Calendar of Events

A complete listing of department, committee, commission, and board meetings is posted on the Town’s website, www.royalston-ma.gov.

March 2        Monday
National Read Across America Day/Dr. Seuss Day

March 3        Tuesday
7 a.m. - 8 p.m.   Presidential Primary. Voting at precinct 1 (Town Hall) and precinct 2 (Whitney Hall). There will be early voting for this election. These hours will be held in the Town Clerk’s office at Whitney Hall, 5 School Street, South Royalston, for both precincts.

March 4        Wednesday
6 p.m.   Author talk: The writers of Flash in the Can Number One have done it again. Flash in the Can Number Two is packed with 28 new short stories filled with more mystery, mischief, and mayhem! Diane Kane, Kathy Chencharik, Sharon A. Harmon and Phyllis Cochran will be at the Phinehas S. Newton Library to give an inside view on some of their entertaining characters. Snacks will be served. Signed copies of both books will be available.

March 8       Sunday
2 a.m.  Daylight Savings Time begins
2 p.m.  Film showing with the Winter Book Club continuing the theme of “talking to strangers.”

March 9       Monday
1:48 p.m.  Full Worm Moon

March 11      Wednesday
Community Reading Day. Volunteers read to students in each class at the Royalston Community School. This annual event is sponsored by the Athol Public Library and is a collaboration between the school district, the Phinehas S. Newton Library, and the Athol Public Library. Anyone interested in volunteering to be a reader may call the library at 978-249-3572.

2 - 4 p.m. and 7 - 8 p.m.  Last day to register to vote in the Annual Election in the Town Clerk’s office.

March 14      Saturday
National Pi Day
5:30 p.m.  Royalston F&G Roast Beef Supper

March 15      Sunday
The Ides of March
10 a.m. - 11 a.m.  Wheat weaving with Kathy Morris. Braid a sweet traditional shamrock at town hall. Sign up by calling the library 978-249-3572.

March 17      Tuesday
St. Patrick’s Day

March 19      Thursday
11:15 p.m.  Vernal Equinox – Happy Spring!

March 21      Saturday
8 - 11:30 a.m.  7th annual Chet Hall Pancake Breakfast at Royalston Community School. Raffles, gift baskets, silent auction, t-shirts. Tickets at the door or at Royalston Community School and Kimball Cooke Ins. Auction donations can be dropped off at ticket locations. Proceeds benefit college scholarships for ARRS students.

March 22      Sunday
2:00 p.m.  Indian cuisine cooking class at Town Hall with Nalini Goordial, chef at Nalini’s Kitchen at the Quabbin Harvest Coop in Orange. Sponsored by the cultural council. Pre-register by contacting the library.

March 24      Tuesday
5:28 a.m.  New Pink Moon

Save the date:
April 6        Monday
Annual town election

April 11     Saturday
10 a.m.  The Royalston Annual Easter Egg Hunt will be held at the Royalston Town Hall on the common. Donations of soft, individually-wrapped candy are welcome (hard candy is not permitted). Donation baskets will soon be placed at the library, post office, and the Royalston General Store. Donations are accepted until March 28th. Thank you!
We have begun work on the unscheduled inspection by the state elevator board. A handful of details for the contractor to complete and the as-yet lights – the lit-up space is where the music will be. The holdups are last month: When you come to the March Open Mic, look for the Police Department and the Fire Department.

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Elevator Update: Unfortunately, we have to repeat what we said last month: When you come to the March Open Mic, look for the lights – the lit-up space is where the music will be. The holdups are a handful of details for the contractor to complete and the as-yet unscheduled inspection by the state elevator board.

Raymond Update: Last July voters at a special town meeting approved $145,000 for the abatement of hazardous materials in the former Raymond School and the replacement of the asbestos roof, contingent on a Proposition 2½ debt exclusion; voters at a special election in September also said yes. Bids for the two projects, however, came in over this amount, so we made a second call for bids for just the abatement and on February 18 accepted the bid of A&E Environmental, Inc., of Leominster to properly remove and dispose of the roof and other asbestos and to cover the exposed roof with weatherproof tarps for $138,000.

At press time, we are investigating how to fund a permanent roof without returning to voters for more money. Toward the goal of converting the Raymond to town offices, we intend to replace the student and faculty restrooms with one accessible, single-occupant restroom on each floor. We have won an ADA grant from the Massachusetts Office on Disabilities for this purpose, but we don’t yet know if it will be enough for both restrooms; the Building Committee is arranging to meet with plumbers in coming weeks.

Royalston on Facebook: The Police Department, the Fire & EMS Association, and the Library have pages on Facebook, and now the town does too. We see this as a supplement to the library’s wonderful newsletter and the town’s soon-to-be improved website – another way to keep residents abreast of what’s going on around town. In Facebook, check out @TownofRoyalston and then click on Town of Royalston for updates and reminders and, occasionally, a really nice photo of our town. You can comment on posts or message the page with questions.

FY21 Operating Budget Update: We have begun work on the FY21 operating budget and are receiving requests for double-digit percentage increases in department budgets – from the Board of Health, for example, to deal with much higher costs brought on by the nationwide recycling crisis, from the Board of Assessors to adopt professional assessing, and from the library to increase salaries to fairer levels. We have yet to review budgets from the DPW, the Police Department and the Fire Department.

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Broadband Update
Andy West, Committee Member
The Royalston Broadband Committee has made significant progress in selecting a network design firm from the respondents to our bid request. On February 18, the Committee made a final review of the information provided by the bidders, in accordance with state bidding requirements. In that meeting, the committee made an affirmative recommendation to hire one of the bidders. That recommendation will first travel to our grant funding state agencies for a prompt review. Then, the recommendation will travel to the Selectboard. If the Board confirms the Broadband Committee’s recommendation, the next step will be to draw up a contract and finalize the network design. This will be done as quickly as possible along with creating a second bid request for a construction contractor. Timelines will be forthcoming once some of the previous steps have been solidified. But, the Committee is driving actions to take advantage of as much of the upcoming building season as possible.

Join the Community Garden in South Royalston Village
Richard Martin
The South Village Revitalization Committee is pleased to announce that it has received the approval from the Town of Royalston to use the empty lot located at 1 School Street (between the Store and the Church in the Village) as a Community Garden in 2020.

Anyone from Royalston can sign up for a space on the lot to grow all the vegetables, herbs, and other garden produce for themselves or their families. Water will be available on the lot for your use. All you need are a few seeds/plants, lots of patience, and your own gardening tools (which cannot be stored on the property).

You will find further information and sign-ups in the April newsletter. With a limited amount of spaces available, it will be first-come, first-served. The planting season will begin on May 1st! Just envision working in your garden on a hot summer day, sharing your ideas with other gardeners, buying your favorite beverage from the store, and enjoying the new views of the river.

We will be waiting to see all the would-be farmers in April and May!

Department of Public Works
Parking ban in effect until April 30. During the ban, do not park in the road, on the shoulder or in public parking lots. When vehicles are left in the way, this delays or in some cases doesn’t allow the road to be treated or cleared of snow or ice. The Town can have these vehicles towed at the vehicle owner’s expense. Also, avoid plowing or shoveling snow into the public way. This also can build into a hazardous obstruction that may result in damage to other vehicles. Please be considerate.

Thank you all for your support and understanding.
Royalston Department of Public Works Supt.,
Keith R. Newton

Town Clerk News
Barbara Richardson

Primary Presidential election voting will take place March 3 for precinct 1 @ The Town Hall and precinct 2 @ Whitney Hall. 7 A.M. - 8 P.M.

Last day to register to vote in the Annual Election March 17, 2020  2-4 and 7-8 P.M. in the Clerk’s Office.

Keep an eye out for your annual street list forms coming soon.

Dog licenses are ready: all dogs must be registered by March 31st. To register, come in person during regular business hours or by mail. I will need a current rabies certificate and 6 dollars for spayed/neutered animals with proof, 10 dollars for unaltered animals. Checks are payable to the Town of Royalston. If applying by mail, please enclose a self addressed stamped envelope for the return of license and tag. Mail to: Town Clerk, PO Box 127, Royalston, MA. 01368

Board of Health News
Phil Leger, chair person

Well, the world recycling markets have finally caught up to Royalston. For over ten years, we have not had a significant change in our hauling and processing cost for recycling, trash and demo. Several events over the past year has changed the market. The first was the closing of the only glass processor in Massachusetts. The second was China lowering to .05% waste tolerance acceptable in recyclables. In response, the material processing facilities faced with lowered revenue and increased cost started charging a processing fee. Our hauler Monadnock Disposal, a small family owned business based in Jaffrey, New Hampshire, can no longer absorb this cost which ranges from $90-120 a ton. Our hauling cost will go from $150 to $275 a pull. This cost will also apply to our trash and demo hauls which did not have a separate pull charge.

We will have to increase our fees in order to cover this increase in cost. We are proposing to raise the annual vehicle sticker fee from $15 to $50 and the trash bag sticker fee from $2.50 to $3.00. Demo fees will also have to be increased.

We are not a profit making venture. We aim to break even and provide a service to the townspeople. Recycling was never free. It always cost money to collect, transport, and process material. We have been fortunate not to have an increase for so many years.

All that being said, if folks have comments or concerns on these changes, you can attend the next RBOH meeting on Wednesday March 4th, 7pm at Whitney Hall. Or you can email us at boh@royalston-ma.gov.

Royalston Community Newsletter March 2020 Page 3

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

COVID-19 (Corona Virus Disease – 2019) is now a daily part of our lives, and while a global presence of a particularly dangerous virus shouldn’t be ignored, there are better responses than blind panic, like being fully-informed and planning ahead, just as in preparing for any hazard that may result in sheltering in place (which, in this instance would be referred to as a quarantine – a period of isolation from others so germs are not shared.)

Let’s first look at planning ahead. Preparations are essentially the same, except the traditional 72-hour timeframe has been expanded to 14 days, the longest period of contagion for similar viruses (the common cold among them). To shelter in place that long, store a two-week supply of frozen or commercially-sealed water, and non-perishable/long-keeping foods. (Don’t forget pets!) Keep at least two-weeks ahead when renewing prescription medications. (Again, consider pet meds!) For this particular scenario, also have a good collection of non-prescription medicines and supplies – over-the-counter (OTC) pain relievers like acetaminophen (Tylenol) and ibuprofen (Motrin) in appropriate forms (capsules/tablets/liquid) for your family; symptom-relievers like cough syrup, throat lozenges, and anti-nausea/anti-diarrhea products; fluids with electrolytes (Pedialyte; Gatorade); and multi-vitamins are not a bad idea. Hand sanitizer and tissues should already be stationed throughout your house (and in your car) for cold and flu season, and general preparedness means you already have everyone’s basic health records easily accessible, and a list with important names and contact information.

To limit spread of the garden variety colds and flu-bugs already circulation (as well as COVID-19), standard precautions include: avoiding close contact with people who are ill; keeping your distance from others when you’re not feeling well; covering your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing, disposing of tissues carefully, and immediately washing your hands or using hand sanitizer after; and avoiding touching your eyes, nose, or mouth (the easiest ways to infect yourself).

Generations of moms have already been promoting the best ways of staying healthy: Get plenty of sleep; eat nutritious foods and drink plenty of water; be physically active; manage stress as best you can; and wash your hands thoroughly all throughout the day, using soap and water. It’s still not too late – better late than never – to obtain a flu vaccination (available through most pharmacies).

For accurate information on COVID-19, other corona viruses, and flu, go to www.flu.gov, which links to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) website. Preparedness beats panic every time. Be informed. Make a plan.

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.
Phinehas S. Newton Library News
Kathy Morris, Library Director
Trustees: Jeffrey Mangum, Jennifer Basso, Theresa Quinn
Mondays: 10:00 am - 8:30 pm. Thursdays 1:00 pm - 5:00 pm and 6:30 - 8:30 pm
Saturdays: 9:00 am - 12 noon
978-249-3572  www.royalstonlibrary.org

Donations to the Friends - Thank You!

Marcia Flanagan

Poetry in the Woods
“The creation of a thousand forests is in one acorn”
Ralph Waldo Emerson
Do you have a favorite poem about nature, a tree, a bird, a lake? The Library will be working in conjunction with The Army Corps of Engineers to place signs containing selections of poetry, nature writing, and haiku on signs that will be on the interpretative trail at Tully Lake. We will provide the writings and the Corps will take care of the rest. So, put on your thinking cap and leave your submissions at the library or send them to P.O. 133 or royalstonlibrary@gmail.com).

Art Exhibit
Sonja Vaccari’s beautiful paintings will continue to be exhibited during the month of March. Stop by and enjoy the various scenes, with some local landscapes.

Community Reading Day - Volunteers Needed
On Wednesday, March 11 at 8:30 a.m., volunteers will read to students in each class at the Royalston Community School. This annual event is sponsored by the Athol Public Library and is a collaboration between the school district, the Phinehas S. Newton Library, and the Athol Public Library. The book for kindergarten through grade 2 is Rocket Says Look Up! by Nathan Bryon. Grades 3 and 4 will read Pluto Gets the Call and grades 5 and 6 will read The Big Book of Monsters by Hal Johnson. Anyone interested in volunteering to be a reader may call the library at 978-249-3572.

Indian Cooking Class
On Sunday, March 22 at 2:00 p.m. at the Town Hall, Nalini Goordial, chef at Nalini’s Kitchen at the Quabbin Harvest Coop in Orange, will teach a class on Indian cooking. The class is limited to 15 people and only 2 slots are left, so sign up quickly by contacting the library. This program is supported in part by a grant from the Royalston Cultural Council, a local agency which is supported by the Mass Cultural Council, a state agency.

Preschool Story Time
Every non-holiday Monday, you are welcome to join the Preschool Story Time led by Brooke Coleman. There is a story, an amazing craft, a nutritious snack, and plenty of time for children and their caregivers to play and socialize. You are welcome to attend this program whenever it works for you as there is no need to pre-register. It’s a great opportunity to connect with others with preschool children for socializing, networking and friendship.

St. Patrick’s Day Craft
On Sunday, March 15, at 10 a.m. at the Town Hall, you can create a shamrock from straw for St. Patrick’s Day. The symbolism of the shamrock is possibly derived from the triskele, a Neolithic three legged spiral, common throughout Ireland. There were also two triple deities in ancient Celtic lore and thus St. Patrick’s use of the symbol to represent the Holy Trinity in early Christianity was already familiar to the Irish. No matter what the symbolism, each participant in the workshop will make two shamrocks, one in a three straw hair braid and the other in a cat’s paw/plait. The program is free but space is limited. To register, call or email the library.

Internet to Go! - Hotspots Available for Borrowing
Hotspot Update: Several people have borrowed the hotspots and have had success in using them. They have been extremely useful for people who have no internet service, for others who have been traveling, and for some with limited data who wanted to update devices and download large files. Anyone over the age of 18 with a valid library card may borrow a hotspot for two weeks.

Peabody Essex Museum Exhibit
The library has received bookmarks that offer free admission for two adults to the Peabody Essex Museum in Salem for the Jacob Lawrence, the American Struggle exhibit which runs through April 26. “Reunited for the first time in more than sixty years, the Struggle paintings revive Lawrence’s way of reimagining American history as shared history. Utilizing historical fact to underscore universal values, he created a broader narrative of U.S. history by pairing image and text, quoting a range of voices and rendering figures from prominent Founding Fathers to underrepresented historical actors.” Lawrence was a pivotal figure in the Harlem Renaissance. Stop by the library to pick up your free ticket.

Weekly Yoga Classes
Yoga with Charlotte Weltzin is held upstairs in the Town Hall on Tuesdays at 7:00 p.m. The class is appropriate for all abilities. Improve your flexibility and balance (both physically and mentally). Charlotte is an experienced Ayurvedic Practitioner and Ayurveda Yoga Teacher (ERYT).
Some of the new materials at your library

**Adult Fiction**
- Adiga, Aravind: *Amnesty*
- Allende, Isabel: *A Long Petal of the Sea*
- Angelo, Megan: *Followers*
- Beams, Clare: *The Illness Lesson*
- Black, Benjamin: *The Secret Guests*
- Chute, Carolyn: *The Recipe for Revolution*
- Colfer, Eoin: *Highfire*
- Cummins, Jeanine: *American Dirt*
- Gardner, Lisa: *When You See Me*
- Gibson, William: *Agency*
- Hurston, Zora Neale: *Hitting a Straight Lick with a Crooked Stick*
- Hurwitz, Gregg: *Into the Fire*
- Jen, Gish: *The Resisters*
- Luna, Louisa: *The Janes*
- Ofill, Jenny: *Weather*
- Pinborough, Sarah: *Dead to Her*
- Preston, Douglas: *Crooked River*
- Robb, J.D.: *Golden in Death*
- Stabenow, Dana: *No Fixed Line*

**Adult Non-Fiction**
- Askwith, Richard: *1001 Movies You Must See Before You Die*
- Gottlieb, Lori: *Unbreakable*
- Kendi, Ibram: *How to be an Antiracist*
- Perry, Philippa: *The Book You Wish Your Parents Read*
- Shambroom, Donald: *Duchamp’s Last Day (Local Author)*
- Wallace- Wells, D.: *The Uninhabitable Earth*
- 1001 Movies You Must See Before You Die The Mueller Report Illustrated
- American Dirt
- Agency
- Ducks
- Unbreakable
- Maybe You Should Talk to Someone
- How to be an Antiracist
- The Book You Wish Your Parents Read
- Duchamp’s Last Day (Local Author)
- The Uninhabitable Earth

**Children’s Fiction**
- Barrows, Annie: *The Best of Iggy*
- Coppo, Marianna: *Such a Good Boy*
- Daywalt, Drew: *Love from the Crayons*
- Fox, Mem: *Bonnie and Ben Rhyme Again*
- Grabenstein, Chris: *No More Naps!*
- Lin, Grace: *Mulan: Before the Sword*
- Maclean, Kyo: *Story Boat*
- Marcero, Deborah: *In a Jar*
- McNamara, Margaret: *Vote for Our Future!*
- Niellander, Amy: *Grama’s Hug*
- Pak, Kenard: *Goodbye Winter, Hello Spring*
- Pignataro, Anna: *The Heart of the Whale*
- Rosenthal, Amy: *Straw*
- Sullivan, Mary: *Up on Bob*

**Children’s Nonfiction**
- America’s Test
- Tree Frogs
- Octopuses
- Hard Work, But it’s Worth it
- Kangarooos
- Animal Tracks and Traces
- Bug Boys
- Fly High, John Glenn
- The Only Woman in the Photo
- Facts vs. Opinions vs. Robots
- Being Frog
- I Voted
- Birds of Paradise

**Young Adult Fiction/Non-Fiction**
- Adeyemi, Toni: *Children of Virtue and Vengeance*
- Riggs, Ransom: *The Conference of the Birds*

**DVDs:**
- The Addams Family
- The Big Trip
- The Chaperone
- Dear Walmart
- Doctor Sleep
- Ford v Ferrari
- Garfield and Friends
- Gemini Man
- Good Boys
- The Good Liar
- The Handmaid’s Tale Season
- Harriet
- Indian Horse
- Judy
- The Lighthouse
- Maleficent
- Mistress of Evil (DVD & Blu-ray)
- Missing Link
- Motherless Brooklyn
- My Life is Murder Season 1
- Overcomer (DVD & Blu-ray)
- Pain and Glory
- Parasite
- PBS Kids: 15 Frozen Tales
- The Peanut Butter Falcon
- Pinkalicious & Peterrific
- Playing with Fire
- Sanditon
- Terminator: Dark Fate

**Winter Book Club**
All welcome to meet on Sunday, March 8 at the library for a film showing and discussion.

In April, we will be continuing the theme of books about talking to strangers with the graphic novel, *Good Talk* by Mira Jacobs. Order a copy at the library.

**Audiobooks**
- Caine, Rachel: *Bitter Falls*
- O’Brady, Colin: *The Impossible First*
- Rhodes, Richard: *The Making of the Atomic Bomb*
- Stabenow, Dana: *No Fixed Line*
Historical Society:
Peter Kranik, president

A few decades ago, the picket fence in front of the house known as the Bastille on the corner of South Royalston Rd was slated for demolition as it is mainly located on town land, and those in charge of the pursestrings did not think it a wise expenditure of taxpayers money. At this time, the Society stepped in and thorough targeted and energetic fundraising, came up with the money to restore the fence. Now, the fence is showing signs of wear and bids are sought to restore the fence.

If you are interested in making a bid, please find the specs by visiting the website royalstonhistorical.org or calling president Peter Kranik 978-249-7625.

Local Authors of Short Fiction to Give Talk at the Library March 4 at 6 pm

The authors of Flash in the Can Number One have done it again! Flash in the Can Number Two is pack with 28 new short stories filled with more mystery mischief, and mayhem! Diane Kane, Kathy Chencharik, Sharon A Harmon and Phyllis Cochran will be at the Phineas S. Newton Library in Royalston, Wednesday, March 4 at 6 pm to talk about their new book and give you an inside view on some of their entertaining characters.

Come by to support the authors and get to know their characters. Snacks will be served. Signed copies of both books will be available. Flash in the Can, it’s an American Standard!

Media Review
Mary C. Barclay

Crisis in the Red Zone by Richard Preston
Published 2019 by Random House

The biology of viruses is both fascinating and frightening, especially when human behaviors are added to the mix. Preston’s in-depth exploration of the 2013-2014 Ebola eruption in Guinea includes the search for patient zero, and a detailed accounting of the fatal virus’ progression. He reaches back to his 1994 non-fiction best-seller, “The Hot Zone,” artfully weaving in details of the Zaire Ebola outbreak of 1976. Preston irrefutably links the consequences of understandable misdiagnoses at the outset and breaches in universal precautions along the way to the explosive spread of Ebola. The gory details are not suitable for squeamish readers, but the horrors are somewhat humanized by the inclusion of stories involving generations-old cultural traditions that helped grieving family and friends; traditions that ultimately became a death sentence to those participating in them. Given the recent global concern regarding COVID-19, Richard Preston’s non-fiction Crisis in the Red Zone is an educational, timely read.

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.
Congratulations and Good News

Graduates: You did it! Now, tell the town. Send your graduation information and a photo to the newsletter for publication in the next issue. Got other big news or milestones? Let us know. Send them to chasegos2@gmail.com or drop at the library.

Former resident Heather (Barclay) Johnson has been accepted into the Eisenberg School of Management at U-MASS for their MBA program beginning this summer. She is Operations Manager and Executive Assistant at Quantitative Economic Solutions, LLC in Boston. Heather was homeschooled in Royalston, earned an A.A. in General Studies from Mount Wachusett, and a B.S. in Cultural Anthropology, with a concentration in linguistics, from U-MA Amherst.

RCS a semi-finalist in the ARRSD Geography Bee 6th grade correspondents

There was a cross-school geography bee on January 9, 2020. The contestants from RCS included; Aidan McNamara, Ayden Charron, Jaiden Mikels, Rylee Boudreau, and Autumn Knetchel. These students placed in the top of their class on a preliminary placement quiz.

The Bee consisted of five rounds - each with a different subject. The bee started at 6:30 and ended at an unknown time. Most people got 3 out of 5 correct. There was a tie, Om vs Rylee. In the end, Om Patel at ARMS won. RCS will win next year! Afterwards there was free fruit and cake.

Suppers at the Club

The next Royalston F&G Club Roast Beef Supper is March 14, seating at 5:30 p.m. Tossed salad, bread and butter, roast beef with brown gravy, mashed potatoes, and green beans are all served family style, with an ice cream cup for dessert. Fully-cooked roasts are raffled off at the conclusion of the meal, for $2/chance. For those who wish, BLITZ (think BINGO) is played after

North Quabbin Garden Club

Pauline Aldred , co-president

On Thursday, March 19, 2020 at 7 pm at the Millers River Environmental Center, Donna Laclaire, a wellness advocate working for an essential oil company, will discuss the benefit of using and creating an all natural tick and bug spray and a hand scrub to help with dry rough hands after a day in the dirt. Attendees will make these. Spring will come and gardeners will be out in their yards. Come and have fun preparing and anticipating. There is a $5 fee for materials.

Q: What Happened at the Special Town Meeting?
A: The town entered into an agreement for solar panels.

Maureen Blasco

At the January 30, 2020 Special Town Meeting, four articles were passed, two of which were PILOT (payment in lieu of taxes) agreements with solar companies. A PILOT agreement is a negotiated tax agreement based on the estimated true value of property. In these cases the property is a solar photovoltaic facility.

The reason to enter into an agreement such as this is because both the solar company and the host town will then know what is coming from a financial perspective, and can more easily plan for costs and revenues relating to a certain project. In the case of the planned solar site at the town landfill, there will also be a lease agreement for up to 35 years, which will be negotiated by the Select board in the coming weeks.

Town finance director Rebecca Krause-Hardie commented that the amounts agreed upon are very beneficial to the town. The facility at the town landfill will generate approximately 6.57 megawatts per year and will possibly bring in $60,000 to $90,000 per year, as well as the lease revenue. The other facility on 60 Winchendon Road will generate approximately 3.62 megawatts per year, and will possibly bring in $40,000 to $50,000 per year.

Plans for a Gazebo from the Royalston South Village Revitalization Steering Committee

Linda Alger, Gazebo Sub-committee Chair

Following a RSVR community meeting last summer, the building of a gazebo in the South Village Park was discussed as a project. A group of residents interested in the project met to pursue the type of design and to explore the location in the park.

This January, a proposal for funding was submitted to the Community Preservation Committee where it received unanimous approval. Further approval will be sought from the town at the Annual Town Meeting on May 8th.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Tom Musco for all of his help with not only the design, but offering to mill the timber and agreeing to be the Project Manager. Hopefully this summer, we will be looking for volunteers. The coordinator of the volunteer carpenter crew is Roland Hamel.

Anyone wishing to donate to the project can please contact one of our committee members. Donations do not necessarily mean monetary ones; once construction begins, we will need to keep our volunteers fed and hydrated. Work days will be announced as the project moves forward.
What’s Happening at the Village School?

Wondering if the Village School might be a good place for your child? You can visit anytime to observe classrooms. Call 978 249 3505 to arrange your visit.

What’s Happening
Now we are heading into sugaring season, and all the classes are making field trips to the Richardson Farm in Phillipston for sugaring and lambing. The K-6th classes start swimming at the YMCA on Fridays in March and April.

Science Night Wednesday evening March 18 7:00 pm
Back in January, 5th-6th grade students chose a topic to investigate, and with the help of scientist Cathy Szal, designed experiments to prove or disprove the initial hypothesis. No help from parents! Peer review is part of the process. Students will enthusiastically display their work at Science Night and be ready to explain. Come see their work and ask questions! Everyone is welcome.

Roots and Sprouts: A Parent Child Group for parents and caretakers with infants and toddlers up to age 3 1/2 FREE
Starts again on Wednesdays: April 1, 8, 15 & 29, May 6 & 13. 8:45-10 a.m. (no session April 20, school vacation week)
Come gather in the lovely Village School preschool classroom, meet other parents and deepen your connection with your child through fun activities. The morning finishes in the playground.
For info, call 978 249 3505 or email info@villageschoolma.org
Led by Brooke Coleman, parent, nurse, midwife and health educator, and Sofie Vieira, preschool teacher.
Drop-ins always welcome!

Scholarships Available
Royalston Academy Scholarships:
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, ther Quinn@aol.com. Deadline for submissions is April 17, 2020.

ARRSD Scholarships are open to those who attended ARRSD schools past and present. Applications are with guidance counselors or call Royalston Community School 978-249-2900. Deadline: April 17, 2020.

Monty Tech
Mary C. Barclay, Royalston Rep., m-barclay@montytech.net

Students (publicly, privately, or homeschooled) wishing to be considered for one of Monty Tech’s two quota freshmen seats, or for any vacated sophomore or junior seats, must have completed the application process no later than March 31st. Applications are available through Monty Tech, or by downloading one from www.montytech.net (Admissions). Any available seats after that date are offered to applicants with the highest application score, which is a composite of scholastic achievement (maximum 25 points), number of unexcused absences (maximum 20 points), discipline/conduct (maximum 20 points), local guidance counselor’s recommendation (maximum 15 points), and Monty Tech guidance interview (maximum 20 points). A score of 45 is required to be eligible.

Monty Tech is in the final stages of a comprehensive facilities assessment, which began in February of 2019. The Capital Improvement Subcommittee met with the Mass. School Building Authority (SBA) late in February, to discuss options for the building, which, while in outstanding condition, is more than a half-century old, and has systems in desperate need of upgrades and/or replacement.

The six-year comprehensive review (Tiered Focused Monitoring) by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education was recently completed, with outstanding results. In Special Education/Civil Rights, Monty Tech was cited as “going beyond the minimum,” and creating “a culture for students to succeed.” An impressive 100% of parents/guardians surveyed reported feeling “...respected and part of a team process.” In the area of English Language Learners, commendable practices included the in-take process, the fact special education and ELL programs were distinctly different, excellent parent communication, diverse shop placement, translation of documents, and the routine professional development offerings on ELL education.

The Career, Vocational, and Technical Education area also received a stellar report, with Monty Tech being cited for having “…instructors [who] make decisions with the best interest of the students in mind,” a strong work co-op program, and teachers who always strive for improvement in curriculum and teaching. The evaluator wrote, “You can tell that the students and teachers take safety very seriously in the programs. This may be the smallest safety report I have written in a long time!” Kudos to all of the employees at Monty Tech, who contribute each and every day to the successes of the students!

The spring semester of Monty Tech’s School of Continuing Education has begun, and includes a number of useful and exciting new programs. Coming soon is a 160-hour Commercial Driver’s License (CDL), Class A (tractor trailer) training program, with 40 classroom and 120 on-the-road hours. On-site testing will be offered. The Fall 2019 semester saw 1,103 adult education students in 144 different classes! Financial aid and payment plans are available, as well as on-line courses. Register at Monty Tech or at www.montytech.net/continuinged.

The Monty Tech Veterinary Clinic Grooming Salon is now open to the public, and features services from $5 nail trims to bath/full grooming of “giants” (dogs over 90 lbs) for $45, and everything in between. This is a learning environment, and will take longer than a commercial salon visit; students are overseen by a professional groomer, and are currently seeing as many as five pets a day.

The second annual Monty Tech Career Expo is planned for Tuesday, April 28, from 6-8 p.m. If your business/company needs employees, contact Dawn Provost at x5220 to reserve a table. If you’re looking for work, mark the date in your calendar and get that resume all polished up!
Classifieds

free: File Cabinets: 4, gently used, 4 drawer; 2, a bit more mileage, 5 drawer. Assorted office, desk top trays and dividers. 978-249-3531, please leave message.

Services Available


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) 424-8580. Current email: cobbsuzannew@yahoo.com. Stalls available for winter. Thanks!

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:


Fitness Equipment - In good working shape, Lightly used - Bench with weights, $100. Cross-country ski machine, $35. Treadmill (Smooth 5.0P) $400. Call Polly 978-240-5901.

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 $18, half gallons $30 and gallons $55. Call John 978-894-5109

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

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.

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

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

Dean’s Beans Coffee You can get yours delivered, fresh, once a month to the Village School, whole beans or ground. Around $10/ pound. Find the order form at www.villageschoolma.org and order online. You’ll pick up the coffee in the Village School hallway.


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

Mulch your garden - Fertilize by the load or by the bag from Black Horse Farm (978) 424-8580 or email suzannagaits@gmail.com

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


2020 Census: This is just a reminder that the census begins in March (although it’s already started in remote areas of Alaska) and the library will be able to assist you if you need help. Library computers are available to fill out the form and we have materials to explain the forms and answer any questions. Remember you may complete the census by mail, phone, or online.

Congregational Churches News

First Congregational Church of Royalston, 15 On The Common-Services start at 11 a.m. with Pastor Tim Oja. Fellowship gathering and refreshments served after service. Thursdays, at 3 On The Common, there is a 5 p.m. prayer worship and a 7 p.m. women’s Bible study group.

Second Congregational Church of Royalston, 3 School Street Services start at 9 a.m. with Pastor Tim Oja. Fellowship gathering and refreshments served after service. On Wednesday at 7 pm, there is Bible study with Pastor Tim Oja.
There have been occasions, in times past, when garden work commenced in mid- to late-March, but those occasions have been rare. In fact, my only brush with garden matters was my recent attendance at the annual farmers’ market meeting where we consider incredibly boring matters (by-laws, election of committee members, and such). This will be our thirty-ninth year, which, aged though I may be, still represents more than half my life. (Only one vendor has been there longer.) We’ve roller-coasted with the ups and downs of the market. At one time, forty-five farms were peddling; at another, there were but a handful. Currently, thirty-four participate, but fewer and fewer offer produce, a reflection of the difficulty in deriving a livelihood from small-scale farming. I’ll be providing the same-old, same-old. With one exception. The Amherst Board of Health, in its ‘wisdom’, has declared that the health, safety, and well-being of the populace under its domain is best served by outlawing the sale of wild-gathered mushrooms, mushrooms I have been gathering and selling for twenty years or so to a cadre of devoted patrons. This is the second time the strong arm of the law has come down upon me, shaking me to submission. I lacto-ferment vegetables, most notably, pickles, sauerkraut, and kimchi, selling them to another cadre of devoted patrons (the same cadre in fact). Until I was informed that THIS WAS ILLEGAL. My kitchen had not been inspected. It was as if I engaged in armed robbery. Government at its un-finest.

From time to time I’m asked how my winter’s been. I respond in respect to two criteria: the stores in the root cellar and the stores in the wood stacks. In respect to the former, it’s been just fine, ample supplies of all roots persisting. The root is a humble vegetable, commanding neither the appeal nor the price of non-roots. In its favor, however, is its ease of storage and the cost (zero). So, tonight, we’ll skip the head of lettuce and greenhouse cherry tomatoes and mash a mess of potatoes and rutabaga. The wood supply, reflecting the more-than-moderate winter temperatures, is ample as well, and, unlike the roots, which must be consumed in the next couple of months, will stay in place just fine until next winter. I trust I will stay in place just fine until next winter as well.

Larry Siegel

With spring-like conditions forecast for the next several days, we’ve tapped the maples, sap flowing almost immediately. The operative word here is spring-like, a far cry from spring. Yes, the redwing blackbirds have returned to the feeders but it is unlikely I will observe that other harbinger of spring, the robin, on the front lawn any time soon. (Do you think that might have something to do with the fact that the front lawn, as well as everything else, remain enshrouded in snow?}

When did ice start to rule our winters? This winter it seems that ice has been a constant companion. Our driveway is a ribbon of frozen ruts, our walkway passable only with a layer of sand that migrates relentlessly into our home. I walk outside with great caution and keep a pair of strap-on cleats at the ready. Plans are changed, or at least questioned, as we watch the temperatures rise and then plummet. Venturing out is questionable because of ice.

This is not the winter weather I remember. My childhood winters featured mounds of powdery snow, soft and impossibly cold. Most of our play consisted of plunging into it and sinking up to our hips, or flopping backwards to make snow angels. It clung to our snow pants and filled our boots. Bitter cold winters produced such snow.

Not until the warmer days and cold nights of March and April would we see weather that threatened ice. Late winter weather produced the wet, heavy snow of snowball fights and snow forts. The locals called it “corn snow” and waxed their skis accordingly. This was the time of giant icicles suspended from eaves and slick patches on steps and sidewalks. Slowly, winter was melting. The deep dark months of midwinter were snowbound and consistently cold. Ice was the stuff of spring.

No longer. The weather we’ve had of late has been fickle at best. Unseasonable warmth followed by melting followed by plummeting temperatures that freeze it all. Snow turns to sleet that taps at our windows then settles into a coating of ice. At once dangerous and beautiful, the ice that glosses our roads also adorns every tree and bush with light-catching crystals. At breakfast we watch in wonder as the rising sun turns branches into diamonds. One morning just at dawn I watched from a northeast window as pinpricks of light appeared and disappeared in the treetops. Were these stars, still visible in the growing light? No, this was ice. The sun, not yet above the horizon, cast rays that, for a brief moment, sparked each branch in turn before moving to the next, and the next - a pre-dawn light show.

The bitterly-cold winter days that prohibit even a moment of melting seem to be in the past. But we are New Englanders. We know how to cope with whatever Mother Nature sends our way. So, we sand our driveways and then stop to marvel at the beauty of our ice-encrusted world.
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Wildlife Sightings
At 7:30 am on February 1st, Carol Bou-dreau was alerted, by her dog, to a young bull moose walking along the driveway to Bliss Hill road. He meandered across the road and back into the woods.

What's in your backyard? Let us know at the Royalston Community Newsletter.

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In person: Drop off at library

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The Royalston Community Newsletter
Friends of the Phinehas S. Newton Library
PO Box 133
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Royalston Resident
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7th Annual Chet Hall Pancake Breakfast
Proceeds go to college scholarships for ARRSD students.
March 21, 8 - 11:30 a.m. at RCS

Check out Royalston’s official Facebook page.
Visit us @TownofRoyalston