, so reserve by calling Lorraine Casinghino at 978-249-5151. To participate, or for more information, please call Deb Nunes at 978-249-4000.

June 13 Saturday Classic Car Show, sponsored by the 250th Committee.

Singing Praises:
This month, Janice Draper is recognized for making Royalston a better place to live. She cheerfully takes on extra work at her central perch in the post office distributing and collecting information, tickets, checks, ephemera, and other community tidbits for many town organizations. This keeps the gears of community humming, yet Janice is rarely thanked or acknowledged. She also buys a ton of tickets for local charity raffles, and hence, with a combination of good works and good odds, wins the good prizes time after time. She is a generous citizen and steadfast post mistress. Janice may be a bit lucky to win those raffles, but Royalston is more lucky to have her as postmistress.

Whom do you think deserves recognition for making this town a better place to live? Send in your commendations to the newsletter throughout the 250th year.
Select Board Notes

Christine Long, Chair

The Select Board urges residents to attend annual town meeting on Friday, May 8 at 7 p.m. at Royalston Community School, when the board will present a budget of $1.9 million for FY16, up less than $50,000, or 2.6 percent over this year.

However (as snow shovellers well know), we again have a significant over-age in the snow and ice account – $105,000.

Because of the $50,000 in excess capacity discovered last fall, we will be able to pay those bills and do some necessary small scale projects – among them a used brush truck for the Fire Department, replacing one that died; repair of the fire escape at Town Hall; and roofing the ramp at Whitney Hall, for protection from snowfall and ice.

Once again, too, however we will be significantly depleting the Stabilization Fund, the town’s emergency fund.

And yet again there’s a list of bigger ticket things we can’t fund, like painting Town Hall ($28,000) and Whitney Hall ($27,000) or acting on a recently report on the town energy’s use. One example from that report: doing some weatherization at Town Hall for about $17,000. Had voters accepted the Stretch Code at last year’s annual town meeting, Royalston would have become a Green Community and qualified for upwards of $120,000 in state money that could have paid for this and new furnaces and new lighting that would save us money year after year.

The Select Board also reminds voters that the town faces big projects in the relatively near future: coming up with our share of a grant to build an elevator at town hall (we are going to recommend a small start on that), rehabbing the Raymond School for town use, replacing totally inadequate restrooms in Whitney Hall, and creating better public safety and public works facilities.

Call for volunteers: In June the Select Board will be appointing residents to the various town boards and committees. What interests you – capital planning? wise energy use? the protection and enjoyment of open spaces? local agriculture? elder affairs? the cultural scene in town? Contact the Select Board (249-9641 or bos@royalston-ma.gov) to express your interest and volunteer! We’ll get back to you about the possibilities.

High Speed Broadband in Royalston

It is crucial that you complete the broadband survey

Jon Hardie

Here’s the latest news on the design, engineering, and town-wide survey for our Royalston Hybrid Fiber & Wireless Broadband Network to serve everyone in town. We’re making great progress!

#1 At the Special Town Meeting on April 10th, at RCS, after years of hard work, members voted to make minor word changes, and unanimously passed - and enacted - the New Zoning Bylaws. These Zoning Bylaws incorporate Section VIII, NON-RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT METHODS and Section A: Telecommunications Tower & Wireless Communication Facilities Page 33 - Top Page 41

#2 On Thursday April 23rd, a team from Royalston, met with MBI, and wired west towns to move forward on the Royalston Hybrid Fiber / Wireless network option.

#3 SURVEY on May 4th The Royalston Broadband Committee, will mail out a confidential detailed town wide broadband, high speed internet survey, to make sure we have everyone on the list. We ask that each of you complete the survey on line as provided in the survey letter. Rather than having volunteers enter 300 data sets manually. It is critically important that everyone complete the detailed survey. We need at least 300 completed and accurate survey responses across town. The information you submit is confidential. It will not be shared.

If you have any questions, or concerns, or would like help in completing and returning the survey... Please contact Jon Hardie, 978-790-8474 or, Jim Barclay EMA-978-249-2904 , Tom Musco 978-249-9633
Wear Your Life Jacket! A message from Tully Lake and Birch Hill Dam
Jeff Mangum, ranger

Whether you are swimming, paddling or boating, water safety is very important for people of all ages. According to the Centers for Disease Control, every year over 3,400 people drown in the United States. It is the second leading cause of accidental deaths for children 1-14 years of age and the sixth leading cause for all ages. Two thirds of the people who drown never had any intention of being in the water in the first place. If you are going to be out on the water, knowing how to swim is very important, no matter how deep the water is. Wearing an approved life jacket whether you can swim or not is also important because you never know how long you will be in the water and what other factors may be in play. Even when it is hot out you can still get hypothermia from being in the water too long, and if you get stuck in a strong current you may not be able to swim out. Wearing a life jacket can save your life.

Massachusetts state law requires that life jackets must be worn by youth under 12 years old at all times. Each boater must have a life jacket in the boat, and from September 15th to May 15th all canoeists and kayakers must wear the life jacket. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers recommends that you ALWAYS wear it on the water. Please view the water safety video at http://watersafety.usace.army.mil/. Wearing a life jacket should be an automatic routine every time you get on the water, just like putting on a seat belt every time you ride in a vehicle. They are made to keep you alive. Be safe, set the example and always wear your life. 
Thank You
Thank you to Valuing Our Children for funding and organizing the Bugs, Bugs, Bugs program for April school vacation.

Stephanie McClure, Kathy Chencharik, Patti Stanko and Maureen Blasco for baking for the CS Manegold program.

Donations to the Friends
Shirley Anderson
Ralph and Joy Cutter
Kate Duffin
Aaron Ellison
Virginia Gingras
Diane Lincoln
Gordon Morrison
Diana and Geoff Newton
Phil and Carla Rabinowitz
Village School

Summer Monday Hours Funded
Thanks to a grant from Valuing Our Children, the library will again be able to open on Monday mornings during July and August so that people attending the preschool summer programs and others will be able to use the library during those hours.

Art Exhibit
Diana Santiago will exhibit her acrylic paintings during the months of May and June. She lives on Frye Hill Road.

Library Book Discussion 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 of cookies. The next meeting is May 18 when the group will discuss The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao by Junot Diaz.

Zumba Canceled; Yoga continues through May
Yoga classes continue on Tuesdays 5:30 - 6:30 pm
All classes will occur upstairs in the Town Hall and are sponsored by the Friends of the Library. The classes are free but donations are appreciated.

Unique things to borrow from the library:
This is just a reminder that you can borrow an Orion StarBlaster Telescope and tripod, ice cream makers (the round ball type), Kill-A-Watt electricity monitor, 6’ folding tables (2), digital projector, and screen.

Kindergarten Readiness Kits Available
Thanks to Valuing Our Children, the library has two kindergarten readiness kits that contain books, games, and activities to help your child prepare for kindergarten. Each may be checked out for two weeks.

State Park Passes Available
This year the Department of Conservation and Recreation’s Annual Use Nature as Your Library Program has given the library two ParksPasses. The ParksPass entitles the bearer to free parking for one vehicle (excluding buses or vans) at over 50 facilities in the Massachusetts State Parks system that charge a day-use parking fee, which has increased this year. In addition you may download a free app, The Official Mass Parks Adventure Guide, at pocketranger.com. This guide allows you to discover Massachusetts state parks, forests, beaches, campgrounds, mountains, rail trails, and more. The app contains an advanced GPS mapping features so that you can record and share your trails, mark waypoints, and share them with others.

Wanted: bookworms with green thumbs
Friends of the Library Plant Sale and Book Sale
9 - noon May 30
Do you have a green thumb? Donations to the library plant sale would be very appreciated. Bring plants to the library during the week before or drop off at the Post Office the day of the sale.

Have a hole in your garden? Come shop for perennials, herbs, veggie seedlings, annuals, house plants and more- all while supporting your library. Plants are reasonably priced and good gardening advice is free.


All proceeds benefit the Friends of the Library, which supports library purchases and programs as well as funds the production and mailing of this newsletter free to every household in town 10 times per year.

Pictured: Chris Dawson trundles home with some healthy happy plants, grown locally for local gardens, from the library plant sale.
Some of the New Materials at Your Library

**Adult fiction**
- Berg, Elizabeth: *The Dream Lover*
- Berry, Steve: *The Patriot Threat*
- Boyle, T.C.: *The Harder They Come*
- Coben, Harlan: *The Stranger*
- Delinsky, Barbara: *Cardinal Rules*
- Gray, Casey: *Discount*
- Gruen, Sara: *At the Water’s Edge*
- Haynes, Elizabeth: *Falling in Love*
- Petterson, Per: *I Refuse*
- Roberts, Nora: *The Liar*
- White, Randy: *Cuba Straits*
- Woods, Stuart: *Hot Pursuit*
- Tremain, Rose: *The American Lover*
- Vargas Llosa, Mario: *The Discreet Hero*
- Winspear, Jacqueline: *A Dangerous Place*

**Adult non-fiction**
- Drake, Samuel: *The Battle of Gettysburg, 1863*
- Kurkjian, Stephan: *Master Thieves*
- MacDonald, Helen: *H is for Hawk*
- Mann, Traci: *Secrets from the Eating Lab*
- McGraw, Seamus: *Betting the Farm on the Drought*
- Morton, Andrew: *17 Carnations*
- Pederson, Rena: *The Burma Spring*
- Peschak, Thomas: *Sharks and People*
- Piercy, Marge: *Made in Detroit*
- Slevin, Peter: *Michelle Obama*

**Young Adult Fiction/Non-Fiction**
- Almond, David: *The Tightrope Walkers*
- Johnston, E.K.: *The Story of Owen*
- Stine, R.L.: *Don’t Stay Up Late*
- Woodson, Jacqueline: *Brown Girl Dreaming*

**DVDs**

**Audio Books**:
- Berry, Steve: *The Patriot Threat*
- Winfrey, Oprah: *What I know for Sure*

**Children’s Fiction**
- Birdsall, Jeanne: *The Penderwicks in Spring*
- Carle, Eric: *Friends*
- Collins, Billy: *Voyage*
- Dean, James: *Pete the Cat’s Groovy Guide to Life*
- Gaiman, Neil: *On the Beach*
- Julius, Jessica: *Anna’s Birthday Surprise*
- Patterson, James: *Public School Superhero*
- Peirce, Lincoln: *Big Nate*
- Quinn, Jordan: *Adventures in Flatfrost*
- Quinn, Jordan: *Beneath the Stone Forest*
- Quinn, Jordan: *Let the Games Begin!*
- Quinn, Jordan: *Sea Monster!*
- Quinn, Jordan: *The Lost Stone*
- Quinn, Jordan: *The Scarlet Dragon*
- Quinn, Jordan: *The Witch’s Curse*
- Santillo, Oren: *Memories of Grandpa*
- Santat, Dan: *The Adventures of Beekle*
- Yolen, Jane: *Trash Mountain*

**Children’s Non-Fiction**
- Pringle, Laurence: *Octopuses!*

**Book Reviews**
Kathy Morris

Excellent non-fiction writing can equal the most entrancing fiction and here are some titles that I have read and enjoyed lately. Both are available at the library.

**Finding Zero: A Mathematicians Odyssey to Discover the Origins of Numbers** by Amir Aczel - At times reading like a mystery, the quest to find the origin of our numbers and the elusive zero, Aczel recounts his travels around the globe in search of evidence of the earliest use of a zero.

**The Short and Tragic Life of Robert Peace: A Brilliant Young Man Who Left Newark for the Ivy League** by Jeff Hobbs. Written by his Yale roommate, this remarkable book follows Robert Peace, as his hard working mother encourages his intellectual ability and sends him to a private Catholic school. From his outstanding performance there he was admitted to Yale which was paid for by a wealthy alumnus of his high school. Absent but not forgotten was his father, also a brilliant man but a drug dealer who was incarcerated for a double murder when Robert was seven. This is a story of a man who navigated two worlds, working all during college to secure a new trial for his father while excelling at Yale in biophysics, biochemistry and water polo. For whatever reason, he eventually returns to his boyhood home after college and becomes entrenched in the drug world he seemed unable to escape.
**Recipe of the Month**

“Jim Taylor said “goodbye city life” almost 9 years ago and lives just off Royalston Common where he now roams the woods, plays with old trucks, makes folk art and builds and plays musical instruments ‘of no simple description’. A one-time cooking school dropout, Jim usually keeps it pretty simple but he still has a few culinary tricks up his sleeve. Here is an easy side dish that is sure to impress the host and guests of any summer potluck;

**Creole Vinaigrette Pickled Asparagus**

1 bunch of Asparagus (tiniest and tenderest is best)  
2 tsp Olive Oil  
2 tbs Tarragon Vinegar  
1 tsp Paprika  
2 tsp Creole Mustard  
2 tsp Cayenne Pepper  
½ tsp salt

The day before you wish to serve this dish, lightly blanch the asparagus, ideally banded together, standing upright in your asparagus steamer—or if you don’t have one, use a small sauce pan with an inch or so of boiling water, placing a small inverted aluminum bowl on top. After just a few minutes (depending on thickness of the asparagus), plunge in cold water when it begins to soften.

Mix all the rest of the ingredients listed above in a non metallic bowl.

Place blanched and cooled asparagus in an appropriately-sized flat rectangular plastic container with a tight fitting lid and pour in mixture on top. Seal tightly, gently roll around a bit to distribute the mixture. Refrigerate overnight.

*The next day you have an easily transportable delicacy (you can even slip it in a coat pocket if you trust the integrity of your plastic ware) that will have the other potluck attendees raving. You WILL return home with an empty container…“*

**Local Arts Scene**

Area performances this month by Royalston singer-songwriter Linq:

- **GALA COFFEE HOUSE** Friday, May 1st @ 7:30 PM: Linq is the featured artist at this monthly event hosted by the Gardner Area League of Artists. Location: GALA Art Center, 205 School Street, Gardner. [www.galagardner.org](http://www.galagardner.org)

- **5th ANNUAL ARTS IN BLOOM SPRING FESTIVAL** Saturday, May 2nd @ 11 AM to 5 PM: Sponsored by the Performing Arts Collaborative at Butterfield Park on East River Street in Orange. Crafts and other wares available at booths circling the bandstand, where musicians perform throughout the day. May Pole Dance. Linq’s set starts at 2 PM. [http://www.artsinbloom-nq.org](http://www.artsinbloom-nq.org)

- **MEETING HOUSE STAGE** Friday, May 8th @ 7:00 PM: Linq is the featured performer this month. The Historic Rindge Meeting House, 6 Payson Hill Road, Rindge, NH. [http://meetinghousestage.com](http://meetinghousestage.com)

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**Royalston Historical Society**

**Sunday Jazz Brunch**

*Enjoy delectable delicacies and delicious drinks*

*Featuring - by special request*

**The Maples Jazz Band**

*At “The Maples” on the Common (Patience’s House)*

**Sunday, May 24. 2015**

12 noon - 2 pm

This event will benefit the Royalston Historical Society’s fund drive to repair and restore its building at the head of the Common, 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 per person to

The Royalston Historical Society  
PO Box 203  
Royalston 01368

**Tables for 4 may be re-served for $100**

Please confirm your reservation by emailing Patience at goodshoe@earthlink.net

Capacity is limited, so please respond early

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**Cultural Council News:** Royalston Follies Coming!

*Deb Nunes*

The Cultural Council’s World Famous Royalston Follies will be held on Saturday, June 6, 2015, from 7-10 pm at the Town Hall. The evening consists of acts both hilarious and serious, with the audience determining the winner of the coveted Oscarina trophy. There are still several slots available for you to bring your talent (or not) to the show. Beer, wine, and soda will be available for purchase. Tickets are $10.00, and seating is limited due to the occupancy capacity of the Town Hall, so you need to reserve by calling Lorraine Casinghino at 978-249-5151. Don’t delay as we usually sell out. If you wish to participate, or for more information, please call Deb Nunes at 978-249-4000.
Poetry

This 250th year, Royalston is lucky to have 2 poets serving as poet laureate: Sharon Harmon and Mary Carnie. Both capture life in our town in rich stanzas of sensual imagery. Sharon’s was printed last month. Here is Mary’s contribution to the history of verse in our town.

Royalston 2014

Fruit and field, gardens galore
The bounty of harvest by barn door
Activism and discontent
Amid the hills spirits rent
Neighbors rally around the cause
The pipeline planners give us pause
Sever our life blood
This soil fair
To gain access to markets
That cannot compare
To our fine town
Hundreds strong
Innocent children all who long
For sweet slumber and untroubled song
Authors, artists, weavers and sheep
Come together in peaceable sleep
Conjuring dreams to improve the lives
Of neighbors whose hearts we hold inside
Open hands filled with love, faith and trust
All is possible as strive we must
We share our pain, we share our bounty
Life’s sweet journey in rural county
Royalston, sweet Royalston, like no other
She is an all attentive Mother

Alice Daugherty (of town) recently performed at the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C. for the concert for the Japanese Cherry Blossom Festival. Below is a direct link to Alice’s April 6, 2015 internationally broadcast performance. Alice’s portion begins around the 30min mark and she returns again for the final piece. The performance was in conjunction with the Japanese Embassy, in order to celebrate springtime!
http://www.kennedy-center.org/explorer/videos/?id=M6262

Alice is also the flute player on the animated Nickelodeon production series Dora the Explorer. Her flute sound can be heard on the TV shows and movies.

Elizabeth Farnsworth has completed an important new study for the New England Wild Flower Society of invasive plants and their effect on native plants. Here are three links -- the first is NEWFS; the Boston Globe; and New England Public Radio, which ran an interview with Elizabeth
http://www.newfs.org/

Some of the findings in Elizabeth’s report as reported in the Boston Globe are that “Out of 2500 native species in New England, 593 (22 percent) are rare, threatened, endangered or in significant decline. It continues, “31 percent of all the region’s plants are not native to New England, while 10 percent of those, or 111 species, are considered invasive.” The article stresses that the effects of climate change are significantly stressing native species like sugar maples, speeding their decline and allowing conditions which are favorable for invasive plants and pests.
Democrats Invited to Join Committee

The Royalston Democratic Committee is seeking registered Democrats to join the committee. A caucus will be held in the spring and the convention in late summer. Town committees of political parties are part of our democratic electoral system. Interested Democrats should contact committee chair Allen Young at 978-249-7612 or email ay114@columbia.edu for more information.

Royalston Emergency Management

EMD Jim Barclay – ema@Royalston-ma.gov – 978-249-2904

With the end of this crazy winter and snowy spring comes a little break before we enter into a number of special activities planned to celebrate Royalston’s 250th anniversary. During this hiatus, I would ask that you consider participating in some of the volunteer opportunities available through local, state, regional and federal Emergency Management Agencies.

Royalston has a few volunteers – and would like several more – certified as “Community Emergency Response Team” (CERT) members. These volunteers have participated in classroom and hands-on training on topics like personal safety, disaster preparedness, and light search and rescue. Opportunities exist for optional in-depth training in emergency first aid, shelter management, disaster response, communications, and crowd control. CERTs who wish can continue on to more advanced training and in some cases go on to work on call fire, police and EMS departments.

Responsible teenagers and adults of all ages are welcome and there are activities for all levels of interest and ability. Families are encouraged to sign up together. If enough residents are interested, training would be held in Royalston; typically we have three or four residents participate with Templeton EMA’s courses at Narragansett H.S. and with Gardner EMA’s courses at the South Gardner Fire Station.

If this is something you’d consider, please give me a call or drop an e-mail.

Village School May News

Rise Richardson

Right after April vacation, the classes fanned out and identified the local flora and fauna for Biodiversity Day. One class visited Lawrence Brook, a few classes went to the Camp Caravan pond, and the preschoolers explored the vernal pool near the school. The students also illustrated the written records of their discoveries.

The students are planting the garden, looking towards the fall harvest and snacks for the summer programs. Potatoes, sugar snap peas and carrots being planted. By June 1st, pumpkins and winter squashes, cucumbers, Indian corn and more will be planted. All the students love being in the garden – with the extra bonus of finding all kinds of interesting bugs.

The month starts with a traditional May Day celebration, May Pole and all, for which all the students have learned songs and dances. On May 15th, the annual Village School original play is performed at the Town Hall, the culmination of 2 months intensive work by the 4th-6th grade, based on the year-long study of the Middle Ages.

Openings for the next school year at the Village School

There are openings in most classes. Call to set up a visit asap.

YOU are invited to Open Visiting Mornings in April and May on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday mornings from 8:30 to 10:30 a.m. Call ahead to sign up. You can observe classes, talk to staff and meet with the Director. You can find out about Financial Aid and carpools too. 978 249 3505

Summer Programs for Children at the Village School

Go to www.villageschoolma.org to get the PDF brochure of the Summer Programs, which run from July 13 to 24, for children ages 7 to 14. Programs include Woodworking for Kids and the Science and Art Experience. Discounts are given to Royalston families, courtesy of Royalston Academy. Brochures are at the Post Office and the library.

Garden Club Plant Sale

Saturday, May 16, 2015, 8 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Millers River Environmental Center

For some, Spring means gardening. The members of the North Quabbin Garden Club have been patiently waiting for the snowbanks to recede, and the ground to warm up so that they can dig and pot plants for their annual sale. Perennials come from members’ gardens, so the weather plays a crucial part in the success of the sale. All proceeds from the sale go to supporting the grounds around the Millers River Environmental Center and guest speakers’ honoraria. This is a great time to replenish plants you may have lost this past winter, create new gardens, and pick up new plants for your garden. Stop by the Millers River Environmental Center, rain or shine, on Saturday 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. to pick up your plants and meet members of the garden club who will be happy to answer any questions about your gardens. And please bring some warm, spring weather with you.
Community School News

6th Grade RCS Correspondent
Aliyah Neale

Spring is finally here, and classes are beginning to sprout with intelligence.

Kindergarteners have made their own Flat Stanleys! They have been sent off to visit fun places!

Grade one made their own books about the animal of their choice. They can read them all by themselves! Also they are working hard in math. They are learning how to regroup.

Second grade has preformed Wackadoo Zoo! With a lot of hard work with grades one, two, and three, it was an amazing play.

Third grade has worked hard on the play as well. They have learned about the play’s moral, “it is okay to be different.”

Our fourth grade class has worked hard reading and writing. They are learning to compare and contrast two different books. They also made lovely poems about spring.

Grade five is learning about our solar system. Also students have learned about the phases of the moon. They’re even making their own solar system books!

Sixth grade is doing a project on the book The Omnivore’s Dilemma. Also they are mapping out Massachusetts.

The Futures class is measuring and doing measurement activities like cooking to help them. They are also making connections in their readings.

Our whole school went on a field trip together to see School House of Rock at MWCC. We also had a book fair. We could buy all sorts of cool books to read.

Thank you to Mrs Benjamin, Mrs Stimson, and Mr Parker for putting together a wonderful play called the Wackadoo Zoo at RCS. The project was funded by the Athol-Royalston Education Foundation (AREF), a local organization which raises fund to support activities and community involvement in local public schools. AREF’s biggest fundraising activity, the Father-Daughter Dance, is coming up this May 15. Visit www.atholroyalstoneducationfoundation.org for more information.

Photo: Marie Mello

RCS Calendar

5/7 *Grade Grade 2 field trip to Harvard Forest
5/8 *9:00 Hug-A-Tree Program K-3
5/11 *5/15 Grade 6 to Nature’s Classroom
5/21 *6:30 - 8:00pm *PTG event “Book Bingo”
6/3 *Kindergarten field trip “Community Helpers”
6/4 *Grade 1 field trip to Southwick Zoo
6/5 *RCS “Walk-A-Thon (rain date 6/19)
6/5 *6:30 - 7:30 “Art Show”
6/11 *Kindergarten field trip to Davis Farm
6/12 *RCS Field Day (rain date 6/19)
6/17 *RCS Spring Concert (rain date 6/18)

We still have several field trips and the grade six Completion Ceremony to be scheduled.

D.A.R.E. Graduation, Mary C. Barclay

Fifth graders at RCS recently concluded their annual D.A.R.E. (Drug Abuse Resistance Education) program with a graduation reception. The 18 students had Royalston D.A.R.E. and Police Officer Sherry A. Miner as instructor. Guests included Worcester County District Attorney Joseph D. Early, Jr.; Representative Suzannah Whipps Lee; Tom Mitchell, an aide for Senate President Stanley C. Rosenberg; Selectman Christine Long; School Committee member Mitch Grosky; ARRSD Director of Educational Services Dr. Elizabeth Ervin; and from the Royalston P.D. Officers Christopher Deveneau and Keith Swan, and Patrol Sergeant Roland G. Hamel. Students received letters and certificates of commendation, D.A.R.E. tee shirts, pins and winning essayist Kassidy Swan received a medal. Runners up in the essay contest included Isiac Paulino and Bishnu Darjee. Those earning honorable mention included Alexandra Phelps, Nova Lajoie and Adam Rogers. Other essayists included Katrina Bullock, Katelyn Cauley, Daniel Cummings, Ryan Darling, Maia Eldridge, Anthony Gaullzetti, Kane Gray, Jameson Hires, Brady Killay, Josiah Potter, Liberty Smith and Owen Willhite. Fifth grade teacher Sally Knetchel, Principal Molly Superchi and Secretary Marie Lajoie were cited for support.

Cloutiers’ Pete & Henry’s
18 Main St. (Rt. 68) in South Royalston, MA 01368
Thu. 4-9; Fri. 4-10; Sat. 3-10; Sun. 1-8 p.m.
Closed July 2-5, 2015
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I have been advised to inject a certain element of gardening into Garden Notes. No easy task. In many years, spring emerges seemingly overnight. Winter’s grip becomes a dim memory as the prevailing southerly breezes bring on a string of 60 and 70 degree days. Spring birds are seen (and heard), bulbs burst into color, brown morphs into green, long sleeve shirts become optional. And, my personal milestone, there is no compelling need to fire up the cookstove before mid-afternoon. Not so this year. Spring is creeping in. No 70 degree readings. Winds approaching from the north and east. I have yet to see my first robin. Crocuses are opening; daffodils are not. Brown persists as the dominant color. Long sleeve shirts are not optional. And (grumble) we start off most days with a fire in the cookstove.

Initially (as always) my attention was directed to the alliums, all of which were clamoring for my attention. The mulch atop the garlic beds was pushed aside, just days after the snow melted. They had already broken dormancy. The chives, weed-free last fall, were anything but this spring. The culprit was witch grass. Trying to extract witch grass from a bed of chives is one of life’s great challenges. The third of the allium triumvirate, perennial scallions, were a piece of cake in comparison, unencumbered by weeds and beginning to grow. I turned then to the perennials, cleaning up around the rhubarb (which had emerged) and the horseradish and asparagus (which had not). I uncovered the strawberries. I had long given up on strawberries, but Kathy, the eternal optimist, set out plants last spring. They wintered well, but that has never been the problem. It remains to be seen whether they set fruit. Stay tuned. Finally, I cut back the raspberries, experienced the first casualty of the season, my right eye, which was poked (or scratched) by a cane, seriously muddying my view of the world (some would suggest my view of the world is routinely muddied) for a couple of days. Who said that gardening was a low-risk occupation? This might seem to have been a pile of work, but it was all accomplished in less than half a day.

Mid-month provided a window (peephole, actually) of opportunity and I jumped at it. Re-acquainting myself with my hoe and wheelbarrow, I jostled and re-formed some beds, moved material out plants last spring. They wintered well, but that has never been the problem. It remains to be seen whether they set fruit. Stay tuned. Finally, I cut back the raspberries, experienced the first casualty of the season, my right eye, which was poked (or scratched) by a cane, seriously muddying my view of the world (some would suggest my view of the world is routinely muddied) for a couple of days. Who said that gardening was a low-risk occupation? This might seem to have been a pile of work, but it was all accomplished in less than half a day.

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Brighter times beckon in May (if you ignore the black flies). How could it not? Potatoes will be dropped into the awaiting trenches, onions, leeks, celery, and celeriac transplanted, and a host of others direct seeded. The travails of winter, and April, will be forgotten. It is time to garden.

Larry Siegel
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Wildlife sightings:
Mason and Marie Mello saw a bald eagle flying over the marsh in South Royalston near the Phillipston line on Tuesday, April 7th and again on Wednesday the 15th.

Elizabeth Leonard spotted a bobcat and a mountain lion, separately but on the same day in mid-April, on Laurel Lake road.

A plethora of porcupine are present in town. One as big as a large monkey and as placid as Buddha spends its evenings atop a basket willow on NE Fitwilliam Rd.

The Walter Carson Fishing Derby from 10 - noon on Sunday, May 3rd at the Royalston Fish and Game Club is open to members and non-members. Fabulous prizes. Contact the club for more information.

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