A complete listing of all town meetings is posted on the Town's website, www.royalston-ma.gov
Winter Parking Ban through April 30

April 1 Monday
10 a.m. - 8 p.m. Annual Town Election
precinct 1 Town Hall
precinct 2 Whitney Hall

April 2 Tuesday
5 p.m. Deadline Royalston Agriculture Committee logo contest
7 p.m. Not tonight - Select Board Meets WEDNESDAYS in April

April 3 Wednesday
Half-Day all ARRS School for professional development
5 p.m. RF&G Trap Shoot $3/25 clays; all levels welcome
7 p.m. Select Board Meets

April 5 Friday
4:50 a.m. New Pink Moon
7-10 p.m. Open Mic Night Season Finale in the basement of the Congregational Church.

April 6 Saturday
5:30 p.m. RF&G Roast Beef Supper

April 8 Monday
5 p.m. Friends of the Library meeting, all welcome.
7-9 p.m. Burning Permits Available FD Station #1

April 12 Friday
Close of Schools today – April Vacation Begins
3:06 p.m. Full Pink Moon
7:00 p.m. Historical Society meeting at the home of Peter Kranik, corner of Winchendon and Stone roads. Pot luck supper preceding at 6:30.

April 14 Sunday Palm Sunday
April 15 Monday
Patriot's Day – Post Office, Town Offices, Library, Schools all closed

State & Federal Taxes annually due today but, thanks to the the American Revolution battles in Lexingon and Concord, must be post-marked by midnight, Tuesday, April 16th.

April 16 Tuesday
5 p.m. LBS Scholarship Deadline
April 17 Wednesday
7 p.m. Select Board Meets

Calendar of Events

April 19 Friday Good Friday
sundown Passover begins
5 p.m. Royalston Academy Scholarship Deadline

April 20 Saturday
10 a.m. sharp Annual Easter Egg Hunt on The Common
April 21 Easter Sunday
April 22 Monday Earth Day
Pre-dawn Lyrid Meteor Shower with about one shooting star every five or six minutes, originating in the southern skies.
7-9 p.m. Burning permits available – last chance. FD Station #1

April 26 Friday
7 p.m. Tick Talk, researchers from the UMass Amherst Laboratory of Medical Zoology program on the ticks of Massachusetts and the diseases they can carry at the Royalston Town Hall. Refreshments. Sponsored by the Friends of the Library .

April 27 Saturday
9 a.m. - noon Townwide Roadside Clean up (command center Bullock Park). Pick up trash from the roadsides and bring to the transfer station for free disposal. Get an assignment or just clean up where you see a need. Hot dogs and chili at Bullock Park at noon for all pickers. Thanks to Charlie Scribner for his organization skills.

May 10 Friday
7 p.m. Annual Town Meeting

Dear Reader,
If you have never been to the Royalston Library, or haven’t been in a long time, I pose to you a fun challenge for the month of April, or, really, any month at all: treat yourself to a library visit!

Why is this a treat? Behind our doors, you will find a smiling librarian and a world of entertainment. Yes, obviously we have books, carefully selected to be fascinating to you, from gripping novels to the latest insightful works of non-fiction. If you don’t have time to read, you can listen to our audio books while you drive (both CD’s and streaming). If you prefer to watch movies or TV shows, you can borrow from our extensive collection, including the latest releases. If magazines or music delight you, we have that too. And if you cannot find or we do not have what you are looking for, our friendly librarians will find it or order it for you.

So, please, come to the library and indulge your brain in whatever tickles your fancy at the moment. The library is the most delightful public institution, serving your individual interests, be they frivolous or profound. It is free and open to all, and we invite you to come in and take out something that entices you. It will enrich your life!

-- Jeff Mangum, Library Trustee
Select Board Notes

Deb D’Amico – Select Board Clerk

More Budget Talk During March the Select Board continued to refine the town’s operating budget for FY20 and heard the recommendations for capital needs – goods and services that cost more than $5,000 and have a life expectancy of at least five years. This work revealed that we are at the point – we have warned of this for years – where we cannot offer the same services, treat our employees decently, and make sound capital decisions with the money we have. We’re now at the stage of evaluating everything, juggling where we can, weighing one good against another. We will have a more complete report next month.

Integral to that discussion is the first ever ten-year capital plan, completed this month by the Capital Plan Development Committee – a vital tool in avoiding “government by crisis”. You will hear more about why in our next report and you will find more information about the plan elsewhere in this newsletter.

Town Hall Elevator Project As can be seen when driving through the Common, work has begun on the Town Hall elevator. When completed, the elevator will provide full access to the second-floor auditorium and stage, allowing everyone to participate in the many events that take place there. This is a long-held-dream come true! Until its completion, however, the elevator construction will result in some inconveniences for all of us.

Under the advisement of Fire Chief Keith Newton and Building Inspector Geoff Newton, the Select Board has voted to close all access to the second floor for the duration of construction. The ground floor will continue to be available. However, because one of the ground floor fire exits has been blocked by construction work, a fire detail will be provided for most ground-floor events. The board is grateful to the members of the First Congregational Church on the Common for offering their fellowship hall as an alternative space for some town events. We also appreciate the creativity of our library staff and the staff of the Village School as they seek alternate spaces for their performances that typically take place on our stage. For information on gaining access to these spaces, contact the Select Board office.

The Royalston Handbook inserted in this newsletter is the “Royalston Handbook of Boards and Committees.” This handbook has been several months in the making, with input from board and committee members. We hope it will be a valuable resource for residents and inspires many to join a committee or run for elected office.

Coming Soon – Royalston’s Official Facebook page! One of the board’s goals is to increase community engagement. To that end, a small but dedicated working group met several times during the winter to devise a “social media presence” for our town, and in March, the board approved the development of a Royalston Facebook page. We see this as an extension of the Friends of the Library’s excellent Royalston Newsletter, which we all rely on for news and entertainment. We believe our Facebook page will offer timely updates about events and other happenings around town.

Thank you, Melanie! As many of you know, Melanie Mangum will be leaving us at the end of April. Melanie has served as our Town Clerk for many years and, for the past five years, has served as Administrative Assistant to the Select Board. Her ability to organize, prioritize and generally keep dozens of plates spinning at once has made the Select Board’s work much easier. We are constantly astonished at all she keeps on top of and we will miss her very much.

Got brush piles? Burn Permits are available from the Fire and EMS Department through May 1st. To get the required permit, go to Station #1 (4 Athol Rd) on the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th Mondays of the month from 7-9 pm. On the day you intend to burn, call the non-emergency number (978-249-8138) and listen to the message to be sure that daily conditions are appropriate for burning. Then leave a message as instructed, including your address and permit number.

Board of Health News

Phil Leger, chair person

Spring is in the air. Roadside clean up last Saturday in April. Bud Light is still on sale in NH. Don’t wait to pick up your neighborhood roads. If anyone sees the Bud Light boys, tell them the cans are recyclable. If you use your pick up truck to go to RRATS, be sure that you secure your load so that you’re recycling and not littering. Your neighbors thank you.

Even though it will be a while before black flies come out, ticks are active. So do the tick check when coming in from outside activities. BOH office hours Wednesday 5-9pm Whitney Hall. Meeting 1st Wednesday of the month 7pm.

Capital Plan Development Committee

Phil Rabinowitz

The vision of the Capital Plan Development Committee is that Royalston will be maintained as the rural community it has always been, while affording its residents the services, security, and amenities they need, including the technology that will allow them to participate fully in 21st-century public life.

A capital investment plan for Royalston should be more than a spreadsheet outlining when and what spending will take place over time. It should also lay out long-term goals for the town, and how the spending plan fits into the achievement of those goals.

This is an attempt to describe a vision for Royalston over the next ten years. It is based in part on what we’ve heard from residents in a series of informal group meetings that included over 40 individuals. This vision, like the plan itself, will be reexamined every year and adjusted as circumstances and the town’s priorities change.

Perhaps the most important goal voiced by town residents and implied by our own deliberations and those of department heads and the Select Board is to keep the town as it is – maintaining its rural character, its natural beauty, its open space, its historic buildings and atmosphere, and its sense of community – while improving its efficiency, services, and financial position. Capital expenditures should be considered in light of this guiding principle. With that in mind, the capital plan will address the following:

DPW/Highway. Most of our road maintenance and rebuilding is done under the auspices of Chapter 90 – Federal funds that are administered by the state. Given the size of the town’s budget, the amount of road work that is currently performed is the maximum that can be done with the resources and manpower available to us. We can, however, seek funding from other sources – with the understanding that such sources may or may not exist – to hire out some additional work each year, and thus try to complete more road projects more quickly. The plan can anticipate and incorporate such funding, if we can find it. Vehicle replacement must be considered as well. If we want better roads, we’ll have to pay for them somehow, and that might be out of pocket.
Capital planning -continued

**Fire Department.** The Fire Department has regular capital expenses – turnout gear, hoses, etc. – in addition to also needing a vehicle replacement plan (see below again) and possible work on the fire station.

**Police Department.** The issue of space for the Police Department is an ongoing one, since the current office and confinement space is woefully inadequate. A renovated Raymond School is a possible solution, but funds would have to be found to make that a reality (see Buildings). As with DPW and Fire, the Police should have a vehicle replacement schedule.

**Replacement Schedules for Equipment.** For many years, the town has nursed its vehicles – trucks and heavy equipment for the Highway Department, Fire Department vehicles, cruisers for the Police – as long as possible, often resulting in costly emergency repairs or replacements at the most inconvenient times. Creating schedules for replacement that would allow us to anticipate expenditures and to avoid most crises would be the ideal situation. The plan should set forth replacement schedules and estimate what proper replacement would cost.

**Emergency Management.** Items such as a generator to make the Royalston Community School a possible emergency shelter, portable gas tanks to fuel public safety vehicles in the event of a long-term power outage, and radios that allow public safety personnel to communicate with one another and with other local and state agencies are all part of a coordinated plan for dealing with the security of the town.

**Sewer Commission/Water District.** The town owns the sewer system in South Royalston, and recently paid for a new sewage treatment plant. While we can hope that the plant won’t need a major capital investment during the next ten years, there is no guarantee. In addition, pumps, pipes, and other elements of the system may need repair or replacement. It would make sense to allow for capital expenses, although perhaps not immediately.

**The Water District** is owned by users, but the town owns the water tank, which could also need a capital investment in the future. It may be prudent to plan for that possibility.

**Trees.** There has been concern expressed about town trees and the danger they may present. There was a survey done in 2012 by the Tree Warden in conjunction with the power company. As a result 91 trees were marked as hazardous and to be removed, 42 of these trees were either dead or on private property. There was a public hearing held for the remaining 49 town trees and all but one were approved for removal and those were taken down by the power company. There is no hearing required for dead trees to be removed. Another survey could be undertaken in the future. We recommend an increase in the budget article ,Tree Maintenance, to help with the need to remove trees which the power company will not take care of.

**Technology.** While the town Wi-Fi system currently in development is not anticipated to need direct outlay from taxes in order to function, it should be included in the plan, since town departments and boards will be using it as well.

**Board of Health/Transfer Station.** While we lease the trash compactor, we own a metal building and several roll-off containers at the Transfer Station. The containers get damaged on occasion, and eventually succumb to corrosion and wear. There should be replacement costs for some containers in the plan. In addition, it looks likely that three-phase power will be available at RATTS in the next couple of years, and that may demand capital expenses.

Royalston Community Newsletter April 2019 Page 3

**Buildings.** There are at least two elephants in the room here: Raymond School and Whitney Hall. These town-owned buildings – each in a prominent place in a central location, one on the Center Common, the other in the center of South Royalston – are potential assets. Each, however, is also a potential disaster, in that both need large amounts of cash in order to be made fully usable. Asbestos abatement for the Raymond School will apparently cost in the neighborhood of $200,000.00, and that begs the question of the cost of renovation that will be needed in addition – perhaps as much as $2.5 million – to prepare the building for whatever future use the town decides on. A serious renovation of Whitney Hall – needed if it is to be used as office space, and essentially necessary for the preservation of the building – will run about $3.5 million. Further complications arise in that Whitney Hall is an anchor for the South Village: many current residents and/or their children went to school there, and tearing it down would create bad feeling among a large segment of the community. Either or both of these renovation expenditures is huge for a town with an annual budget not far above $2 million, but some solution has to be found, and it is inevitable that whatever it is will involve capital outlay.

**The Town Hall** also needs work. It is settling around the columns installed to prop it up, causing bulging floors and potential structural damage, and windows need updating. The Phinehas Newton Library, too, is likely to need a capital infusion in the coming years. A new roof, a furnace, and other possible expenses are looming, and the question of accessibility has been waiting in the wings for years. There are also buildings at the DPW garage that may need roofing, electrical work, or even replacement. In addition, the town owns two fire stations, a former fire station, and two hearse houses, all of which may or do need capital expenditures over the course of the plan.

**Cemeteries.** The addition of the donated land at the Stewart-Maple Cemetery comes with some associated costs related to site preparation. The acquisition of more land for cemetery space will require a capital outlay as well.

**Post Office.** The current Post Office, housed in the Old Schoolhouse belonging to the Royalston Historical Society, has no heat and no bathroom, making life difficult for anyone who works there. There should be allowance for a habitable post office in the plan.

**Revenue.** There are a number of expenses in this summary that are over and above what the town has traditionally spent. If we are to accomplish the goals that these expenses represent, we will have to find the revenue to fund them. This will likely draw on many different sources – grants, donations (of materials and labor as well as money), taxes from businesses such as solar installations, and possible debt exclusions and overrides from taxpayers. Without some or all of these revenue sources, all the goals of the plan can’t be met.

It is probable that we will have to neglect some of the goals above in favor of others, but it’s important to lay out all of them in order to keep the vision of what we want for the town before us, and to continue to work toward the vision of a community that meets the needs of all its citizens.

Don’t forget:

**Town Elections, April 1, 10 AM-8PM**
**Annual Town Meeting, May 10, 7PM**

Royalston Community School
Phinehas S. Newton Library News
Kathy Morris, Library Director
Trustees: Jeffrey Mangum, Jennifer Basso, Theresa Quinn
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

Thank you
Maureen Blasco, Patti Stanko, and Stephanie McClure for baking for Dale Monette’s program
Maureen, Patti, Joshua Doub, and Lydia Musco for helping with set up and clean up for the program.

‘I Learned It from a Book’
Several of us were sitting around talking at the last book group and it came up that many of us had learned how to do things from a book. So, we decided to ask the community to tell us how you learned to do something or what you have learned from a book. We’ll compile the results and publish them. This is your chance to let people know about the unique thing, idea, craft, whatever you learned through reading a book. Send your submissions to royalstonlibrary@gmail.com or drop them off at the library.

Kite Flying
The annual kite flying day will be Thursday, April 25 at 1:30 at the library, weather permitting. Bring a kite or use one of ours. Come soar with the kites, write some kite poems, and eat some kite cake. And if the weather doesn’t cooperate, we’ll still have fun writing, eating cake, and dreaming about spring.

Tick Talk
On Friday, April 26 at 7:00 p.m. at the Royalston Town Hall, researchers from the UMass Amherst Laboratory of Medical Zoology will present a program on the ticks of Massachusetts and the diseases they can carry. The incidence of Lyme Disease has been steadily increasing every year throughout the United States and is most prevalent in the Northeast and Atlantic States. Infected black-legged ticks can carry not only the bacteria that causes Lyme disease but also babesiosis and human granulocytic anaplasmosis and can infect you with more than one disease at a time. This group of researchers is studying ticks in its ‘Send a tick to college program’ in which scientists examine ticks sent in from around the state to determine whether they carry the pathogens that cause Lyme Disease and more than twenty other tick-borne pathogens. This talk will introduce you to the different types and life stages of ticks, their geographic distribution, the diseases they can carry, up-to-date information on research as well as generally enlightening you to become tick smart by providing information on avoiding and dealing with tick bites. Join us for this topical discussion and come with questions. Refreshments will be provided by the Friends of the Library.

Art Exhibit
Dale Monette’s stunning nature photographs will be on display throughout the month of April. Be amazed at how the eyes of the bobcat and horned owl follow you as you walk around the room looking at the different animals and birds.

Read something good lately? Let us know at the RCN. Send your review by the 22nd of the month prior to publication. All ages welcome.

Preschool Storytime
at the library
10 am each Monday
Stories, socializing, songs, snacks and crafts
Free
Call the library for more information

yoga - every Tuesday night at 7 pm relocated to the basement of the first congregational church during elevator construction, sponsored by the friends of the library. Free but donations welcome.
Some of the new materials at your library

**Adult Fiction**
- Berry, Steve: *The Malta Exchange*
- Box, C.J.: *Wolf Pack*
- Butler, Nickolas: *Little Faith*
- Coben, Harlan: *Run Away*
- Cussler, Clive: *Celtic Empire*
- Deveraux, Jude: *A Justified Murder*
- Eggers, Dave: *The Parade*
- Fielding, Joy: *All the Wrong Places*
- Fox, Candice: *Redemption Point*
- Gardner, Lisa: *Never Tell*
- Greaney, Mark: *Mission Critical*
- Griffiths, Elly: *The Stranger Diaries*
- Hannah, Sophie: *Next to Die*
- Heller, Peter: *The River*
- Iles, Greg: *Unto Us a Son is Given*
- Leon, Donna: *The Last Woman in the Forest*
- Quinn, Kate: *The Huntress*
- Reid, Taylor Jenkins: *Daisy Jones & the Six*
- Robards, Karen: *The Fifth Doctrine*
- Russell, Criag: *The Devil Aspect*
- See, Lisa: *The Island of Sea Women*
- Swanson, Peter: *Before she Knew Him*
- Wilson, G. Willow: *The Bird King*

**Adult Non-Fiction**
- Bradley, Steve: *Instant Pot Miracle*
- Chezar, Ariella: *Seasonal Flower Arranging*
- Cook’s Illustrated: *Vegetables Illustrated*

**Young Adult Fiction/Non-Fiction**
- Avery, Logan: *Art and Culture*
- Bottner, Barbara: *What a Cold Needs*
- Ellis, Gerry: *Little Larry Goes to School*
- Jenkins, Steve: *The Frog Book*
- Levine, Sara: *Flower Talk*
- Markle, Sandra: *The Woolly Monkey Mysteries*
- Rice, Dona: *Tails*
- Rice, Dona: *The History of Ice Cream*
- Rice, Dona: *The Serengeti*
- Slade, Suzanne: *Daring Dozen*
- Wick, Walter: *A Ray of Light*

**Children’s Fiction**
- Baer, Julien: *The Book in the Book in the Book Circle*
- Barnett, Mac: *The Night Bear*
- De Moraes, Ana: *Ruby & Rufus*
- Dunrea, Olivier: *Baby Day*
- Hall, Michael: *Monkey Time*
- Hernandez, Carlos: *Sal and Gabi Break the Universe*
- Hoberman, Mary: *The Sun Shines Everywhere*
- Iwamura, Kazuo: *Good-bye, Winter! Hello, Spring! Wings*
- Klein, Cheryl: *This Book is Spineless*
- Leslie, Lindsay: *I Am Just Right*
- McPhail, David: *Another*
- Reid, Barbara: *Picture the Sky*
- Robinson, Christian: *The Donkey Egg*

**Children’s Nonfiction**
- Bailey, Linda: *Mary Who Wrote Frankenstein*
- Challoner, Jack: *Stem Lab*
- Clanton, Ben: *Narrwhal’s Otter Friends*
- Gillibrand, Kristen: *Bold & Brave*
- Oxlade, Chris: *Construction Machines*
- Oxlade, Chris: *Emergency Machines*
- Richmond, Benjamin: *Baby Elephant Joins the Herd*
- Salas, Laura: *Snowman – Cold= Puddle*
- Sehgal, Kabir: *Thread of Love*

**DVDs:**
Annual Royalston Egg Hunt, Saturday, April 20th

Mr. Bunny and friends invite you to celebrate the annual Egg Hunt on Royalston Common. The festivities will start promptly at 10:00 AM on Saturday, April 20th from the steps of the Town Hall. It will be held rain or shine; participants are advised to dress for the weather.

Again this year, some eggs will contain prizes. The morning’s activities will once again include the longtime-favorite chocolate melting and candy-making in the Town Hall immediately following the egg hunt. There will also be an opportunity to have photos taken with Mr. Bunny and participate in fun games.

Children should bring a bag or basket to hold their eggs during the hunt and to hold their candy afterwards, to take home. We ask that everyone please recycle the plastic eggs. Everyone is asked to place the emptied eggs in bins set up for that purpose in the Town Hall.

Donations of soft candy are welcome (hard candy is not permitted). All candy must be individually wrapped and small enough to fit into the plastic eggs. The Library and the Post Office will accept donations in the baskets provided until April 6th, allowing the time necessary to prepare the eggs. Cash donations are also welcomed. All donations are used for candy, melting chocolate wafers, and prizes.

Questions can be directed to event organizer Sara Dilg at 978-488-9828.

Royalston Fish and Game Club

The next F&G Roast Beef Dinner is April 6th, 5:30 p.m. The family-style supper starts with a delicious tossed salad with dressing, bread and real butter. The main meal is rare to well-done roast beef, mashed potatoes, and green beans. Choice of chocolate or strawberry Hoodsie for dessert! Tickets may be reserved at the Club, or by contacting Sandy Graf at 978-249-4281.

Trap Shoots for all levels, members and non-members, are open Wednesdays, from 5-8 p.m., at a cost of $3/25 clays. ATA/MATA members needing registered targets, registered shoots are May 15, 22, 29; June 5; and August 28.

Horseshoes: Luck of the Draw Partner nights begin April 16, 22, 29; June 5; and August 28.

Members needing registered targets, registered shoots are May 15, 22, 29; June 5; and August 28.

Royalston Emergency Management Agency

I had the opportunity to attend an all-day program sponsored by the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) on “Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS) in Disaster Management.” The program provided an overview of UAS types, the rules and regulations that currently guide their use, and some of the many uses in pre-planning, emergency situations, and post-disaster assessment. How to begin a UAS program, engaging the community, addressing issues of privacy, civil rights, and civil liberties, and understanding the Federal Aviation Administration’s (FAA) role in drones were all discussed. As the number and severity of incidents increases and grant funding decreases every public safety organization must consider the use of newer, more efficient, technologies including drones.

Mount Wachusett Community College raising funds for sculpture by Gene Cauthen. To recognize Gene’s role in establishing the art program and gallery at MWCC as well as his contributions during the 35 years he taught sculpture and bronze casting, the art department is seeking to acquire his piece “Small Bather” to place in the permanent exhibit. Donations of any size are accepted and appreciated and can be made at support.mwcc.edu/genecauthen.

Your face here! Local artist Gordon Morrison is putting the finishing touches on a new photo panel that is being added to this year’s Royalston Egg Hunt event. Local youngsters will be able to have their pictures taken with their faces showing through the cut-outs in the panel. The project was awarded a Royalston Cultural Council grant.

Historical Society:

“Get Schooled” event postponed until fall to accommodate the town hall’s make-over as it gets a new elevator, the Historical Society is putting off the program on schools until September 21, back-to-school season.

Former scholars, did you attend Royalston schools or were you home-schooled in Town? Do you have an unforgettable memory of your school days? Write up, record, or make a drawing to tell all about it (and to add your experience to the Town’s historical record). If you agree, your memory will be put on display at the “Get Schooled” event. Alternatively, visit the Historical Society’s story-collecting booth at the Town Fair in September to share your true tale.

All invited to the Society’s quarterly meeting on April 16 at 7 p.m. (with an optional pot luck supper preceding at 6:30 at the home of president Peter Kraniai). Please come help plan society collections as well as upcoming events like the “Get Schooled” program and upcoming October 19 cemetery tours.

Royalston Fish and Game Club

The next F&G Roast Beef Dinner is April 6th, 5:30 p.m. The family-style supper starts with a delicious tossed salad with dressing, bread and real butter. The main meal is rare to well-done roast beef, mashed potatoes, and green beans. Choice of chocolate or strawberry Hoodsie for dessert! Tickets may be reserved at the Club, or by contacting Sandy Graf at 978-249-4281.

Trap Shoots for all levels, members and non-members, are open Wednesdays, from 5-8 p.m., at a cost of $3/25 clays. ATA/MATA members needing registered targets, registered shoots are May 15, 22, 29; June 5; and August 28.

Horseshoes: Luck of the Draw Partner nights begin April 16, and continue through the summer on Tuesdays from 6-10 p.m. $5/ person. Top shooter is ten best of the 20 weeks. If raining, join in for CornHole under the pavilion.

F&G 2019 Memberships are $50/year. Contact the Club at 978-249-3004. Check into the Royalston Fish & Game Club Facebook page to see what new events are added!
**Milestones**

Lucy Jean Richards, was born on February 21, 2019 weighing 7lbs 4oz 19inches to Kayla Lusco (daughter of Carla Jarvenpaa of Royalston) and Blake Richards of Keene. Lucy is the great-granddaughter of lifelong Royalston residents Donald and Marlene Jarvenpaa.

Owen Daugherty arrived on March 12 at Brigham and Women’s Boston. He weighed in at 7lbs, 13oz. He and his parents Alice and Scott Daugherty are all healthy and happy!

Charles W. Gamble, 67, of Royalston, died peacefully Friday, March 1, 2019 in Quabbin Valley Healthcare of a period of declining health. Charles was born on January 27, 1952, a son of the late Walter and Helen (Anson) Gamble and has lived in Royalston the last 10 years. He is survived by his wife of 10 years; two brothers, David Gamble of Maryland and William Gamble of New York and several nieces and nephews.

Charles earned a PhD in Music Theory from City University of New York. He was a talented musician and mastered guitar and five different types of saxophones. He played in several local bands including the Wachusett Community Band and the Expandable Brass Band of Northampton. He enjoyed being outdoors especially when he was hiking, canoeing and kayaking. Charles also loved to travel and took trips all over Europe and Canada. One special excursion took him to Baffin Island in the Arctic Circle.

There are no funeral services planned at this time.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to the Dakin Humane Society, PO Box 6307, Springfield, MA 01101, https://www.dakinhumane.org/tribute-donation.html

**Amanda Putney Horse Show**

The 7th annual Amanda Putney Memorial Horse Show has been moved to a later-than-usual date of June 23rd, 2019. This family-friendly fundraiser helps out young equestrians with scholarships to help with showing expenses. If you wish to donate items, certificates, or commitments of goods or services, please send a message via the group’s Facebook Page, or by contacting Brenda L. Putney at 978-249-7787.

**Allen Young to Speak at North Orange Library**

For those who missed Allen Young of Butterworth Road when he read selections at the Royalston library from his recently-published 500-page autobiography, he will do a similar program at the Moore-Leland Library in North Orange at 7 p.m. on April 4. The title of his book is “Left, Gay & Green: A Writer’s Life.” It is available at the Royalston and Athol libraries, and for sale ($25) at Haley’s in Athol and Trail Head in Orange. If you would like a personally autographed copy, contact Allen at 978-249-7612.

**Millers River Garden Club**

On Thursday, April 18, 2019 at 7 pm at the Millers River Environmental Center, Henry Homeyer, lifetime Master Gardener in New Hampshire and author of four gardening books, will discuss the nuts and bolts of dehydrating, storing and freezing food from your garden so you will always have some of your own food to eat. He also offers a new weeding tool - the cobrahead weeder. (Please note that this presentation was originally scheduled for November 2018 but was canceled due to a snowstorm).
Monty Tech
Mary C. Barclay, Royalston Rep., m-barclay@montytech.net

First of all, congrats to the Monty Tech Bulldogs girls’ basketball team, which secured the Central MA Division 4 Championship last month! The top-seeded Bulldogs overtook third-seeded Maynard with a 56-49 win.

Monty Tech has submitted a budget that includes a total increase of 3.3%, which is just 1.1% above the Governor’s proposed Net School Spending (NSS), the amount mandated by the Commonwealth of MA. The School Committee voted to take $125,000 from Excess & Deficiency to offset some of the capital increase. For purposes of the FY20 budget, Royalston has an enrollment of 13 students, a decrease of five from the FY19 budget. That student decrease, combined with the modest increase in the overall budget, translates to Royalston contributing $81,162 towards FY20 Monty Tech budget, a decrease of $26,250 from FY19.

With regard to student enrollment, Royalston is entitled to just TWO seats in each freshmen class, a function of our total student population as a percentage of the Monty Tech District. By rights, we should have just eight students in any given year, but thanks largely to a quality education provided by the Royalston Community School and Athol-Royalston Middle School, Royalston students tend to score well on the intake assessment, which is weighted almost equally between attendance, behavior, and grades.

Royalston Community School

The annual Chet Hall Memorial Pancake Breakfast was again, a great success, bringing the school and greater community together to raise funds for student scholarships. Photo montages and event tee shirts, a roomful of raffles ranging from cash to camping equipment, and a fabulous breakfast with “Chet Hall appropriate” offerings of venison sausage, blueberry compote, and home-baked breads. It drew hundreds of supporters. Thanks to the many volunteers and to the Hall family for their attendance and gracious appreciation for those who work at and support this event.

What’s Happening at the Village School?

It’s spring! Come to Open Visiting Days Mondays through Thursdays. Come at 8:30 a.m. to observe a lesson (or two!) in the classroom of your choice, and then meet with our Director Rise Richardson or with Curriculum Director, Wendy Davenport. Please call in advance to schedule- 978 249 3505.

If on a warm sunny day, you see a big circle of children outside with teddy bears in their laps, then you have chanced upon the annual Teddy Bear picnic, when all the children bring teddy bears to school, sing teddy songs, and go on a bear hunt!

On Tuesday April 23, for Biodiversity Day, each class visits a local habitat and surveys the flora and fauna in that habitat. 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.

Roots and Sprouts Parent-Child Group

Wednesdays 8:45 to 10:00, held in the Village School preschool classroom, followed by outdoor play and intended for caregivers and children 0-4. Share a healthy snack, play, move, sing, and explore the preschool classroom. Free. Through April 24. (no group Wed. 4/17 for spring break)

Saturday Morning on Royalston Common

Save the date Saturday Morning June 1st from 7:30 to 11:00 a.m.

Pancake Breakfast 7:30 to 10:30 a.m. at the Town Hall
Adults $7  Children $3  Organic blueberry pancakes and local syrup
Spectacular Silent Auction 7:30 to 11:00 a.m.  Auction and Breakfast will benefit the ongoing building renovation at Camp Caravan.

Friends of the Library have plants for sale at the Post Office. Library has a book sale.

Scholarships Available

Royalston Academy Scholarships:  Deadline April 19, 2019 - Forms are available through your high school guidance counselor, Royalston Library, or Kristen West c/o Royalston Academy Scholarship Committee, PO Box 35, Royalston, MA 01368.

The Katherine Seymour Bullock Cole Memorial Scholarship (up to $1000) is available to graduating high school resident 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.

The Ladies’ Benevolent Society Scholarships are open to all residents (regardless of age or gender) pursuing higher or continuing education opportunities. Forms are available from high school guidance counselors and the Phinehas Newton Library. For more information, contact Theresa Quinn 978-249 3819, theraquinn@aol.com. Deadline for submissions is April 16, 2019.

Chet Hall Memorial Scholarship is open to those who attended ARRSD schools past and present. Applications are with guidance counselors or call Royalston Community School 978-249-2900.

**Classifieds**

**Royalston Maple Syrup**

Putney’s Sugarhouse  $6.50/half-pint; $10/pint; $18/quart. Jessica Putney Schanz at 978-939-3329 (cell); 978-249-7787; jessputney1989@gmail.com.

Maple Syrup from Divoll’s sugar house. Prices: pints $10, quarts $17, half gallons $30 and gallons $55. Call John 978-894-5109

**Sweetwater Sugar House** at the LeRays has syrup available. Call 978-249-3464.

**Free pot belly pig** to a good home. Call Becky 249-3158

**Services Available:**

- **Early drop off and/or after-school babysitting available** for children from the Royalston Community School. Hours are Monday to Friday 6.30am till school drop off, 3 to 6pm after-school pickup and childcare. I will pick up your children and bring them back to my home 1/2 mile from the school. Snow days, holidays and school vacation days are also available. Costs will vary depending on how many days coverage you would like. Call Christine Morris: 978-249-4737.

- **Piano and Guitar Lessons:** Evan Foisy. $20 for a half hour session. Call Evan 978-249-4250, or email evan55@comcast.net

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

- **2 matted horse stalls available:** round pen, arena, generous turnout, watchful care 24/7. Black Horse Farm is near Birch Hill Dam by horseback. $400 per month. Training or any number of lessons $575 per month. Text Susanne at 978-323-1048.

- **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 brguiney@wildblue.net

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

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


---

**for sale:**


**Glass etching:** by Swank Kreations. Custom options by experienced graphic designer and etching of glassware. Single pieces or sets. Contact Krys and Keith Swan at Swankkreations@gmail.com.

**Hand-knitted items:** Hats, mittens, boot socks, baby sets, etc. 978-249-4013.

**Pork Cut Packages available.** Variety packs. 10 lbs- $55 20lbs-$100 Sausage also available for $4/ lb- breakfast, hot, sweet, and Cajun. Call Chet 978-895-6327

**Riding Lawn Mower Lift:** Used only one season. Like new. Paid $119, will sell for $80. Call 978-249-4013.

**Jarvenpaa Farm Eggs.** $2.50/dozen. 17 River Rd, So. Royalston. Come by anytime. Cooler at the bottom of the driveway next to road.

**Pigs:** Call John 978 894-5109

**Local writer’s Diane Kane, Phyllis Cochran, Kathy Chencharik and Sharon Harmon have a newly released book of short stories for sale. Flash in the Can**, stories to read on the go. To order call 978-249-3040.

**Nature books and prints.** Commissions accepted. Call Gordon Morrison at 978-249-2947.

**Local, raw honey** from Squier Davis Farm. One pound jars $8.00 Cash preferred. Call Deb/Joe Nunes at 978-249-4000.

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

**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

**Firewood-** Green firewood $195/ 170 cu feet. or $380/340 cu feet. Call Jim Putney. 978-249-3379.

**Dean’s Beans Coffee Order** You can order fresh roasted coffee once a month through the Village School, ground or whole beans, for around $10/ lb. Order online and pick it up in the hallway at the school the following Friday. Go to http://www.villageschoolma.org/coffee.htm
**Garden Notes**  
*March 20, 2019*

Today is the vernal equinox. Why is it I feel no closer to outdoor gardening than I did a month ago when I last shared these notes? Snow is melting but the prevailing color in the garden is white, not brown (we are a long way from green), and there is a sequence of events that must occur before seeds hit the ground. Snow must disappear, of course, and in the absence of another snow event, will disappear shortly enough. Then, the ground must defrost, not as simple as pulling the plug on the freezer, but my designated beds for the early plantings (peas, spinach, potatoes) are mulch-free and will thaw long before the beds that are mulch-covered. Finally, and this is the rub, the soil gotta dry out. Dropping seeds (especially in the cool conditions of early spring) into wet soil is a recipe for failure. The prevailing ‘rule’ is to pick up a handful of soil and form a ball. If it crumbles when squeezed you are ready to go. If it does not, you are not. While it is reasonable for me to expect the snow to be gone and the soil to be frost-free, I have a suspicion I’ll still be tossing around dirt balls. Indoors, of course, everything is proceeding according to its pre-ordained schedule. Onions and leeks, planted but twelve days ago, are up and thriving. Celery and celeriac, planted at the same time, are not even up. Each at its own pace. Peppers need to be started now, but since I am writing this bit of advice on March 20 nd you’ll be reading it on April 1, it is probably too late. Mark your calendars for next year. Not so, tomatoes, early April is early enough.

Mapling, which should have been in full-swing weeks ago, has barely begun. Trees were not tapped until March 11 (a far cry from the mid-February dates of the last couple of years), our forty-second consecutive year. In that first year, twenty taps were set, an outdoor pit improvised, and the boiling attended by urban friends travelling to Royalston to ‘play’ at country living. (Indeed, at this stage, Kathy and I were playing at country living as well.) Twenty taps was the magic number year-in and year-out. With stocks of maple dating back to 2016, this year we bit the bullet and reduced the number to ten. We could, of course, have skipped a year, but there is time enough to do that when hauling five-gallon pails of sap becomes unavoidably difficult. The last couple of years we’ve brought the enterprise indoors, abandoning the outdoor pit and covering the surface of the wood cookstove with an array of sap-filled cannors. Yes, the humidity level in the house increases dramatically, but after a winter of ultra-dry wood heat, it is welcomed.

If mapling has begun, the onset of mud season is not far behind. In fact, mud season is far ahead; we’ve been muddy since last fall and it would surprise me not at all if I’m still mud mumbling next month. I can manage with the mud-riddled roads (admittedly, at a much-reduced speed); I cannot manage with a mud-riddled garden.

We shall see.

*Larry Siegel*

---

**Sounds Like Spring**

March is the first month of spring. But this year it looked more like January than – well – January. For a while the snow fell daily, even if just a dusting. All that fresh snow kept our world out here looking lovely and bright, but nothing like spring. We’ve set our clocks ahead and the daylight lingers. The equinox has come and gone and each day is moments longer, or so I’m told. But with the snow banks and black ice of March, I’ve been hard pressed to believe that spring has arrived.

It was not until I heard the chickadee’s mating call that I realized that spring had come. To be sure, the chickadees have been with us all winter, darting back and forth between forsythia bush and birdfeeders, with their characteristic “chick-a-dee-dee-dee”. But now their call has changed. One bird book I have likens this call to “a squeaky door hinge”. But I prefer a birder friend’s description as an inviting “sweetie-pie!” Either way it is unmistakable. The titmice, too, have changed their call. Quiet all winter long they now call “peter-peter-peter” from the edge of our woods. They are insistent! Despite the snow and cold, it would seem the birds know that the business of spring is upon us.

The sound of water is all around me now. As I walk North Fitzwilliam Road down toward Lawrence Brook, I hear the streams on both sides. Over the course of just a few days, the water, released from its frozen form, has gone from silence to trickle to rushing torrent. The hollow echo of water pushing through chutes of ice is the sound of early spring. When I drive this same stretch my tires splash in water that, only last week, threatened as black ice. Even a summer shower does not wet the road in quite the same way. This particular, tentative “splash” is a sound unique to spring.

This afternoon I walked out into our field to examine a felled pine tree. I stood considering how the bark had pulled away from the trunk when a small, hollow “swish” caught my ear. I looked around, puzzled. Then another soft “swish” and I realized that, all around me, the snow was melting from beneath itself. Slowly, relentlessly, it was becoming small caverns of ice crystals that would be mud in just a few more days. “Swish.” A tiny sound of spring.

Late one afternoon as I sat reading in our den another spring sound caught my ear. It was small but unmistakable – an intermittent “tap” on the windows. These are the ladybugs that emerge inside our house in late March. They spend their days flying from window to window drawn in desperation by the watery spring light. Tap. Tap. It seems to me they live for just a day or so before I find them, dry and lifeless, on the windowsill. They are a mystery to me. I wonder what these tiny red insects have accomplished in their short life spent between windows. But they are as much a harbinger of spring as the rushing waters and the chickadees’ call.

Sounds like spring to me!

*Deb D’Amico*
Family Pet Mobile Veterinary Services
Sue Ellen Mowcomber DVM
Caring for your pet in the comfort of your home.
978-249-4626
www.familypetmobilevet.net

Renovations R Us
All Phases of Home Improvement
Bob LeBlanc, Royalston

Paul A. Montero, P.L.S.
Professional Land Surveyor
101 Northeast Fitzwilliam Rd - PO Box 20
Royalston, Massachusetts 01368
Telephone: (978) 249-5879

Daisy Duke’s Country Salon
Waterville Plaza, 10 Main Street
Winchendon, MA
Hair, Nails, Tanning Services & Hydro Massage
Hair Stylists Lisa Martin & Emma LeGrand
Call for an appointment:
978-297-1200

Stephen Chase Contracting
Restoration and Preservation Services
Royalston
978-249-0358
MA Construction Supervisor #044817
MA Home Improvement #161878
MA Lead Safe #LR003488

Sam’s Canine Companions L.L.C.
Sherry A. Miner
71 Athol Road
PO Box 123
Royalston MA 01368
508-873-0629 call or text
Professional all breed grooming and obedience training

Royalston General Store
Mon - Wed 7am-7pm, Thur & Fri 7am - 8pm
Sat 8am - 8pm, Sun 9am - 6pm
Daily Lunch & Dinner Specials
Full Breakfast
978-249-9798
Subs • Pizza • Pasta • Beer • Wine
Liquor • Lottery • Groceries • Hardware
Eat In or Take Out
Wildlife Sightings
Male Red-winged Blackbirds have been back in Royalston wetlands since early February securing breeding territories before females return from their southern wintering grounds. Waiting around in the cold, males spend much of their time patrolling territorial boundaries and fending off intruders with busy warning calls and posturing. When the females return, looks and musicality are considered when choosing their mate but the quality of a male’s territory is usually the deal maker. It needs an abundant food supply of small insects, water, and tall grass for safe nesting sites. Once the females arrive the red patches on the male’s wings brighten. Because the top males can defend territories that safely support multiple nests, there are often multiple females nesting within high-ranking male territories. Females stay down low in their nests raising young while the males perch in trees showing their red patches to those who need a reminder that they are in charge.

Striped Skunks are emerging from their winter torpor, and for a while now their thoughts have turned to l’amour. The resultant babies emit a musk at 8 days and can spray at about a month old. Adults can spray their rotten-onion scent up to 6 times in a row and can direct the spray with aimable nipples. Mostly, however, skunks are easy-going and rarely spray unless pushed.

Ask not what your town can do for you but..
Calling all musicians, young and old! The Royalston Memorial Day Committee is seeking volunteers to play a few patriotic tunes as a community band at the Royalston Memorial Day Ceremony on May 27th. Come share your talents, have some fun performing with other Royalston musicians, and help us to honor those that have paid the ultimate price for the freedoms we enjoy every day. If you are interested in participating, please contact Beth Weaver at maranacook122@gmail.com, or (978) 249 0920.

Volunteers Needed to Finish Building a Stage
Are you handy? The Events Committee needs volunteers to help with completing the stage at the Bullock Park. Bring tools: shovel, screw gun, full batteries and/or chargers. Call Geoff Newton to leave your name at 978-249-3726, and he will call you when the area dries out and it looks good to push forward. Thank you.