The Royalston Community Newsletter

December 2016
January 2017

Volume XVIII, Issue X

A Publication of the Friends of the Phinehas S. Newton Library, Royalston, Massachusetts

Calendar of Events

December 2  Friday
7 - 10 pm  Open Mic at Town Hall. Coffee, baked goods and light suppers. Sponsored by the Royalston Cultural Council

December 3  Saturday (and all Saturdays in December)
9 am - noon  Holiday refreshments served at the library

December 4  Sunday
2 pm  Fused dichroic glass pendant workshop at town hall.

December 7  Wednesday
6 pm  Christmas Tree Lighting at Town Hall

December 10  Saturday
11 am  Friends of the Library Meeting. All welcome.

December 13  Tuesday
7:06 p.m.  Full Cold Moon, which will diminish visibility of the Geminid meteors streaking across the skies at up to one per minute.

December 14  Wednesday
7:30 pm  LBS holiday gift basket packing at the home of Theresa Quinn, 11 On the Common

December 21  Wednesday
5:44 a.m.  Winter Solstice

December 23 (half day) - January 2  School Vacation

December 24  Saturday
Christmas Eve; Chanukah ( Begins at sundown)

December 25  Sunday  Christmas Day

December 26  Monday  First day of Kwanzaa

December 29  Thursday
1:54 a.m.  New Wolf Moon

December 31  Saturday  New Year’s Eve

January 1, 2017  Sunday  New Year’s Day

January 2  Monday  New Year’s Day observed – Post Office, Library, schools all closed; no meetings

January 4  Wednesday
7 pm  Events committee meeting at the Town Hall. All welcome. We are hoping for the younger crowd to take part as well.

January 5  Thursday

January 6  Monday
10 am  Pre-schoolers warm up the winter with basic yoga moves at the library. Free!

January 9  Monday
10 am  Pre-schoolers warm up the winter with basic yoga moves at the library. Free!

January 12  Thursday  Full Wolf Moon

January 16  Monday  Martin Luther King Day
Post Office, Library, schools all closed; no meetings

January 20  Friday  Inauguration Day
7 pm  Royalston Historical Society Meeting at the home of Peter Kranik on the corner of Winchendon and Stone roads. Call 249-7625 or vist the website for more information. Tasty desserts served.

January 27  Friday  New Snow Moon

January 28  Saturday
Chinese New Year 4715 – Year of the Rooster
Select Board Notes:
Christine Long, Chair

In the ongoing effort to improve Royalston’s financial services, the Select Board itself will be taking two steps this year.

First, in collaboration with our financial officers, we have developed a new form for departments to use when they submit their budgets for FY18 (July 1, 2017 through June 30, 2018). The new form asks them to include their FY16 budget and what they actually spent that year, their FY17 budget and year-to-date spending, and their FY18 budget request. It also asks that they base that request on anticipated spending rather than just applying a 2.5% increase to each line of their budget.

Second, by consensus the board will this year present annual town meeting voters with a categorized budget instead of an alphabetical one. For instance, instead of considering administrative assistant, then animal control, then assessors, voters will consider the first as part of General Government, the second with Public Safety, and the third with Financial Services.

Also in relation to financial matters, the board would like to praise the work of Interim Town Accountant Karen Shea Barrett, who is making good progress on reconciliation of past years’ accounts and picking up efficiently on day-to-day needs.

We also wish to praise new Administrative Assistant Melanie Mangum, who is settling in well at town hall. Melanie is also, of course, Royalston’s Town Clerk, and the skills she ably displays in Whitney Hall are clearly evident in her second office, too.

Finally, the Board wants to wish all residents joy in the holiday season. While we all have problems to solve, we also have much to celebrate – our beautiful town, our wonderful people, and our dedicated town officials and employees.

Town Clerk News
Melanie A. Mangum, Town Clerk
978-249-0493 P.O. Box 127
www.royalston-ma.gov

Annual Town Election – Offices/Deadlines:
Nomination papers for the Annual Town Election in April will be available beginning Tuesday, January 17. Nomination papers can be obtained at the Town Clerk’s Office on Mondays during the business hours of 9-1 and 6-8, or at the Administrative Assistant’s office at Town Hall Tue-Thu. from 9 a.m. – 3 p.m.

The deadline to return nomination papers is Mon., Feb. 13 by 5 p.m. The following are the offices up for election/re-election:
Selectman - 3 yrs; two Assessor’s terms – 2 yrs and 3 yrs; 2 Board of Health terms – 3 yrs and 2 yrs; Cemetery Commission – 3 yrs; Library Trustee – 3 yrs; Board of Public Welfare – 3 yrs; Planning Board – 5 yrs; two Sewer Commission terms – 3 yrs and 2 yrs; 4 terms on the J.N. Bartlett Fund – all 1 yr.; Athol-Royalston Regional School Committee – 3 yrs.

2017 Dog Licenses are available January 4. Dog licenses may be obtained on Mondays from 9-1 p.m and 6-8 p.m. at the Town Clerk’s Office. Spayed/Neutered dogs are $6.00, unaltered dogs $10.00. Proof of current rabies vaccination is required at the time of licensing.

November 8 Election Results
for complete info, visit www.royalston-ma.gov!

Heavy turnout: Out of 913 voters, 701 voted in this election. This is a 76.78 percent turnout.

Results:
pct 1 - 414 voted out of 528; pct 2 - 287 voted out of 385

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Pictured: Ballot counting in precinct 1: Thank you to Gert Corser, Mari-ah Mallet, Brenda Putney, Rebecca Krause-Hardie, Theresa Quinn and John Divoll for facilitating Royalston-style democracy. The election day LBS bake sale raised enough money for a scholarship.
Royalston Town-wide Broadband Network Update

Jon Hardie

The Royalston Broadband Committee, MLP Team, Selectboard, and I have been working together these past 12 months, to complete the new extensive Royalston. MBI Broadband Readiness Assessment Documentation and MBI Grant application, now due January 11th.

Important Note: This summer, MBI changed the individual town project application process, effectively adding 3 months to our project approval cycle. We had expected to have the grant application done in September. With the changes, that has been pushed to January 11th. Expect a project launch later in the spring.

These documents will enable us to move forward with the final town-wide Network grant application. We can also go to our Special Town Meeting to approve funding for our self-sustaining network, without having to come back to Town meeting for money every year, and then obtain DOR, and MBI funding approval. We will then go out to bid to build the network, operate the network and ISP (internet service provider) and tech support, based on the successful Town of Leverett, Concord and Holyoke models. Leverett has been especially helpful.

Here’s what we have accomplished so far through years of hard work: We’ve completed our town-wide network design, coverage & system engineering, to serve everyone – everywhere in town. We have produced highly detailed, and very conservative, capital (CAPEX) and operating (OPEX) budgets, to serve more than 350 households.

We already have nearly 350 families who have signed the Tech Access Easement Form. We continue to get new signups every week. Dozens of folks have donated $49 to help defray start-up costs ... and get their first month free. You can too!

Want high speed internet in your home? it’s not too late to pre-register & be ready when we’re in your area.

1) Go to the Royalston town website at www.royalston-ma.gov
2) click on the Broadband Website & Signup (on the left)
3) Complete the Tech Easement Form, then
4) Read and Click the Terms and Condition, and
5) Pre-Register (over on the right). We’ll confirm via email.

We’ll notify you when we are installing in your neighborhood, to set up a site visit - with you - to select the best antenna location for your home.

We’ve been swamped with new application requirements, and massive document preparation. So, finally, in December, we are launching the monthly Royalston Network E-Newsletter. to give you detailed buildout progress, specific goals about the areas we will serve each month, and answers to frequently asked questions. If you pre-register you are signed up for the newsletter.

Again ... Thanks for your help. Together we’ll get it built. If you have any Questions? Please call Jon Hardie, Project Lead on his cell phone at 978-790-8474 from Sam to 10 pm or 24/7 for emergencies. This is really exciting news for all of us.

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Board of Health News

Phil Leger, chair

When bringing lawn mowers and other combustion engine items to scrap, please be sure to empty all oils and gases.

When bringing refrigerators for scrap, please remove the doors prior to disposal.

MADEP has awarded the town a grant to recycle mattresses. This will include a separate container to store them for shipping. We’ll keep you posted on developments.

Still time for flu and pneumonia vaccines. See your local health care provider or nearest pharmacy.

We are still in the midst of a severe drought with no end in sight. Use what you need but not what you don’t need. Leaky toilets and faucets use more water than one thinks. In order for the drought to break we need extended soaking rains, a better than normal snow pack, and good spring rains. In the meantime, conservation is the order of the day.

Watch out for ticks, especially all you hunters in the woods. The warm weather has increased their numbers. Check yourselves after coming in from outside.

Cultural Council Notices

Our first Open Mic of the season kicks off on Friday, December 2st from 7-10pm at the Town Hall. Come and enjoy our award winning Open Mic while indulging in the ridiculously delicious food! Soups and breads will be available for $5.00 per meal, followed by delectable baked goodies made with love for you by the Cultural Council members. The money raised from our Open Mics helps support all the cool events we have all year.

The annual Christmas Tree Lighting will be held on Wednesday, December 7th beginning at 6 pm with the lighting of the tree and singing of Christmas carols. Santa will be arriving shortly after with treats for kids of all ages, and then we will serve hot cocoa and cookies inside while enjoying the musical talents of students from the community school directed by music teacher Erin Girouard. Come and celebrate the holiday season with friends and neighbors!

January Open Mic is Friday, January 6th, and like all our Open Mics , features local talent and delicious food. See you next year!

For more information, call Deb Nunes at 978-249-4000

Winter Parking Ban:

December 1, 2016 through April 30, 2017

Please know that the 24 hour per day enforcement is extremely important for keeping our roads cleared and treated so all travelers can safely navigate to and from their homes. Any vehicles left on the roadway in this period of time will be towed at the owners expense. Thank you all in advance for your full cooperation. Have A Safe Winter!

Also be aware that North Fitzwilliam Rd. is now closed for bridge work. Alternate routes include: N. E. Fitzwilliam Rd, and Rt 32.

Keith Newton, DPW supervisor
Phinehas S. Newton Library News
Kathy Morris, Library Director
Trustees: Polly Longsworth, Jeffrey Magnum, Clarence Rabideau
Mondays: 10:00 am- 8:30 pm. Thursdays 1:00pm - 5:00pm and 6:30 - 8:30pm
Saturdays: 9:00 am - 12 noon
978-249-3572  www.royalstonlibrary.org

Donations to the Friends
Marcia Flanagan
Kay Schoedek

Art Exhibit
We are continuing the art show containing works from several people including Kate Collins, Tom Kellner, Gordon Morrison, Laurie Truehart, and Sonja Vaccari. Most are of local scenes (and none are winter scenes) so stop by and enjoy the ‘warm’ beauty of Royalston and a tropical rainforest.

Library Book Discussion Group meets at 4:30 the 3rd Monday of most months. On December 19, the book under discussion will be Exploring Stone Walls, a Field Guide to New England's Stone Walls by Robert M. Thorson. The author is a professor at the University of Connecticut. The book provides information that will train readers to determine any stone wall’s history, age and purpose. All welcome. Copies of the selection are available at the library. Come for tea, cookies, connection and chat.

Yoga with Janet Bettey
Blissful yoga will continue on Tuesdays at 7:00 p.m. at the Town Hall through the end of December and then take a one month break and resume February 7. All skill levels are welcome to attend and poses are given for each level of competency. This relaxing hour plus helps improve flexibility and balance and focuses on breath work. The program is sponsored by the Friends of the Library with free-will donations accepted.

Fused Glass Workshop Nearly Full
There are two spots open for Royalston residents in the fun fused glass pendant workshop with Deenie Panik Giuliano on Sunday, December 4 at 2:00 p.m. at the Royalston Town Hall. Cost for the workshop is $5 for members of the Friends of the Library and $10 for others. Call the library asap to reserve your spot.

Holiday Cheer on Saturdays at the Library in December
During this beginning of winter, we once again will be serving coffee, tea, cider, or hot cocoa at the library along with goodies to munch on every Saturday. These refreshments are courtesy of the Friends of the Library and are a nice opportunity to browse, chat quietly (theoretically), and catch up on some perusal of magazines or leisurely reading.

Rat-a-tat-tat!
Do you remember having a relative who used to tat? Or do you remember those doilies that graced so many tables and arm chairs, and lace collars? Would you like to see tatting in action? Karen Mercier will be demonstrating her craft on Saturday, December 10 from 10:00 until 11:00 at the library. She will answer questions and show you how it’s done. Often blamed for causing poor eyesight in the past, it is now used as occupational therapy to restore hand agility and dexterity. Karen has offered to teach a class so that we can all learn the basics of how to make lace. If you are interested, call the library and let us know.

Potential Belly Dancing Classes
Dance instructor Tanya Allain has offered to teach a six week class in belly dancing during March. She will focus on helping people learn the basic moves and to create a fluid dance. Wikipedia states that belly dancing is a non-impact, weight-bearing exercise and thus suitable for all ages. Many of the moves involve isolations, which improves flexibility of the torso. Belly dance moves are beneficial to the spine, as the full-body undulation moves, lengthens (decompresses), and strengthens the entire column of spinal and abdominal muscles in a gentle way. If you are interested, in taking the class, call or email the library.

Winter Reading Program to Begin
Last year we ran a winter reading program that proved extremely popular with all ages (especially with adults!). It was so much fun we decided to do it again. All you have to do is take out books from our library, read them, and then tally your results. Favorite prizes from last year will be offered again, including chocolate and candy from Priscillas, honey from the Nunes, and maple syrup from the Divolls. It all begins after the first of the year and will run until the Little Free Library is ‘On the Map’
The Little Free Library in the Park in South Royalston is now registered and on the map on the website for all to find (littlefreelibrary.org). It is well stocked and there is a bookmark telling you about the program and the library.

Pre-schooler Pre-yoga
Pre-schoolers can warm up the winter with Lauren Magruder on January 9 at 10 am at the library. They will be doing sun salutations and other basic yoga moves. All pre-schoolers and their caregivers are encouraged to attend this free event.
Some of the new materials at your library

**Adult fiction**

Alcott, Kathleen  
*Infinite Home*

Archer, Jeffrey  
*This Was a Man*

Baldacci, David  
*No Man’s Land*

Boyle, T.C.  
*The Terranauts*

Brown, Pierce  
*Golden Son*

Brown, Pierce  
*Morning Star*

Cabot, Meg  
*The Boy is Back*

Child, Lee  
*The Wrong Side of Goodbye*

Connelly, Michael  
*Turbo Twenty-Three*

Cornwell, Patricia  
*Chaos*

Evanovich, Janet  
*Those Who Leave and Those Who Stay*

Ferrante, Elena  
*Faithful*

Grisham, John  
*The Whistler*

Hoffman, Alice  
*The Mistletoe Murder*

James, Bill  
*The Principles*

Jin, Ha  
*The Boat Rocker*

Meyer, Stephanie  
*The Chemist*

Prose, Francine  
*Mister Monkey*

Rylant, Cynthia  
*Little Penguins*

Smith, Zadie  
*Swing Time*

Steel, Danielle  
*The Award*

Wells, Dan  
*Extreme Makeover*

Woods, Stuart  
*Sex, Lies & Serious Money*

**Adult Non-Fiction**

Cozzens, Peter  
*The Earth is Weeping*

Garten, Ina  
*Cooking for Jeffrey*

Gretzky, Wayne  
*99*

Horowitz, Richard  
*Why Can’t I Get Better?*

Jackson, Joe  
*Black Elk*

Oliver, Mary  
*Upstream*

Power, Dermot  
*Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them: The Art of the Film*

Samuelsson, Marcus  
*The Soul of a New Cuisine*

Twomey, Steve  
*Countdown to Pearl Harbor*

Wohlleben, Peter  
*The Hidden Life of Trees*

**Adult Audiobook**

Berry, Flynn  
*Under the Harrow*

Cavanagh, Steve  
*The Defense*

Hawley, Noah  
*Before the Fall*

Vance, J.D.  
*Hillbilly Elegy*

Ware, Ruth  
*The Woman in Cabin 10*

Woodson, Jacqueline  
*Another Brooklyn*

**Children’s Fiction**

Biddulph, Rob  
*Grrrr!*

Dean, Kim  
*Pete the Cat and the Missing Cupcakes*

Engelbreit, Mary  
*Night of Great Joy*

Frazee, Marla  
*The Even Bossier Baby*

Haas, Jessie  
*Bramble and Maggie*

Hale, Shannon  
*The Princess in Black takes a Vacation*

Kinney, Jeff  
*Diary of a Wimpy Kid: Double Down*

Numeroff, Laura  
*If You Give a Mouse a Brownie*

Patterson, James  
*Dog’s Best Friend*

Rowling, J.K.  
*Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them: Original Screenplay*

Russell, Rachel  
*Dork Diaries 11: Tales from a Not-So-Friendly Frenemy*

Silvano, Wendi  
*Turkey Trouble*

Tallec, Olivier  
*Who What Where?*

Wenzel, Brendan  
*They All Saw a Cat*

Willems, Mo  
*Nanette’s Baguette*

**Children’s Nonfiction**

Bruel, Nick  
*Bad Kitty for President*

Bruel, Nick  
*Bad Kitty gets a Bath*

Butterfield, Moira  
*Incredible Bugs*

Demi  
*The Shady Tree*

Ellis, Gerry  
*Natumi Takes the Lead*

Goldstone, Bruce  
*Wonderful Winter*

Greathead, Helen  
*Mega Structures*

Hirsch, Rebecca  
*Birds vs. Blades?*

McCrane, Stephen  
*Belly Flop!*

Pearson, Luke  
*Hilda and the Stone Forest*

Russell, Elaine  
*All about Thailand*

Thomas, Louis  
*A Walk on the Wild Side*

**DVDs:**

Alice Through the Looking Glass (DVD & Blu-ray)  
*Bad Moms*

Captain Fantastic  
*Finding Dory (DVD & Blu-ray)*

Game of Thrones 6th Season  
*The Good Wife Final Season*

Independence Day: Resurgence (DVD & Blu-ray)  
*Nerve*

Outlander Season 2  
*The Sea of Trees*

**CDs:**

Jason Aldean  
*They Don’t Know*

Van Morrison  
*Keep Me Singing*
Recipe of the Month

Thank you to Beth Weaver for sharing her grandmother’s recipe for home-made bread. Hands deep in pliant dough and warm yeasty scents out of the oven are just the ticket to get us through the cold dark months.

Shredded Wheat Yeast Bread - Nanna Weaver

3 large shredded wheat biscuits
1 tablespoon butter
1 tablespoon molasses
1 tablespoon honey
1 pkg dry yeast
2 cups hot water
1/2 cup warm water
2 teaspoon sugar
2 cups whole wheat flour
3 cups white flour

Crumble shredded wheat into 2 cups hot water. Add butter, molasses and honey, mix and let cool.

Proof yeast 1/2 cup warm water with sugar, then add to shredded wheat mixture.

Sift in the flour a little at a time; then knead. Place in a large bowl that has been greased and let it rise until doubled. (If you have time, punch it down and let it rise again!)

Knead again, and put into 3 well-greased pans. Let it rise to the top of the pans and then bake in a 350 degree oven for 30 - 40 min.

ROYALSTON EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY
Royalston Emergency Management Director Jim Barclay
e-mail ema@royalston-ma.gov or phone 978-249-2904

We’re off to a cold and stormy start to this year’s holiday travel season. If you don’t need to travel in bad weather, that, of course, is the better option, but if you must, ensure your vehicles are “winter ready.” Have antifreeze sufficient to avoid freezing even in subzero temperatures, the proper viscosity oil for cold, and a battery in top condition, with clean terminals. Have your brakes checked for wear, and top off brake fluid, if need be. Verify that tires have adequate tread – if you must travel in all kinds of weather, consider studded snows. Antifreeze windshield washer fluid is a must. Be sure your vehicle is equipped with necessities for surviving in the cold – a thick blanket or sleeping bag, hat, water, non-perishable snacks and always carry three days’ of medication. Stow a sturdy windshield scraper/brush, a shovel, and some sand/salt, jumper cables and flares in your cargo area. Matches, a flashlight and extra batteries, first aid kit and a pocket tool/knife may come in handy if you’re stranded for an extended period of time. If you have a cell phone, keep a charging cord in your vehicle. Oh, and ALWAYS have important numbers- on paper or in your phone – for emergencies. Take a look at FEMA’s winter-weather readiness suggestions for more details about home and vehicle preparations – www.ready.gov.

This is also a great time to check out the Town’s website www.royalston-ma.gov and CodeRED reverse 9-1-1 calling program. You must register cell, work and VOIP phones and e-mail accounts if you wish to receive emergency notifications regarding Royalston; landlines are automatically included. If you have questions about winter-weather readiness, emergency preparedness in general or want information and do not have internet access, please call REMA at 978-249-2904.
Pillar of our Community
During its annual Physician Recognition Dinner, members of the Heywood Healthcare medical staff were honored for their commitment to their patients and the Greater Athol and Gardner communities.

During the event, George Krasowski, MD, was presented with the prestigious James A. Faust Pillar Award for Physician Excellence, the highest honor Heywood Healthcare bestows on its physicians. A well-known and respected general surgeon, Dr. Krasowski has been a leader in continuing physician education in the Greater Gardner region for nearly 27 years and is seen as a resource for many on the Heywood Healthcare Medical Staff.

“We are privileged to present Dr. Krasowski with this award recognizing his exceptional talent, compassion and especially his commitment to the residents of our region. His contribution to our hospitals, our patients and the health of our communities is immeasurable,” said Win Brown, Heywood Healthcare President & CEO. “He is a highly skilled surgeon who truly cares for his patients. We are fortunate to have him on our staff and value his leadership.

Local Musicians Play 2 Worcester Concerts:
South Royalston flautist Jung-Yi Alice Hsieh Daugherty and trumpeter Scott Daugherty will be playing two concerts in Worcester this December.
On Saturday, December 10, 2016, 8 P.M, they will be part of the Massachusetts Symphony Holiday Pops concert at Tuckerman Hall. Call (508) 754-1234 for tickets.
On Sunday, December 11 at 4:00 pm, they will perform “A Celebration of Trumpet, Flute & Piano” with music of Ravel, Rachmaninoff, Muczynski & Faure at Joseph & Jordan Shapiro Concert Hall at Joy of Music. $15 suggested donation; ($10 Seniors & Students ~ Everyone welcome regardless of donation.)
What’s happening at the Village School?
At October’s end, the 2nd-3rd grade class visited Old Sturbridge Village, to enliven their year-long study of Colonial America. The 4th-6th class visited Fruitlands and the Fruitlands museum, as part of their study of 19th century American painting.

Before Thanksgiving, everyone at the school pitched in to collect a mountain of food for the Orange Food Pantry. All classes begin Winter Gardens for the three weeks of December, beginning with rocks and sand, adding moss and then adding miniature animals. They take the gardens home for the holidays, adding a candle to honor the light in all of us. Before the break, the whole school will gather at the Town Hall to play and sing for parents at the Holiday Celebration.

Upcoming
Roots and Sprouts: Parent - Child group begins on Wednesdays, starting January 4th. 10:30 to 11:45. All parents and caregivers of children newborn to age 3 are welcome to join with Brooke Coleman, nurse, midwife and health educator. Come gather with other parents and their young children in the lovely Village School preschool classroom and deepen your connection with your child through singing, movement and art, celebrating the seasons and outside play. Learn more about child development, how to build a healthy parent/child relationship, and enjoy a simple snack with your child. Preregistration preferred, but you can always drop in. Call 978 249 3505 or email info@villageschoolma.org

Saturday Feb. 4th Village School Open House 10 a.m. to noon.
Explore the various classrooms, find out about openings for fall 2017. Bring your children, there will be engaging art and science projects in the classrooms for them. Staff and parents will be on hand to answer questions and talk about the Village School experience. Refreshments and tea and coffee are served all morning.

For up to date information, go to www.villageschoolma.org

Monty Tech Updates
Mary C. Barclay, Royalston’s Representative – royalston_community_news@yahoo.com
Royalston, once again, has been fortunate in seeing twice as many students accepted to Monty Tech as we have quota seats – means we have four students in the class of 2020, with current enrollment at 14. The extra two seats were unfilled quota seats from seven of our 18 communities: Harvard (14 unfilled of 15 quota seats); Holden (19 of 45); Lunenburg (6 of 25); Petersham (1 of 2); Princeton (4 of 7); Sterling (1 of 17); Westminster (1 of 14)

Reminders:
Dec. 3 and 4 2 p.m. The Nutcracker at Monty Tech PAC
Dec 9 - 11 a.m. Monty Tech Dismissed Prof. Dev. Day
Classifieds

Free:

Services Needed: Searching for snow removal assistance: West Royalston resident seeks snow plowing for driveway this winter. If someone does snow removal or knows someone that does in my area, I’d appreciate being contacted. I have a U shaped, dirt driveway with plenty of open area to push snow. Call or text Gary at 987-895-2595.

Looking for housing: 64 year old woman on Social Security, non-smoking, non-drinking, no drugs, one elderly housecat, and one itty-bitty dog. Prefer washer and dryer hook-up. 413-326-0369

Services Available:
Photography Services: Events, portraits, weddings, horse and dog shows, and commercial photos. Visit www.snowheronstudios.com Call at 978-249-8108 or 978-248-9454

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. Breed your mare to your stallion of choice. Call 978-249-9880 or suzannagaits@gmail.com

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

Graphic digital artist. Websites, print materials - posters, flyers, brochures, business cards, etc... Also photo and slide scanning offered. Barbara 508.364.3339 or bguiney@wildblue.net.

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


Affordable horseback riding lessons. C + R Ranch on the Royalston border in Winchendon. All ages; beginner and up. Call Cindy 978-894-5611

DTM Landscaping. spring cleanup, snowplowing. Call Theresa Gates 413-336-1850 or David Plourde 413-336-1593

Shop locally this holiday for sale:
Royalston Maple Syrup from Divoll’s sugar house. Prices pints $10, quarts $17, half gallons $30 and gallons $52. Call John 978-894-5109


Royalston-raised Pork Sausage: $4.00 per pound. Packaged in 1 lb. packages. Breakfast, Hot and Sweet Italian available. Please call. Chet 978-249-2183

Squire Davis Farm honey $7.00 lb. Available in 1 and 2 lb jars. Call Deb Nunes at 978-249-4000. Cash only.

Hand-knitted baby sweater sets, etc. Call 978-249-4013.

15ft x 15ft EPDM 45 mil pond liner. Brand new still in box. $125.00 or best offer. Call Tom at 978-249-9633.

Fresh Seasonal Vegetables from Ted’s Neale Farm, 1 Neale Place, 978-249-6872

Computer Armoire: Lt. cherry finish, 38” wide X 23” deep X 54 1/2 high. Slide out printer shelf, slide out keyboard shelf and other storage. Excellent condition-$250. Call 978-249-7691

Three barn stalls available. Some tack available Companion mare available. Call Suzanne at Black Horse Farm (978) 249-9880 or cell: (413) 336-1263.

Mulch your garden - Fertilize by the load or by the bag from Black Horse Farm (978) 249-9880, (413) 336-1263 or email suzannagaits@gmail.com

Birch Knoll Farm - Hay for sale, Contact Helen at 978-249-3163 or 774-239-5062


DR field and brush mower: 13 HP Briggs & Stratton Intek OHV engine, Cast iron cylinder sleeve, Cutting width 26”, Cutting capacity 1-1/2”. All manuals. Like new. $900 Firm 978-249-5099

Fire Department News:
Keith R. Newton, chief
The Fire Staff wishes to thank all that supported at the Annual Turkey Raffle. We had a great success. Thanks and see you all next fund raiser.
The space will remain fallow. Ideally, I would cover crop it with plantings will be halved. I am not abandoning the reduced garden. and cucumbers will be reduced by about twenty per cent. Tomato space-grabbing crops, corn, beans, potatoes, brassicas, squashes have planted fifteen per cent less garlic than two years ago. The is a recent event but I have been loath to take a step backwards. I two; and (2) sales at farmers market have been sluggish. Neither (1) the number of mouths to feed has been reduced from six to size. I am finally biting the bullet in recognition of the facts that There will be one dramatic change in the garden next year: its when fall leaf raking was put off until the following spring. Top am forty years older after all.) I give it the lowest priority among to leaf raking, as burdensome as it was forty years ago. (More, I was, burdensome as the soil becomes more and more mellow. After forty seasons, our piece of the earth has become the poster child for “workable garden soil.” Much less was accomplished in respect to leaf raking, as burdensome as it was forty years ago. (More, I am forty years older after all.) I give it the lowest priority among things-to-move-from-one-place-to-another. There have been years when fall leaf raking was put off until the following spring. Top priority is given to the winter supply of wood. Unlike leaves, it cannot be put off. And has not. Mission accomplished.

Beyond harvesting, much was accomplished in the week heading up to our snow event. Every open bed was turned (though many await snow melt for their fall feeding of compost/wood ashes and their winter covering of hay), an activity that becomes less and less burdensome as the soil becomes more and more mellow. After forty seasons, our piece of the earth has become the poster child for “workable garden soil.” Much less was accomplished in respect to leaf raking, as burdensome as it was forty years ago. (More, I am forty years older after all.) I give it the lowest priority among things-to-move-from-one-place-to-another. There have been years when fall leaf raking was put off until the following spring. Top priority is given to the winter supply of wood. Unlike leaves, it cannot be put off. And has not. Mission accomplished.

There will be one dramatic change in the garden next year: its size. I am finally biting the bullet in recognition of the facts that (1) the number of mouths to feed has been reduced from six to two; and (2) sales at farmers market have been sluggish. Neither is a recent event but I have been loath to take a step backwards. I have planted fifteen per cent less garlic than two years ago. The space-grabbing crops, corn, beans, potatoes, brassicas, squashes and cucumbers will be reduced by about twenty per cent. Tomato plantings will be halved. I am not abandoning the reduced garden. The space will remain fallow. Ideally, I would cover crop it with buckwheat, but I have previously reported on the affinity of turkeys to buckwheat. As part of my rotation of crops, the open space will be replanted in two years and a new section of the garden will be taken out of production.

I bemoaned the hiatus of the newsletter in August, there being so much to share. I am grateful for the hiatus of the newsletter in January, there being so little to share. Larry Siegel

**Seasons’ Greetings**

Thanksgiving has come and gone. This means time for Tom and me to compose our Christmas Newsletter. Or, more accurately, for Tom and me to TALK about composing it, AVOID composing it until the last minute, and then ARGUE about the composition until we realize that a finished newsletter is preferable to a finished marriage. If we’re lucky, the actual newsletter is mailed sometime in January, with the headline edited from “Holiday Greetings” to “Happy New Year.”

Like many of you, we have received a wide variety of holiday newsletters over the years. Here are some of our favorites:

A couple we know travels to someplace amazing each year. Their holiday newsletter always consists of a photo of them on that trip with the words, “Season’s Greetings.” The unfortunate detail here is that, in the photo, they are wearing Santa hats. They actually pack the same two Santa hats every year, so they appear at the Great Wall in Santa hats, the Pyramids of Giza in Santa hats, and The Great Barrier Reef in bathing suits....and Santa hats. I find this hilarious.

A family I knew for many years led the most frenetic life. The parents and their three children were like puppies, in a constant state of alert, lurching happily from activity to activity. They adopted a menagerie of exotic pets and hosted an annual Halloween party for their entire neighborhood...in a local graveyard. Every year their holiday newsletter was nothing but photos which the mom had cut out and pasted, collage-style, turned helter-skelter upside down and sideways. No text. Just a bunch of happy people tumbling across their year. Classic.

A relative of Tom’s leads a charmed life. When we see his return address on a holiday envelope we cringe. Bracing ourselves, we open and find he has appeared on “Face the Nation” or won the Nobel Prize; his wife has cured cancer or joined the Rockettes. Together they scaled the Himalayas or crossed the Atlantic in a catamaran. We are overcome with inadequacy and resolve to seriously rethink how we use our free time.

A dear friend of mine disdains “impersonal newsletters.” During his work years he traveled extensively. Beginning in October, he used the long flights to write a personal holiday greeting to each of his friends. He had many friends. Reading his card - which he’d hand-addressed - was like a private conversation. He has long since retired - no more long flights. Yet he continues his own holiday tradition, writing personal notes. We do send him a newsletter...tucked into a personally written Christmas card.

And so we prepare to lay out our entire year’s history for family and friends. No matter how much we stretch the truth, our life is blissfully average. No Santa hats or catamarans. We know our newsletter will say more about us than just the year’s events we choose to share.

We’ll start composing it any day now.

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Wildlife Sightings

Benjamin Morris-Siegel snapped this photo of a flock of turkeys in the park in South Royalston on Thanksgiving Day while waiting for his own dinner to come out of the oven.

As Jack Pretlutsky writes:
“If turkeys thought, they’d run away
a week before Thanksgiving Day,
but turkeys can’t anticipate,
and so there’s turkey on my plate.”

Libraries Provide Lyme Information

The Phinehas S. Newton Library will be one of over 130 libraries in Massachusetts who will have a reference collection of up-to-date information on Lyme disease available for use. The project, called “Stop Lyme: Information for Tick-Borne Disease Identification, Prevention and Patient Care,” seeks to provide curated information about tick-borne illnesses and to demonstrate that public libraries can help convey information from state government to their communities. The project for libraries was spearheaded by the Nahant Public Library.

As part of the project, a collection of six books on various aspects of tick-borne disease has been added to the state-wide ebook platform, Axis360, and now can be accessed by anyone in Massachusetts with a library card. Additionally, there are clinical textbooks in the EBL ebook platform and a book for children in the Biblioboard platform, all of which may be found by using the search term “Lyme” in each platform. Any cardholders needing assistance reserving or downloading these ebooks may contact the library. Another online component will include a database of research articles. In addition to the ebooks, information packet, and database website, there will be a live program to be scheduled in the spring, and people will be able to ask questions from live speakers.