Calendar of Events

September 1  Monday
7 a.m. - 8 p.m. **State Primary election.** All precincts are voting at Town Hall.

September 7  Monday
**Labor Day** – All schools, post office, P.S. Newton Library closed

September 12, 19, and 26
9 a.m. to noon  **Get help to fill out the census forms** using laptops and fast internet in front of the Raymond School.

September 13  Sunday  **Grandparent’s Day**
9 a.m.  **ATA Trap Shoot Competition RF&G**

September 14  Monday
**ARRSD grades 1-12 begin the 2020 - 21 school year.**
The first 2 weeks will be remote learning for all students. For families who choose in-person instruction, that is scheduled to begin on October 5, with an orientation day on September 28.

September 17  Thursday  **Constitution Day**
7 a.m.  **New Harvest Moon**

September 18  Friday  sundown  **Rosh Hashanah begins**

September 22  Tuesday
9:31 a.m. **Autumnal Equinox** – The First Day of Fall – From this day through the Winter Solstice, there will be fewer hours of daylight than darkness.

September 30  Wednesday
6 pm **CodeRED test call.** Royalston uses CodeRED™ to send critical messages to residents, property owners, and those who have a vested interest in Royalston. The system is used sparingly, and only for truly critical messages, such as an evacuation order, a major event that affects a large segment of our population, a child/elder who is missing, or by a direct order of the Select Board. Your contact information is private, and used only to provide such information. Caller ID shows CodeRED™ calls as either “Emergency Notifications or Emergency Comm.” and 1-866-419-5000 or “General Notifications or General Comm.” and 1-855-969-4636. For the last message sent, simply dial the number to play back that message. To register your landlines and other devices to received notifications, please go to http://www.yourwebaddress.com/

**Save the Date**
October 14  Wednesday
10 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. **Annual Flu Clinic** will be a drive-through clinic at Town Hall.

U.S. Census Response rates as of Aug. 26, 2020:
Royalston way worse than every town around us... which is too bad because...

Royalston: 58.9%
Worcester County: 68.4%
Massachusetts : 66.9%
National response: 64.1%

The results matter. Data from this census will affect state and federal funding for infrastructure, the library, our schools, health care availability, public safety, and the arts for at least the next decade. Our political representation in the state and federally are also influenced by this census as districts are drawn using this information.

You can respond by phone (844-330-2020), on-line (my2020census.gov) or by returning the form that was direct mailed to you. If you are having trouble with getting or completing a census form, you can call the library (978-249-3572) and leave a message to ask for assistance. Census workers will be by the Raymond School to assist your participation on September 12, 19, and 26 in the morning as well.
Select Board Notes
Christine Long, clerk, Royalston Select Board

Doane’s Falls Update: During the summer months Doane’s Falls, the canoe launch, the Tully Lake Recreation Area and the trails at all three have been way too popular, primarily with out-of-town visitors hungry for beautiful outdoor spaces – so popular, in fact, that the visitors caused numerous problems, including overcrowding, noise, improper trash disposal and trail erosion.

In early August Police Chief Curtis Deveneau conferred with the Army Corps of Engineers, who oversee the dam and the recreation area, and The Trustees, who own the falls and the campground. He reported that The Trustees had agreed to hire an employee to patrol for ten hours a day, four days a week through the summer and fall. Chief Deveneau also arranged for the installation of more No Parking signs.

During August the Royalston PD backed up The Trustees’ patrol with extra details of its own on weekends, and on August 18 Chief Deveneau reported that the situation had become much better.

Select Board chair Deborah D’Amico said that after all parties have a chance to review the effects of the changes, she will seek a joint meeting of The Trustees, the Corps, the towns of Royalston and Athol, and perhaps our state representative and senator to craft a long-term plan for these gems of conservation and outdoor recreation.

Reopening Update: The Select Board continues to study state-issued guidelines for the Phase 2 reopening of offices and the possibility of a very limited opening here in Royalston. For example, we are looking at additional shields to use at town hall, Whitney Hall, the library and the DPW office. We have voted to hold Select Board and Planning Board meetings in the town hall dining room – which allows for social distancing – but other public officials and members of the public continue to participate remotely by Zoom. And for now, offices remain closed, and all other committee meetings and public hearings continue to be held remotely.

We encourage you to check our website or Facebook page for updates and important announcements, like the dates of early voting sessions held last month for the September 1 state primary.

Elevator Update: By the time you read this newsletter, the last steps in completing the elevator will likely be underway. The additional phone lines needed for the elevator emergency phone were scheduled to go in late last month, with the general contractor picking up immediately.

Residents passing through the common may be startled to see the elevator taken out of its shaft as the first of the last steps. Why? Because for a variety of reasons, it was put in place before an additional sealant had been applied in the concrete foundation of the shaft. The cost of this work and the sealant itself, however, will be shared equally by the town, the architect and the contractor – $2,573 each. Then a moisture sensor will be installed in the shaft at a cost of $3,147. Both of these bills will be paid from the Public Halls account.

ATM Update: As you probably know by now, annual town meeting came off without a hitch “under the big top” at the end of June. Kudos to Town Clerk Barbara Richardson for careful planning of the head table to allow for social distancing, to Board of Health chair Phil Leger for prepping the microphones between each speaker, and to newsletter editor Beth Gospadarek for reporting the results of the meeting and getting them published in the summer edition.

Town Clerk Notes
Barbara Richardson
State Primary
STATE PRIMARY WILL BE HELD SEPTEMBER 1, 2020.
All voting will take place in the Town Hall. Please remember when an unenrolled voter requests a ballot for a primary you must choose the party you wish to vote in.

Register to Vote for the Nov. 3 Presidential Election
It’s easy to register to vote - you can do this in a few ways. The deadline to register is Oct. 24.

Online: You can now register to vote online through the Secretary of State’s website: https://www.sec.state.ma.us/ovr/.

By Mail: Download a mail-in registration form here: https://www.sec.state.ma.us/ele/elepdf/Voter-reg-mail-in.pdf Complete and mail-in voter registration form, to P.O. Box 127, Royalston, MA 01368

In Person: Visit the Town Clerk’s Office at Whitney Hall, 5 School Street during normal business hours (Mondays from 9:00am to 1:00pm and 6:00pm to 8:00pm).

At the Registry of Motor Vehicles: Keep your “motor voter” receipt until you receive confirmation from your local election official. If you do not receive any confirmation, please contact the Town Clerk to verify your voting status: (978) 249-0493

Once you elections and town meetings. Please remember that you are required to return your Annual Census form in order to maintain your status as an “Active” voter in Royalston.

Town of Royalston
DPW CLERK
Royalston is currently seeking a DPW Clerk for 15 hours per week. A high school diploma plus three years municipal office experience is required. Associate’s degree is preferred. Ability to work independently with knowledge of Microsoft Word and Excel programs is essential. A full job description is available upon request.

Please send letter and resume to: dpw@royalston-ma.gov or to DPW, P.O. Box 96, Royalston, MA 01368. Royalston is an equal opportunity employer.
September is National Preparedness Month, and a perfect time to re-introduce Royalston’s Emergency Management Agency (REMA), and discuss what we can do together to prepare for unexpected events, or for expected events like storms and flu season, and the long-lasting consequences of events, like the Coronavirus Pandemic – Sars-CoV-2/COVID-19 – which has been driving nearly every aspect of our lives for the past seven months. It was Friday the 13th when school buildings were shuttered for the remainder of the school year, and just a week later, a “Stay-at-Home Advisory” was issued by Governor Charlie Baker, with the very carefully designed re-opening process kicking in with Phase I on May 18, and continuing with Phase II on June 8. We currently stand in Phase III, Step 1, which began July 6, and will remain until a vaccine has been developed, approved, and widely administered. While we can’t necessarily predict the future of this (or other events), we can take some time now to prepare for whatever the future holds.

The theory is, that in an emergency situation, well-prepared individuals, families, and businesses free up emergency service personnel to care for those less able/unable to care for themselves. In addition, prepared people are generally more willing and able to step up immediately to offer assistance to neighbors, or to a larger community. Together, we can be Ready for just about anything!

REMA IS the critical link between the Town of Royalston and resources at the State, Regional, and Federal Emergency Management Agencies, and ultimately, to the Department of Homeland Security. REMA is just one of several valuable resources in Royalston for individual citizens, households, and businesses wishing to be better prepared for unexpected situations.

REMA IS NOT a first-line emergency response agency like Royalston’s Fire and Rescue or Police Departments. REMA is not a stand-alone agency that responds alone to a situation, as might the Board of Health, South Royalston Improvement Corporation, or Highway Department. REMA is not the only local or regional organization that can help individuals and households prepare for the unexpected. REMA is not a substitute for preparedness within each household, every business, and all neighborhoods.

REMA’s PLANS
REMA’s goal is to enhance all of Royalston’s existing public health and safety services by planning for all hazards, and to engage each and every resident, family, and business in a level of personal emergency preparedness that allows survival for 72 hours – just three days – with no outside assistance. The 2020 Coronavirus Pandemic, obviously, has proven that preparedness to that standard is not full preparedness, but it’s a start; first response agencies like fire, police, EMS, DPW, Board of Health, etc. can deal with the initial crises for three days before a larger segment of the community needs some level of support.

Preparedness beats panic every time. Be informed. Make a Plan.

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

Board of Health News
Phil Leger, chair person
The new fiscal year is upon us and a reminder to purchase your new vehicle sticker to access RRATS. Bag stickers are now $4 per 33 gallon size trash bag.
Reminder that demo is not free. See attendant ahead of time for an assessment.
Reminder to wear masks please if you cannot maintain a minimum six foot separation. Be considerate of our staff that is there all day and one another.

Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE) mosquitoes have been captured in neighboring communities. EEE affects the nervous system and has a high mortality rate, hence the concern. This is the second year in a three year surge. The mosquitoes that carry EEE habitat includes cedar and red maple swamps.
Personal protection and awareness are the best response to this threat.

That being said, we are starting to experience drought conditions. Be careful with campfires and a reminder that fireworks are illegal in MA. Witness the recent Tully Mtn. fire that with huge expense used helicopter drops to extinguish careless campers fires.

Since Covid19 hit, the rest of the world had found Royalston and it’s trails and waterways. If hiking, take out what you bring in, more if you have room.
Above all, be kind and be safe. One day at a time and we will break on through to the other side . (Credit to Jim Morrison and

Royalston Police Department News
Non-emergency number, 978-249-5838
Mary C. Barclay
Thank you to Royalston Police Officer Josh Lamarche for his participation in raising the Town’s American flags to full staff on Memorial Day, and Officer Andrew Newton for assisting with the “Socially-Distanced Gift Drop” for Monty Tech grad Ashley Hadmack.

Support the Store
The Royalston Country Store, while closed for dining in, is still offering great deals on delicious breakfasts, lunches, and dinners from 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. Orders should be called in at 978-249-9798, and it will be ready for pick up when you arrive. Please observe social distancing and face masking when picking up your meals. Be sure to help these new owners make it in Royalston by supporting this business.
Phinehas S. Newton Library News
Kathy Morris, Library Director
Trustees: Jeffrey Mangum, Jennifer Basso, Theresa Quinn

Pick up times Mondays: 3:00-5:00pm, 6:30-8:00pm. Thursdays 1:00-3:00pm Saturdays:10:00 am-12 noon
978-249-3572  www.royalstonlibrary.org

Thank you
Royalston Academy for funding our summer – and fall –
Grab & Go Craft Kits
Pat Kelley, who, over the years, has donated many craft items,
which have found their way into our summer craft kits this year.

Donations to the Friends
Deane Marchbein
Ken and Andrea Lively
Norah Dooley as a thank you to Lynn Anair for a lovely mask

‘Curbside’/’Stepside’ Pickup of Materials
We are now able to borrow items from other libraries in Cen-
tral and Western Massachusetts as well as those libraries that
are members of our MassCat network. That has expanded the
collection beyond what we own and offers everyone a wider
selection of materials. It is preferable to either call the library
at 978-249-3572 or email the library at royalstonlibrary@
gmail.com with your requests. You can search what is in
our collection at www.royalstonlibrary.masscat.org. If you
place a hold on an item in the catalog, it is a random selection
and thus might not place the hold on our item and that is why
it’s better to call or email. Currently, you can pick up items
on Mondays from 3:00-5:00 and 6:30-8:00, Thursdays from
1:00-3:00, and Saturdays from 10:00-12:00. If these times do
not work for you, let us know and we can make other arrange-
ments.

To look at the new items that we are adding to the collection,
you search the catalog, look at the new items list in the news-
letter (remember that the newsletter is archived on the website,
www.royalstonlibrary.org, and you can view all the lists of
new materials in each newsletter), and you can also look at the
photos of new items that we post on the Library’s Facebook®
page or the Facebook® feed on the Library website. I realize
this doesn’t match the pleasure of browsing but for now, it’s
what we can offer.

Local Author: ‘The Hairbrush and the Shoe’
by Jeanne Stanton
Like true ghost stories? Jeanne Stanton has penned the story of
the ghost that inhabits her home in Boston. She has done a lot
or research and the book provides a wealth of information on
researching ghost activities. A copy is available for borrowing.

Services During the Pandemic
*If you need to print, copy, or fax, let us know and we can arrange
for it to happen. Most phones, laptops, and tablets can connect re-
motely to our copier/printer as well for printing.

*Don’t have a computer and need to do something online, let us
know, we can arrange for that to happen.

*Wi-Fi is available 24 hours a day with no password.

*Borrow a Coolpad Surf Mobile Hotspot for two weeks. They use
Sprint and have worked pretty well around town. They have unlim-
ited data.

*Still want to make ice cream? We have several ice cream balls you
can borrow.

*Borrow the Orion Starblaster Telescope for gazing at the stars and
moon and planets especially as the days get shorter and the nights are
still mild.

*Borrow books, audiobooks, CDs, and magazines.

Grab & Go Craft Kits
Due to the popularity of The Grab & Go Craft kits this July and
August, we will continue to offer them at least through the month of
October. We would like to thank the Royalston Academy for funding
these great summer offerings and to Gina Verrelli and Brooke Cole-
man for creating the kits. They are available 24/7 near the front en-
trance of the library. There are two kits: one for older kids and one
for preschoolers. Sometimes the crafts overlap and you are welcome
to take whichever, or both, that you like.

The Saturday after Labor Day we will be offering a hummingbird
swing kit, suitable for all ages, including adults. And, as you can see,
the swing really does provide a place for a hummingbird to rest. After
they leave you can bring it in for next year or leave it out there for the
migrating warblers and other small year round birds.

For any of the kits, you can either pick them up
as you go by or reserve a kit or kits, which we will
leave outside in a bag labeled with your name on
one of our ‘open’ days.

Kaleidoscope Kits Still Available
If you didn’t ask for a kaleidoscope kit, there are still
a few available. They are mostly premade and don’t
require a lot of construction, and are really sturdy, cool, and fun. You
can vary the items you add to the end tube to create some amazing de-
signs. We’ve made these over the years and not too long ago borrowed
one from a person, now graduated from college, who had made it one
summer many years ago. So they are long lasting keepsakes for sure.
Call or email the library to reserve a kit.
What’s in the Future?
We don’t know. Months ago, we devised a ‘reopening’ plan but as of yet the trustees and staff, in coordination with the town, has not gone forward with an actual welcome inside the building. Many Massachusetts libraries are offering ‘curbside’ pickup and a few have reopened on a modified basis. With our small size, we need to be confident that we can offer safe browsing and conditions for reopening. I can tell you that we would all like to be open. One of the wonderful things about working in a library is the personal contact with people and that has been missing since March. We, like everyone, would like the infection rates to decrease to a level that we can confidently and safely reopen. Every day we hear more news. The CDC has issued guidelines that after 24 hours paper products are safe to handle. Recently, new studies have shown that the virus can be detected on DVD cases, audiobooks, and even board books for up to five days and so we have revised our handling of these items from 3 to 5 days. And to all of you who return items in a timely manner and then receive overdue notices, it’s because we isolate the returned items before we check them in. That insures staff safety and also means the items are ‘safe and ready to loan to the next person. We realize that there are very few documented cases in Royalston and the chance of exposure from library materials is low but we feel it is our responsibility to make sure we follow the proper procedures for that ‘rare’ occurrence.

Some of the new materials at your library

**Adult Fiction**
- Bova, Ben: *Uranus*
- Burke, James Lee: *A Private Cathedral*
- Coulter, Catherine: *Deadlock*
- Davis, Fiona: *The Lions of Fifth Avenue*
- Delaney, JP: *Playing Nice*
- Donoghue, Emma: *The Pull of the Stars*
- Emezi, Akwaeke: *The Death of Vivek Oji*
- Goldin, Megan: *The Night Swim*
- Henderson, Alexs: *The Year of the Witching*
- Lane, Byron: *A Star is Bored*
- Lapena, Shari: *The End of Her*
- Louis, Lia: *Dear Emmie Blue*
- Malerman, Josh: *Malorie*
- Mallery, Susan: *The Friendship List*
- McConaghy, C.: *Migrations*
- McCorkle, Jill: *Hieroglyphics*
- Miller, Xander: *The Mouth*
- Nicholls, David: *Sweet Sorrow*
- Patteson, James: *1st Case*
- Pavesi, Alex: *The Eighth Detective*
- Petty, Kate: *True Story*
- Romero, George: *The Living Dead*
- Slaughter, Karin: *The Silent Wife*
- Stage, Zoje: *Wonderland*
- Taylor, Sarah: *The Mountains Wild*
- Thor, Brad: *Near Dark*
- Woods, Stuart: *Choppy Water*

**Children’s Fiction**
- Barnaby, Hannah: *Monster and Boy*
- Cho, Tina: *The Ocean Calls*
- Faruqi, Saadia: *A Place at the Table*
- Heo, Yumi: *Sun and Moon have a Tea Party*
- Higgins, Ryan: *We Will Rock Our Classmates*
- Hrab, Naseem: *Weekend Dad*
- Ismail, Yasmeen: *Joy*
- James, LeBron: *I Promise*
- Kendi, Ibram: *Antiracist Baby*
- Kinney, Jeff: *Rowley Jefferson’s Awesome Friendly Adventure*
- Lyons, Maddox: *I’m Not a Girl*
- Osborne, Mary: *Hurricane Heroes in Texas*
- Rosenthal, Amy: *Choo-Choo School*
- Sarith, Sepideh: *My Favorite Memories*
- Scotton, Rob: *Splat the Cat and the Cat in the Moon*
- Valerio, Geraldo: *The Egg*

**Children’s Nonfiction**
- Brown, Monica: *Sharuko*
- Farrell, Kate: *V is for Voting*
- Gall, Chris: *Jumbo*
- Gravel, Elise: *The Mosquito*

DVDs: *Are You Afraid of the Dark?*, Castle Rock Season 2, Gold Digger (Acorn), *The High Note*, Hope Gap, Marriage Story, and *Scoob!*

**Need Books for ‘School’?**
If you are learning remotely this year, and even if you’re not, and would like groups of books on a particular topic or need specific titles, let us know and we will put together several books and/or get you the specific titles you would like to have.

We also have weeded the entire collection (almost) so if you would like a selection of these books, let us know and we can put together a bag of books for any age and on a variety of topics. These books don’t need to be returned but if you don’t want them, they may be returned in the drop box and we will isolate them and offer them again later.

**Adult Non-Fiction**
- Ball, Edward: *Life of a Klansman*
- Herron, Meghan: *Decoding Your Cat*
- King, Shaun: *Make Change*
- Lippman, Laura: *My Life as a Villainess: Essays*
- Stanton, Jeanne: *The Hairbrush and the Shoe*
- Trump, Mary: *Too Much and Never Enough*
- Wilkerson, Isabel: *Caste*

**audiobooks**
- Delaney, JP: *Playing Nice*
- Donoghue, Emma: *The Pull of the Stars*
- Kwan, Kevin: *Sex and Vanity*
- Lapena, Shari: *The End of Her*
- Miranda, Megan: *The Girl from Widow Hills*
- Silva, Daniel: *The Order*
- Wiles, Deborah: *Kent State*

**Young Adult**
- Larson, Hope: *All Together Now*
- Meyer, Stephanie: *Midnight Sun*
**Historical Society News**

*Peter Kraniak, president*

Some electrical upgrades at the museum have been completed. We now have outlets on the second floor which enables us to improve the lighting situation. We are considering the restoration of the cove ceiling on the second floor. If you know of anyone who does drywall/plastering please contact us. With the ceiling repaired we can put the hanging lights back up which are stored in the attic.

Linda Alger presented us with two old scrapbooks that were obtained through her sister and brother-in-law. They were from the Norfor family who once lived where Marsha Charest as her home. The books pertain to not only Royalson but other towns and families. They are of general historical interest. If you have items like that, please consider donation them to the museum. Unfortunately because of the covid situation we will not be having the Pot Luck Supper nor the cemetery walk this year. Hopefully 2021 will be better.

*To contact us, reach out through our Facebook page or website, call Beth Gospodarek, 978-249-0358, or email this newsletter.*

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**Recipe of the Month**

*Artist Amy Newland contributed this recipe for late summer comfort food. She recently relocated from Texas, just in time to socially distance in a remote part of Falls Rd., where the most common passerby are moose or city folk using their Google maps to try to get to Royalston Falls (albeit finding out the road is too rough, parking is non-existant, and the bridge is long gone.)*

**Any Berry Crisp**

**Ingredients**

- 5 cups blueberries, blackberries, dewberries*, or other berries
- Juice of 1/2 lemon
- 2 tablespoons sugar
- 1 or 2 teaspoons cornstarch, depending on juiciness of berries
- 2/3 cup brown sugar
- 5 tablespoons cold butter
- 1/2 cup rolled oats
- 1/2 cup all-purpose flour
- 1/2 cup chopped pecans
- 1/2 teaspoon cinnamon
- Salt

**Preparation**

1. Preheat oven to 375°.
2. Toss berries with lemon juice, sugar, cornstarch; spread in a greased 8- or 9-inch pan.
3. Combine brown sugar, butter, rolled oats, flour, pecans, cinnamon, and dash of salt in a bowl and mix lightly with pastry blender or put in a food processor and pulse a few times.
4. Sprinkle brown sugar crumble over fruit and bake for 40 to 45 minutes.

Serve with vanilla ice cream.

*Dewberries, a close relative to blackberries, grew all over the place on our Texas farm as well as in the poor soils of Royalson. As soon as they were ripe in May the dicksissels would arrive, followed by screeching flocks of cedar waxwings. Despite all the birds there were plenty of berries for us to pick and freeze for crisp all year round.*

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**It rained again last night.**

A powerful storm that poured out over the walls of heaven, as if some cosmic battle were being fought.

This morning, the sun rose through grateful summer trees.

A mist drifted o’er the landscape.

The backlit meadow became a magic carpet of hayfield and daisies.

Brown-eyed Susan’s rubbed their sleepy eyes.

A single swallow sang the prelude to a morning symphony.

The oaks and maples that frame the whole scene drink deep their roots into the dark, rich, fertile soil.

Above, the whispy remnants of last night’s clouds wave like tattered flags and dissolve into a crystal sky.

What is amazing, beyond the beauty is how so much depends on the weather.

*Michael Young
Current Royalston Poet Laurreate*
Welcome baby Leverett John Siegel!
Levi was born on July 4th, 2020 to Joshua Morris-Siegel and Katherine Siegel of Royalston. He was 8 pounds, 5 ounces and 20.5 inches long. He is the first grandchild of Larry Siegel and Kathy Morris of Royalston and proud grandparents John & Claudia Jennings of Setauket, New York.

Araceli Medina Gonzales and Asher Thomas Chase were married in a small, sweet ceremony in Tepozotlan, Mexico, where they reside, on August 8, 2020. The couple met in Taipei, Taiwan and settled in Mexico last year. Asher is the son of Beth Gospodarek and Stephen Chase and sibling of Caleb and Tobey Chase of town. Chelii’s parents are Maria Esperanza and Ignacio Medina Gonzalez.

Mckaylah Lent, the LeRay’s granddaughter, is shown here doing one of the Preschool Storytime kits from the Phinehas Newton Library. There is a new preschool and school-aged project each week. All the materials are packaged up and ready for pick up on the library steps through October.

Good News: The DPW spent the summer filling potholes and generally smoothing our journeys.

Royalston Fish and Game Club
Royalston F&G dinners, meetings and other events are canceled for now. Trap shoots are returning. Club leaders thank you for your understanding, and encourage you to direct any questions or concerns to them via Facebook messenger.
What’s Happening at the Village School?
Rise Richardson, director
The Village School is opening fully. With our spacious new building and great outdoor spaces, children will spread out with safe distancing. Learning will be outside as much as possible. In the building, all children wear masks and each classroom is independent and separate. Go to the Village School home page to see the Reopening Plan: https://www.villageschool-ma.org

Class sizes are capped for now, to keep everyone safe. Parents can call the school to find out about getting on the waiting lists. Once the vaccine is out, there will be openings in most classes.

WiFi on its Way to RCS!

Cables for reliable internet are being laid from the Common to RCS. The upgrade was arranged by the ARRSd.

Parents Choose Between Remote or in-Person Learning Models as School Re-opens in the ARRSd this Fall

School for all students will start on September 14, 2020 remotely. Families who have selected in-person learning will begin with a one-day session in school on September 28, 2020. Individual schools will be contacting families to let them know details. Starting on October 5, 2020 all students who have selected in-person learning will begin to attend school.

The district has hired a COVID-19 Lead administrator who will handle any COVID-19 related issues. The COVID-19 Lead will also walk schools to ensure that health and safety orders are being followed. Masks, hand washing, and 6 feet physical distance is required for in-person instruction with some exceptions for the youngest students and those with medical conditions. To assure fresh air flow in classrooms, HVAC systems in all schools have been tested and the systems at Athol High School are being upgraded for the first time since the school was built in 1957.

For more information about the school reopening plan, call the school or visit, http://www.arrsd.org/final-fall-reopening-plan/.

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

Congratulations to Monty Tech’s three Class of 2020 grads who were able to celebrate their special day on July 29, with immediate family groupings, widely separated on the athletic field. It wasn’t a usual ceremony – but this is anything BUT a usual year!

Congratulations, and a debt of gratitude, to each and every Monty Tech administrator, faculty member, and staff member for their tireless, months-long efforts in preparing both the school building, and creating a detailed roadmap to a new normal. As Royalston’s representative to the School Committee, I promise you the physical and emotional health, and the safety of all members of the school community (and public!) were primary considerations guiding each decision. The balancing act required was second to none since what’s right for one student, teacher, or staff member, may be in direct conflict with what’s right for another. To accomplish all that needed to be done to open school for students on September 10 has been a Herculean task. I could not be prouder of our personnel or our teachers’ union, and the extraordinary time and energy invested by all.

Detailed information about Monty Tech’s reopening is available on the front page of the website, with links to the revised school calendar; facility and operations safety guidelines; cleaning and disinfecting plans; and Monty Tech’s instructional plan submission to the State, with details on opting out of in-school to remote-only learning. Also posted are the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education’s (DESE) re-opening and transportation guidance for Career, Vocational, and Technical Education (CVTE) schools.

The School Committee, as well as many of the subcommittees, have continued meeting via Zoom throughout the summer. New policies will be in place and everyone will be ready to roll by the time students return to the campus. In order for students to remain on campus, it is absolutely VITAL that ALL members of the Monty Tech Community continue the level of vigilance that has kept this Coronavirus manageable in Massachusetts for most of the summer. Try to limit your exposure to others by staying out of enclosed spaces to the extent possible, and stay at least 6’ apart from others both inside and out; ALWAYS wear a mask when in public; and practice frequent hand hygiene throughout the day.

This is not going to be an easy year, so be patient, be kind, and remember, that if we all work together, we can make it work!
Classifieds

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: cobbsuzanne4@yahoo.com.

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

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

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


Book Reviews - What are your librarians reading?

Call Your Daughter Home
By: Deb Spera, Reviewed by Gina Verrelli
Sometimes you just know from the very first line of a book that you’re going to like it. “It’s easier to kill a man than a gator, but it takes the same kind of wait.” What a great line in the wonderful debut novel, Call Your Daughter Home by Deb Spera. This book is set in rural South Carolina in 1924. The region has been devastated by boll weevils, hurricanes and an economic depression, but there are other more personal struggles happening too. Spera introduces us to three women, each an unforgettable character in her own way, and through these three remarkable women we are given a glimpse into the challenges that women faced in the rural South and the lengths that they would go to to provide for and protect their families.

The Remarkable Life of the Skin: An Intimate Journey Across our Largest Organ by Monty Lyman., Reviewed by Kathy Morris
We’re held together by skin; protected in a water-proof layer from the elements and the myriad of harmful microorganisms, and we take our largest organ for granted. This fascinating book is scientific yet easy to read and understand. Your skin weighs about 4 pounds, has 11 miles of blood vessels, is the fastest growing organ, and is made up of a diverse variety of specialized cells. It is also the least understood organ. Lyman, an M.D. who has studied skin extensively, touches on science, sociology, and history. The book contains so many interesting tidbits about skin that it makes you want to read it to someone. This book is a journey. You’ll learn about the mechanoreceptors, highly specialized sensitive cells that create the magical ability to touch and feel; how human pigmentation varies, why we tattoo and the history of bodily decoration, the many different skin diseases from acne to leprosy; plus, how we can protect, care for, and nourish our skin. It’s captivating, and after reading this book, you probably won’t go outside without sunscreen.

for sale:


Fresh eggs and Royalston maple syrup from Putney’s Sugarhouse - $6.50/half-pint; $8/100 ml. glass maple leaf bottle; $10/pint; $18/quart; Eggs $3/dozen. Contact 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: Custom options by experienced graphic designer. Glassware etching and custom thermal travel-style drinking vessels. Single pieces or sets; even really kool kids’ cups! Krys and Keith Swan at Swank-kreations@gmail.com.

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.

Fresh Eggs: $3/dozen, are available when the cooler is at the end of the driveway at 185 North Fitzwilliam Road. Contact Brenda Putney at 978-249-7787 to reserve eggs for pick-up.

Jarvenpaa Farm Eggs. $3.00/dozen. 17 River Rd, So. Royalston. Come by anytime. Cooler at the bottom of the driveway next to road.

Local Eggs, (first come, first served) for $3/dozen at the home of Tim and Tracie Wright, 6 Morse Road. Available eggs will be in the cooler by the roadside.


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 suzan-
Garden Notes  August 22, 2020

It has been challenging times in the garden. Not, (need I say?) as challenging as times in the world. In some small way, I can make an impact in the garden; in no way can I make an impact on the world.

The state of the garden: a number of crops performed right poorly. That surprised me not at all. What did surprise me was the fact that some have thrived. Tomatoes are beyond plentiful, all the more remarkable in light of the condition of the plants. Early blight works its way up from the bottom of the stem, effectively killing all leaves in its path. The hornworm starts at the top, consuming all leaves in its path. But the fruits have set and are ripening, notwithstanding the paucity of foliage. Pepper plants are growing with an exuberance I have not heretofore observed; it remains to be seen whether the quantity of peppers is as similarly exuberant. Cucumbers abound, but when did they ever not? At the other end of the spectrum, potato yields, to use the technical term, sucked. Corn yields have been a step or two above pitiful. The raccoons don’t even seem interested. Zucchinis? Usually, it is a question of dealing with the pile of zukes somebody has left at your door step. This year? I’ve had more than one person approach me (six feet distant of course) to determine whether I have any extra zucchini. I do not. In fact, I have no zukes at all, the plants having given up the ghost some time ago. That’s not unheard of, but buttercup squash plants dying in early August is. (They have.) I do not recall the last successful brassica year; it won’t be this one either, and the streak remains unbroken, the leaves riddled with insect damage, the plants moribund in their growth. I’ve yet to determine the success of the late root crops, the carrots, beets, parsnips, and daikons, but remain cautiously optimistic.

A secondary factor has been the increased activity of four-legged creatures. I’ve seen no porcupines but one made its presence felt by chewing through row covers to ‘harvest’ brassicas. Deer, rarely a problem, have become one. Only one time in the past forty-some years have rabbits been observed in the garden. Now it is two. (The one emerging from under a row cover ‘protecting’ the beets was particularly vexing.) While yields are reduced almost across-the-board, there have been no failures (if you discount the early retirement of the zukes). Of course, my customer base has been reduced as well (from many to few); we will not go hungry this winter.

Larry Siegel

Mirror Image

It is two months out from the summer solstice and still our days are filled with heat and light. On these hot days I seek out any source of coolness – the shade of our back yard, a splash of cold water, a small window fan. Despite the heat, summer is passing. I see it in the later sunrise and the softer evenings. I try not to calculate the waning light, as if ignoring this cosmic process will slow it down. But of course, it won’t. The light decreases each day by minutes that become hours soon enough. That heat wave now seems to have been the highest point in an arc that bends, slowly but surely, toward winter.

This time of summer light is the mirror image of winter’s dark. In those cold days, I also seek relief from the season’s extremes. But then it is the heat of the wood stove or the warmth of a quilt that comforts me. The light, or lack of it, also draws my attention. Unlike in summer, when I try not to notice the shift from light to dark, in midwinter I mark the tiniest increments of daylight with mathematical intensity: “two minutes more today!” By late February, two months out from the winter solstice, the cold remains a force to be reckoned with, but the days are noticeably longer. And the arc of the season starts to bend toward summer.

Here in New England, this “mirror image” is never far from our minds. Recently I visited a friend in New Salem for a late afternoon walk to the Quabbin Overlook. When we got there, we saw two men in camp chairs, a small cooler between them, facing the eastern vista. Their quiet conversation suggested the comfort of a long friendship. Not wanting to intrude we kept our distance and acknowledged them with a smile. But they spoke first, noting the warmth of a perfect summer evening. They were old fishing buddies, they told us, and had spent many summer days together fishing on the Quabbin. Like us, they had come to this spot to enjoy the evening light. Then we all gazed in silent appreciation of water, hills and sky. When my friend and I turned to go, one of them called to us, “Enjoy the weather,” he said. “Snow is coming next week!”

We laughed, but we knew exactly what he meant. This summer warmth is lovely. But winter, its mirror image, is the inevitable counterpoint we all know too well.

Deb D’Amico
Migrating Dragonflies
In early September, especially in the late afternoon, crowds of large green darner dragonflies gather by the dozens. The insects are preparing to embark on a multigenerational migration over hundreds or thousands of miles to winter in Mexico and other central American countries. There is a lot unknown about the migration, however. If you would like to engage in tracking dragonflies as part of a citizen scientist initiative, visit the website: migratorydragonflypartnership.org.

Dragonflies stand out among the insects. They have the best vision. Each eye is composed of 28,000 simple eyes. Dragonflies are incredible aeronauts. Each wing is independent of the other, which allows for instant change of direction, even shooting straight up or down or flying in reverse. Their lower jaws have teeth and jut out to snatch prey while growing, and both aquatic nymphs and adults are voracious.

On the clear crisp September days, look up. The thermal air currents that hawks and Monarch Butterflies ride south also move the dragonflies.

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PO Box 133
Royalston MA 01368