Calendar of Events

April 1 Thursday  April Fools’ Day

April 2 Friday  Good Friday
April 4 Sunday  Easter

April 5 Monday
10 am-8 pm  Annual Town Elections. Both precinct one and two will be voting at the Town Hall. Please wear a mask covering both mouth and nose.

April 11 Sunday 10:31 p.m.  New Pink Moon

April 12 Tuesday 1:00-5:00 p.m.  Library reopens for in-person browsing. Mondays and Thursdays from 1:00 - 5:00 p.m. and from 9:00 until noon on Saturdays. Masks required. “Contactless” pick up items and craft kits still available on library steps.
7:23 p.m.  Ramadan begins at sundown

April 13 Tuesday 6 p.m.  In-person yoga upstairs at town hall recommences and continues on Tuesdays. Limited to ten people - first come first served. Each person will need to bring a mat and masking is mandatory.

April 15 Thursday  Not Tax Day - The federal and state tax filing days for individuals have been extended until May 17, 2021.

April 19 Monday  Patriots’ Day  April Vacation Week begins  ARRS, Monty Tech, and Village School resume school on April 26.

April 22 Thursday  Earth Day  Pre-dawn hours – The Lyrid Meteor Shower. Peak watching today, but there will be many for a day or two each side of today. Watch the southern skies in the dark early morning.

1:30 p.m.  Kite flying and Earth Day activities outside at the library. School vacation fun. Bring a kite or use one of ours.

April 24 Saturday 8 a.m. - noon  Townwide Roadside Trash pick up. Gather litter and bring it to the transfer station for free disposal. You will feel good and the town will look good!

April 26 Monday  Village School Bio-Diversity Week begins 11:32 a.m.  Full Pink Moon
April 30 Friday  Arbor Day

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

Covid-19 Vaccination Updates: As of April 5, anyone 55 years of age and older, or with one of the qualified medical conditions (including cancer, chronic kidney disease, COPD, Down Syndrome, cardiac conditions, weakened immune system, obesity, pregnancy, diabetes, Sickle Cell Disease, is eligible for the COVID-19 vaccination). As of April 19 – Patriot’s Day – anyone age 16 or older qualifies for a vaccination. Trials on immunizations are underway for children, with details on various age group eligibility coming shortly. To find out eligibility details from the ONLY valid source, go to https://www.mass.gov/covid-19-vaccine. For the site for self-scheduling, go to https://www.mass.gov/info-details/covid-19-vaccination-locations or https://www.heywood.org/covid-19/covid19-vaccine. Eligible people may schedule an appointment through Heywood Healthcare (Heywood & Athol Memorial Hospitals) at 978-958-9057 for clinics at the Polish-American Citizens’ Club in Gardner, and Cornerstone Family Medicine, in the Medical Arts Building at Heywood Hospital, at 978-669-0199.

Regarding the various vaccines, the Pfizer vaccine is for those 16 and older, and is a 2-dose series separated by 21 days. The Moderna vaccine is only for those 18 and older, and is also a 2-dose series, and is separated by 28 days. The J&J vaccine is only for those 18 and older, and is a one-time vaccination. And it bears repeating: This is a slow process, given the fact everyone in the Commonwealth (nearly 7 million of us) needs vaccinating! Please be kind, be patient, be persistent. Please continue masking, distancing, and limiting time in enclosed spaces with people who are not vaccinated and not in your household.

RE-Preparing: Most anyone who’s prepared for winters in New England with a good stash of non-perishables, sealed drinking water, paper goods, etc., is now working their way to the backs of pantries and storage closets. Given the uncertainties of this Pandemic, including those who are not, cannot, or will not be vaccinated, along with the potential for variants for which vaccinations are not effective, everyone would do well to RE-prepare and stay well-prepared throughout the summer months… just in case. That’s what emergency preparedness is all about… just in case. Now that toilet paper and peanut butter are readily available… and tissues, and tuna, and whatever else it is you put by for a time of need, make sure you have enough to weather another run on your necessary and preferred products. It may also be time to invest in or sew some new face masks. Make sure they are appropriately layered, can be comfortably worn (over both the mouth and nose), and close-fitting so there are no gaps.

Preparedness beats panic every time. Be informed. Make a Plan.
Select Board Notes

Christine Long, clerk, Royalston Select Board

Annual Town Business. The annual town election will take place as by the bylaws dictate, on April 5, but both precincts will again vote at Town Hall; polls will be open from 10 am to 8 pm. The Select Board has voted to move the annual town meeting from its usual date in early May to a date in June; both the date and the venue are yet to be determined.

The board has also opened the warrant for the annual town meeting, and the Community Preservation Committee has submitted four recommendations. One is its standard article, which allocates revenues to the various categories of spending, and another is for $6,000 to restore the Town Hall kitchen door, work that will also include restoration of the sill on which it sits.

Last month we reported that this proposal would be coming forward again – it was proposed for the 2020 annual town meeting, but there was no money to fund it then – but we thought the cost would have to be paid by “regular” town funds. Having it come instead from the Community Preservation Fund definitely helps our calculations.

The other two recommendations from the CPC are to use $5,500 to complete the gazebo on the south village common and $9,500 to purchase the property where the late lamented Cloutier’s Pete and Henry’s restaurant once stood. Both these projects will improve the recreational value of the village.

And all of the projects demonstrate the value of the Community Preservation Fund and the wisdom of the voters in accepting it years ago.

FY21 and FY22 Budgets. We are now in the last quarter of Fiscal Year 2021, and it looks likely that both the Fire Department and public halls accounts will run short – the Fire Department because of the change from a stipend fire chief to an hourly one, and public halls primarily because of certain expenses at the Raymond Building and a puzzling spike in Town Hall electricity bills. While the source of this spike is due in part to an old and inefficient water heater, we are still investigating other contributing factors. The Select Board hopes certain fund-to-fund transfers allowed late in the year and the $20,000 in the Reserve Fund will be enough to cover these.

The board has also reviewed the FY22 budget requests for both public halls and the DPW. Public halls is requesting an increase from $80,000 this year to $103,000 next year, a jump of 29 percent. Some of this is based on analysis of this year’s spending and some in anticipation of increased operating costs at the Raymond.

The DPW is requesting a 3.3 percent increase, from $683,000 to $706,000, primarily driven by anticipated union raises in the coming year.

We reported last month that we feared this year’s snow-and-ice expenses would eat up a lot of our Stabilization Fun, but it now appears that it will in fact come in under budget – very good news indeed. We can’t report that the big picture is significantly rosier – we will know more this month as the board grapples with the needs of both this year and next.

COVID-19 Vaccinations. Certain town departments are now able to help residents schedule their vaccinations. If you still need your shots, contact our office (bos@royalston.ma.gov or 978-249-9641), and someone will get back to you. Remember – your getting vaccinated protects not only you but everyone around you, family, friends, colleagues and strangers alike. The more folks get vaccinated, the brighter glows the light at the end of the tunnel.

Annual Town Election

The election will take place at the Town Hall 13 on the Common, April 5th, 2021 from 10 am-8 pm both precinct one and two will be voting at the Town Hall.

Precautions to prevent the spread of the COVID virus will be implemented and anyone wishing to vote will be asked to wear a mask covering both mouth and nose.

Mail in and Absentee ballots are available from the Town Clerk.

Positions to be voted at Annual Town Election

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Terms</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Selectboard</td>
<td>Deborah J. D’Amico*</td>
<td>3 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderator</td>
<td>George Northrop *</td>
<td>3 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constable</td>
<td>Roland Hamel*</td>
<td>3 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tree Warden</td>
<td>Larry Siegel*</td>
<td>3 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessor</td>
<td>blank</td>
<td>2 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessor</td>
<td>blank</td>
<td>5 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cemetery Com.</td>
<td>Roy Smith, Jr.*</td>
<td>3 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Board of Health</td>
<td>blank</td>
<td>3 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library Trustee</td>
<td>Jennifer Basso*</td>
<td>3 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning Board</td>
<td>Amy Sanden*</td>
<td>5 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trustee of J.N. Bartlett Fund</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(4 seats)</td>
<td>Gary Winitzer*</td>
<td>1 year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Curtis Deveneau*</td>
<td>1 year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nancy Melbourne*</td>
<td>1 year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>blank</td>
<td>1 year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Athol-Royalston Regional School Committee Member (Athol)</td>
<td>Carla Rabinowitz*</td>
<td>3 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Athol-Royalston Regional School Committee Member (Athol)</td>
<td>Deborah Kuzmeskas*</td>
<td>3 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lonnie J. Bonenfant</td>
<td>3 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Elaine P. Gauthier</td>
<td>3 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Theodore J. Mallet III</td>
<td>1 year</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* indicates “currently in the position”

Cultural Council News

The Royalston Cultural Council was “faced with an interesting dilemma” this year, when few applicants came forward for this year’s funding, presumably, due to the Pandemic. Since the group couldn’t predict the Pandemic situation in July – MusicFest month – they “…decided to greatly expand Open Mic offerings, with two outdoor music events per month during the summer; one on The Common, and the other in the South Village, perhaps with a big day at the end of the summer, much like MusicFest.” Jim Bennett is currently working on plans, which will likely include collaborative events with the South Village Revitalization group. Be on the lookout for all the summer fun!
**Royalston South Village Revitalization News**

Royalston artist Gordon Morrison, through a grant from the Royalston Cultural Council, has been completing some beautiful artwork for the Welcome to the Village of South Royalston sign. It features scenes of the Millers River, the King Street Bridge, Whitney Hall, the church and the general store. Thank you to all who bought tickets for the 120 Drawing fundraiser last fall, whose proceeds will pay for the sign. The sign, which will be made by Lyman Signs, will go up this summer.

In March, the RSVR submitted a proposal to the Community Preservation Committee requesting the Town of Royalston to purchase the former Cloutier’s Pete and Henry’s property for the town to use for open space and recreational purposes. The proposal was for $5000 for the property, $2,500 for legal fees (title search, purchase and sale, closing), and $2,000 for the survey. Although the Select Board supported the proposal and the Community Preservation Committee voted to approve the proposal, it will be voted on by the community at the Annual Town Meeting this spring. If approved, the Town will have a year to buy it from John and Terry Cloutier, former owners of the beloved restaurant.

The Community Preservation Committee recently voted to approve the proposal from RSVR requesting funding for railings for the gazebo which were not included in the engineering plan of last year’s gazebo grant. The design of the balusters uniquely honors the Finnish population who migrated to Royalston in the early 1900’s. The $5,500 grant was for $4,600 balusters and rails + $900 paint and hardware. This will go up for vote at the Town Meeting in May.

Recently placed on the gazebo ceiling were six wooden medallions that hide the metal hangers that connect the header beams to the rafters. The final design was created by Monty Tech student Megan Vazquez Jacquea and the medallions were laser etched by Monty Tech faculty member Kevin Killay. The medallions are a tribute to the native brook trout population in Buckman Brook which enters the Millers River two miles downstream of the Gazebo. The image of the brook trout relates to the upcoming RSVR river and trails improvement projects that Todd Neale plans as the weather warms up and Covid conditions improve.

Tom Musco recently designed and built the cupola for the gazebo. The aluminum roof put on by Monty Tech students echo the angle of the peak of the Whitney Hall tower. Volunteers and the Royalston Fire Department will be installing the cupola this month.

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**Board of Health News**

Phil Leger, chair person

Vaccine access continues to increase across MA as supply increases. Folks are getting their first and second jabs across the region. Although we had zero cases for a bit, a couple of households were recently hit due to community spread.

Mask wearing is still a requirement in public and will be for the foreseeable future. Getting back to normal will still take time and our best efforts. Thank you to all who have done their part and continue to care.

Spring has come and with that spring clean up. The last Saturday of April is traditionally, Charlie’s Roadside Cleanup. Pick a road and clean up what the melting snows have left us.

With warmer weather, take precautions against ticks and bugs. Check pets and yourselves when coming in from outside. Remember DEMO is NOT FREE and you need a current WINDSHIELD STICKER to enter and use the facility. See attendant.

**DPW**

Warm weather and frost melting from underground happens each year and those that inhabit the North East section of the country know all too well, what to expect. (SPRING!!!)

The Spring also brings, "Mud Season" to our 28 miles of gravel roads. The "Weight Reduction Signs" have been "Posted" to protect our gravel streets and help preserve our rural character. The limit of 6 tons maximum weight is given through the authorization of M.G.L. Chapter 85, Sec 30-32.

Please help us protect and maintain our country roads. Thank you all who cooperate.

*DPW - Supt., Keith R. Newton*
**Phinehas S. Newton Library News**  
Kathy Morris, Library Director  
Trustees: Jeffrey Mangum, Jennifer Basso, Theresa Quinn  
Open and Pick up hours Mondays and Thursdays: 1:00 - 5:00 p.m.; Saturdays: 9:00 a.m.-12 noon  
978-249-3572  www.royalstonlibrary.org

**Donations to the Friends - Thank you!**  
Kenneth and Martha Bouchard  
Tom Musco and Deb D'Amico  
Pierre and Marie Humblet  
Kathleen Pirro  
Nancy and Matt Hickler

**Tax Forms**  
The Internal Revenue Service and the state of Massachusetts have extended the tax deadline for individuals until May 17, 2021. However, ultimately, taxes are still certain. The library has Federal forms, resident and non-resident State forms, and we will be glad to print, free of charge, any forms you may need. Call or email us and we will arrange for you to pick up the forms you need.

**Library Plant Sale is Back!**  
Plant a few seeds, pot a few offshoots, and put aside some space in your gardens. The Friends of the library plant sale will be happening this June. Expect the usual unusual selection of high quality perennials, vegetables, herbs, annuals and houseplants, all delivered with experienced advice and a smile. All profits benefit the Friends, who use the money to support the library and its programs as well as produce and distribute this newsletter 10 times per year.

**Reopening Really!**  
No April Fools’ joke. We will resume limited browsing and opening on Monday, April 12. Initially hours will be from 1:00-5:00 on Mondays and Thursdays and from 9:00 until noon on Saturdays. Based on how things proceed, we will eventually open more hours. The Trustees voted to make it official policy that until further notice, all persons over the age of two must wear a mask covering the nose and mouth at all times while in the library building. Hand sanitizer will be available at the entrance and must also be used upon entering the building. In addition, hand sanitizer and wipes will be available for use. We are excited to try again to open and look forward to welcoming everyone back into the Library.

For those not wishing to enter the building, pickup of items outside the building or in the front entrance will still be available. Each of us has a different comfort level and we want to accommodate all those who want to use the library. Remember that there is also the ebook option and don’t forget to sign up for Wowbrary for virtual browsing with listings and reviews of all the new items added each week (Wowbrary.org, enter Royalston’s zip code and select our library.)

**Kite Flying and Earth Day Celebration**  
It’s April which means kite flying. Join us on Thursday, April 22 at 1:30 outside at the library for a fun day of flying kites and Earth Day activities. We will provide the kites and help get them in the air. There will also be some seed planting and other nature crafts to celebrate Earth Day. Masks should be worn by everyone two and older.

**Scholarship Forms**  
Forms for all local scholarships are available 24/7 in the bin at the top of the Library steps. Deadline is April 16, 2021.

**In Person Yoga**  
Yoga classes with Charlotte Weltzin will resume on Tuesday, April 13 at 6:00 p.m. in the upstairs of the Town Hall. Class size is limited to ten people and will be on a first come first served basis. Each person will need his or her own mat and masking covering the nose and mouth is mandatory. There will be no class on April 27 and possibly on May 4. Information will be on the Library answering machine, Facebook, and website.

**Story Walks**  
Story Book Walks  
From late April through mid-August five local authors will be installing Story Book Walks featuring their books around the Library. The first book will be Don Gateau: the Three-Legged Cat of Seborga by Diane Kane, the story about the relationship between a feral cat and an artist. The other authors in order of the appearance of her Story Book Walk are Sharon Harmon, Clare Green, Phyllis Cochran, and Marsha LaCrois.

**More Learning Walks Coming Soon**  
We are working out the details and gathering supplies to create STEM-related nature-based walks and learning boards to be displayed around the Library and Town and sponsoring nature walks with kits to supplement the experiences. Stay tuned for further information. This program is made possible through CARES Act funding to Federal Institute of Museum and Library Services as administered by the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners.
Some of the new materials at your library

**Adult Fiction**
Andrews, Alexandra  
Who is Maud Dixon?  
Backman, Fredrik  
And Every Morning the Way Home Gets Longer and Longer  
Banks, Russell  
Foregone  
Barry, Kevin  
That Old Country Music  
Benjamin, Ali  
The Kaiser’s Web  
Berry, Steve  
Dark Sky  
Box, C.J.  
A Simple Murder  
Charles, Janet  
The Paris Library  
Cussler, Clive  
Fast Ice  
Engel, Patricia  
Infinite Country  
Foster, Fiona  
The Captive  
Fox, Lauren  
Send for Me  
Goldberg, Lee  
Bone Canyon  
Grearney, Mark  
Relentless  
Griffiths, Elly  
The Postscript Murders  
Hardiman, Rebecca  
Good Eggs  
Ishiguro, Kazuo  
Klara and the Sun  
Jance, J.A.  
Missing and Endangered  
Johansen, Erika  
Beneath the Keep  
King, Stephen  
Later  
Koryta, Michael  
Never Far Away  
Leon, Donna  
Transient Desires  
Lockwood, Patricia  
No One is Talking about This  
Nguyen, Viet Thanh  
The Committed  
North, Anna  
Outlawed  
Pearse, Sarah  
The Sanatorium  
Quinn, Kate  
The Rose Code  
Robb, J.D.  
Faithless in Death  
Rosnay, Tatiana de  
Flowers of Darkness  
Russo, Kate  
Super Host  
Ryan, Jennifer  
The Kitchen Front  
Steel, Danielle  
The Affair  
Tscheida, Sam  
Siri, Who Am I?  
Vida, Vendela  
We Run the Tides  
Whitaker, Chris  
We Begin at the End  
Willig, Lauren  
Band of Sisters  
Wilson, Diane  
The Seed Keeper

**Children’s Fiction**
Collard, Sneed  
Waiting for a Warbler  
Cowdrey, Richard  
Meet Fiona the Hippo  
Davies, Jacqueline  
Sydney & Taylor Explore the Whole Wide World  
Donaldson, Julia  
Counting Creatures  
Fox, Mem  
Early One Morning  
George, Kallie  
The Secret Fawn  
Harmon, Sharon  
Horatio Mortimer Loves Music  
Holm, Jennifer  
The Lion of Mars  
Keller, Tate  
When You Trap a Tiger  
Min, Cat  
Shy Willow  
Osborne, Mary Pope  
Camp Time in California  
Parr, Todd  
The Spring Book  
Pierce, Lincoln  
Big Nate  
Rinker, Sherri  
It’s So Quiet!  
Stilton, Geronimo  
The Last Resort Oasis  
Trevino, Charles  
Seaside Stroll  
Trinder, Theresa  
There is a Rainbow  
Watson, Tom  
Stick Dog Takes Out Sushi

**Children’s Nonfiction**
Esperon, Maria  
The Sea-Ringed World  
Green, John  
InvestiGators  
Heavenrish, Sue  
13 Ways to Eat a Fly  
Hodgson, Rob  
When Cloud Became a Cloud  
Knetzger, Laura  
Bug Boys  
Sandri, Barbara  
Chickenology  
Simon, Seymour  
Climate Action  
Tordjman, Nathalie  
Book of Tiny Creatures

**Audiobooks**
Bittman, Mark  
Animal, Vegetable, Junk

**Adult Non-Fiction**
Allende, Isabel  
The Soul of a Woman  
Gates, Bill  
How to Avoid a Climate Diaster  
Gupta, Sanjay  
Keep Sharp  
Koplewicz, Harold  
The Scaffold Effect  
Isaacsion, Walter  
The Code Breaker  
Kolbert, Elizabeth  
Under a White Sky  
Lamott, Anne  
Dusk, Night, Dawn  
Loeb, Abraham  
Extraterrestrial  
McGhee, Heather  
The Sun of Us  
Novella, Steven  
The Skeptics’ Guide to the Universe  
Patterson, James  
Walk in My Combat Boots  
Peterson, Jordan  
Beyond Order  
Saunders, George  
A Swim in a Pond in the Rain

**Young Adult**
Clare, Cassandra  
Chain of Iron  
De la Cruz, Melissa  
The Queen’s Secret  
Riggs, Ransom  
The Desolations of Devil’s Acre  
Sutherland, Tui  
The Dangerous Gifts

**Children’s Nonfiction**
Esperon, Maria  
The Sea-Ringed World  
Green, John  
InvestiGators  
Heavenrish, Sue  
13 Ways to Eat a Fly  
Hodgson, Rob  
When Cloud Became a Cloud  
Knetzger, Laura  
Bug Boys  
Sandri, Barbara  
Chickenology  
Simon, Seymour  
Climate Action  
Tordjman, Nathalie  
Book of Tiny Creatures

**DVDs**
The Croods, A New Age (DVD & Blu-ray)  
Greenland  
Let Him Go  
The Little Prince  
Miss Scarlet & the Duke

**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.
Historical Society News

Peter Kraniak, president

Among the over 2000 items that are found in the museum, are documents and artifacts from Doctor Francis Adams, who practiced medicine in town for many years and was greatly involved with the community. He was born in Brookfield, Massachusetts in 1840 and attended Amherst College graduating in 1862. He enlisted in the Army at the beginning of the Civil War but was discharged in 1863 because of medical problems. He received his medical degree from Harvard University in 1868. He practiced in various areas before he accepted the position in Royalston Center in 1875. He and his wife raised two children here. Mabel Winifred Adams married William Burr in 1902 and lived in Rochester NY. Among her many of her projects, she wrote poetry. Robert Winthrop Adams married Pauline Whitney of Ashburnham and had two children. Dr. Adams was a descendant of John Adams and John Quincy Adams, and at his death, he was the oldest alumni of Amherst college at that time. He wrote an “Epic Poem on the War of the Rebellion.”

The Adams Family home: When you visit the museum you will find documents of Dr. Adams: medical items, writings of his daughter, and Civil War items. Many other interesting items can be found as well.

We are still looking for people who will answer our call to give us quotes on the ceiling and fence repairs. Thanks for your consideration.

Thank you to Mr. Gerald Wilson and Mr. Richard Wilson for their donations in memory of their mother who attended school here from 1915-1922.

I would like to become a member of the Royalston Historical Society Inc.

Enclosed are 2021 dues of $25.00

I would also like to contribute to the Building Restoration Fund with a tax deductible donation of ____________

Name:
Address:
Email:

Checks payable to the Royalston Historical Society may be mailed to PO Box 23, Royalston MA 01368 or deposited in donation box at School House #1

March was officially maple month in Massachusetts and Royalston’s LeRay family got a proclamation signed by the governor to prove it. The deputy commissioner of the state Department of Agricultural Resources, Ashley Randle, as well as the chair of the Massachusetts Maple Producers Association came to their Brown Rd. sugar house to tap the 2021 official Massachusetts “first tree of the season” recently.

Obituary

Raleigh A. Harrington, 94, died peacefully Thursday morning, March 18, 2021 in Athol Memorial Hospital.

He was born in South Royalston on February 10, 1927, son of the late Arthur and Pearl (Fenner) Harrington. He grew up and worked on the family farm in Royalston and had been a resident of Gardner since 1964.

Raleigh had worked for many years as a sider at the Columbus Home Improvement. He had also worked many years ago on state highway projects. Raleigh enjoyed camping in Maine, spending time with family, family cookouts, making puzzles, gardening and bird watching.

A proud veteran, Raleigh served in both World War Two and the Korean War as a member of the United States Army. He was a member of Ovila Case #905 VFW, Gardner Post 129 American Legion, Fraternal Order of Eagles, Acadian Club, the former South Gardner Historical Society and Gardner Golden Agers.

His wife of 60 years, Martha A. (Kangas) Harrington, died in 2019. He leaves two sisters, Virginia Moore of South Royalston and Shirley Greenwood of Templeton and many nieces and nephews. He was predeceased by brothers and sisters, Edward Hawes, Glen Hawes, Kenneth Harrington, Howard Harrington, Goldie Harrington, Roger Harrington, Robert Harrington, Stanley Harrington and David Harrington.
Recipe of the month -
Here’s a favorite maple cookie recipe I adapted from one found many years ago inside the box of Land’o’ Lakes Butter. They’re delicious, and kinda cute; great for kid tea parties. They’re also fun for kids to make. I usually double the recipe so I can share!

Mary C. Barclay

Maple Snail Cookies
Original recipe from Land’o’ Lakes Butter
Pre-heat the oven to 350F. Cookie sheets do not need to be greased, but I use parchment
1 cup granulated sugar
1 cup butter, room temp.
1/3 cup pure Royalston maple syrup
½ tsp. maple extract
1 egg
3 cups all-purpose flour
½ tsp salt
Mini choco chips for eyes

Combine sugar and butter in mixer. Beat at medium speed, scraping bowl often, until contents are creamed. Add syrup and egg; continue beating until well-mixed. Add flour and salt, beating on low speed until well mixed. Shape dough into one-inch balls using floured hands. (Dough is soft. If too difficult to work, refrigerate for about 30 minutes.) Roll each ball into a 10” “rope.” Shape into a pinwheel shape, leaving one end uncurled to resemble the head of a snail. Place snails two inches apart on an ungreased cookie sheet. Place a chocolate chip as an eye on each snail. Bake 10-13 minutes, until lightly browned. You can also flatten the balls to about 1/8” thick, if you just want the cookies, not the “snails.” Once cooled, I sometimes make a thin maple glaze and lightly glaze the cookies, although they are just fine plain.

The Litter Picker
He sharpened his litter stick each morning on a grinding wheel. Packed yellow plastic bags into the orange truck, and drove down the litter-laced highway. Donning his florescence orange vest, sunglasses and thick canvas gloves he walked mile after mile. He stabbed beer cans, McDonald bags, coffee cups, thousands of cigarette packs and worthless lottery tickets. Tires, boards, hats, dirty diapers, all of mankind’s gifts to mother earth were bundled up and thrown into the back of the truck. People drove by all day. Some honked, some would wave, most never noticed. Most just kept throwing trash to the wind.

This is a poem for April 22nd National Earth day
Sharon A. Harmon

Townwide Roadside Trash Pick-up on Saturday, April 24, 8 a.m. to noon.
Choose a road. Pick up litter. Bring to the transfer station for free disposal and recycling.
Enjoy the results!
ARRSD

There is clamor for schools across Massachusetts to re-open quickly, but in fact, the ARRSD has been open for any student who chooses to attend ever since September. As the school year has progressed and there have been zero cases of Covid-19 spreading in our schools, more and more families have returned for in-person learning. At Royalston Community School nearly everyone is learning in the classroom now.

A collaboration with Heywood Hospital and the ARRSD has meant that all adults who work in the district have had an opportunity to get their first dose of the Covid-19 vaccination, and the second dose is coming shortly. High staff vaccination rates, combined with our engrained safety protocols, are keeping us safe so far. There has been no known spread through our schools.

Kindergarten and pre-school registration for 2021-22 is in full swing now. Visit any district school or the ARRSD website for the registration forms. Early enrollees are entered into a drawing for special prizes.

Scholarships Available

Royalston Academy Scholarships:
Deadline April 16, 2021

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, 2021.

Chet Hall Memorial Scholarship is open to those who attended ARRSD schools past and present. Applications are available with guidance counselors, the Library, or call Royalston Community School 978-249-2900. Deadline: April 16, 2021.

The 2021-2022 FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) Form is available now at https://studentaid.gov. This form is the basis for many public and private scholarship and student grant opportunities.

Monty Tech

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

The Annual Town Meeting will be asked to approve a total of $83,896 for our portion of Monty Tech’s FY’21-FY’22 budget, an increase of $265 from last year. Required Net School Spending is up 2.19%, and reflects the majority of the 2.69% increase in the total assessment.

Monty Tech’s enrollment this year was just 1,420 – a five-year low – and that’s directly a function of the Coronavirus Pandemic, and the fact student density was decreased in order to allow for greater distancing in both academic and voc-tech settings. Royalston currently has 12 students at Monty Tech, down one from the prior foundation enrollment number; there are four fewer school-aged attending children in all. Our quota is two freshmen seats, but Royalston students continue to earn quota seats not used by other communities, and made available to any in-District eighth grader.

As far as where each dollar goes, more than half (53.09%) goes for direct instruction, with another 11.38% going towards direct student services – well over 64 cents of each dollar is invested in our students. Maintenance on the half-century old+ main building, and various outbuildings that students have built to allow for more students and programs comes in at 12.02%. One of the smallest percentages – to their credit – is Monty Tech Administrations, which is less than four cents (3.86%) of each dollar.

On the revenue side, nearly 59% comes from State Aid, in the form of Chapter 70 funds (53.20%) and transportation funds (5.49%). Community contributions make up 38.74% of the revenue.

Not to be overlooked, are the hundreds of thousands of dollars the Administration brings in each year through competitive and allocation grants. The Annual Report shows last year saw nearly a million dollars ($978,827) in grants. The first infusion of COVID-19 funding and grants for this school year came in at $543,140 – more than half a million dollars. The latest Skills Capital Grant of $271,974 (bringing our total over multiple years to $1,779,686) helped upgrade the Automotive Technology program. A Safe & Supportive Schools grant of $10,000 is being used to improve the physical and emotional well-being of the Monty Tech family. A Career Technology Initiative Grant of $125,000 supports both high school and adult students with training that leads to immediate, well-compensated employment. Monty Tech will receive $651,823 in ESSER II (Elementary and Secondary School Relief) funds which will help allow for in-person education as the Pandemic continues. Donations in all amounts, in cash, and in-kind, come in throughout the year from individuals, groups, and businesses. Monies are raised by students and support groups to fund educational enhancement opportunities and scholarships for post-secondary training and education.

There may be administrators who do their jobs as well as those at Monty Tech, but I sincerely doubt there are any better public school administrators. These people see to it our students receive an outstanding education, and that our dollars are not wasted. It is a privilege to serve on the Monty Tech School Committee.

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Congratulations to Monty Tech senior Anthony Divoll who earned a gold medal in the local SkillsUSA “Collision Repair Technology” category, and moves on to the State competition!
What’s Happening at the Village School?

Rise Richardson, director

At the Village School on a Tuesday afternoon, the 5th-6th class is making truss bridges with popsicle sticks, talking about how the weight is spread out. In 3rd-4th, students are dabbing paint onto a circle, making a moon for their moon calendar. In 1st-2nd, children are excitedly making puppets for their upcoming puppet show, based on the stories they wrote. In kindergarten, the children are gathered around Martin and the board and talking about the months, and learning to recognize the months of the year by name on the board. Each child comes up and points out their birth month. It’s quintessential Village School, learning with hands, hearts and heads.

Its mud season! With the snow gone, and snow pants put to rest, playing in the woods and fields is even more fun. Later this month, each class will celebrate Biodiversity Day with outings to Lawrence Brook and the pond at Camp Caravan, counting species.

There are potential openings in preschool, kindergarten and 5th-6th for next fall, email rise@villageschoolma.org if you are interested. Visits are scheduled, with masks on and safe distancing.

April is Financial Literacy Month is raising “awareness about the importance of financial literacy, and the need for effective financial education.” Lots of resources for kids and families at www.jumpstart.org
**Garden Notes  March 22, 2021**

The gardening season unfolds at a snail’s pace. Actually, other than starting a few seeds indoors, it unfolds not at all. The sun, higher in the sky, and the temperatures, well into the 50’s, encourage me to make an effort, but the soil suggests otherwise. Uncovered beds are muddy and, just below the surface, frost persists. (We have yet to successfully extract a parsnip.) Thus, my garden ‘activity’ is limited to ambling through it and making mental notes of tasks to be undertaken as soon as the soil permits. I did discover that last month’s reportage in respect to the demise of the spinach and parsley was a bit premature. Some of each are beginning to green up. I picked a handful of spinach leaves, providing a touch of fresh green in our chicken soup, more for the symbolism than the substance and nutrition obtained. It was a celebration of sorts, the first of many we observe over the course of the growing season. First harvest of asparagus, first harvest of strawberries, first harvest of peas…you get the idea.

Sap runs for the first three weeks were sluggish; in the last few days, anything but. We are experiencing a running frenzy. Boiling occurs indoors, and, assuming a ratio of 35:1, thirty-four gallons of water must be driven off to obtain one gallon of syrup. The water does not miraculously disappear, rather it deposits itself on any flat surface, horizontal or vertical. Some might object to a kitchen sodden with moisture, but after a wintry of dry wood heat, it is a welcome (if temporary) adjustment.

Everything will be accomplished in hours, not days, hardly making a dent in my idleness. Grudgingly. I will turn my attention to the leaves and twigs and assorted detritus that have accumulated over winter. Make-work, until such time as the garden’s more pressing needs present themselves. I am ready.

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**Marbles**

These days, as I walk our road, I watch the season shift. For a while, snow remained on the roadside and forest floor. Yet in the matter of a day or two the forest snow has been replaced by patches of dark mud and the once mighty roadside banks are now narrow stretches of gritty snow. The road is striped with rivulets of snowmelt. I smell warm earth, cold air and fresh water. Spring has arrived.

All of this – the smell of spring, the melting snowbanks, the gritty puddles – brings images of the spring school yard of my New Hampshire childhood. In early April it would have been cold enough to wear our full winter gear on our walk to school. However, by lunch recess, spring’s fragile warmth was enough for us to burst onto the playground hatless with jackets unzipped and mittens stashed in pockets or, more likely, dropped and forgotten. The playground was a sea of mud so recess was consigned to the paved “hot top” near the kitchen. The game of the season: marbles.

There were two distinct groups of marble players: the older kids and us. The former was engrossed in an actual game of marbles, which involved a chalked circle, many marbles, and the expert flicking of “shooters”. Just watching this was too much for us, and we soon lost interest. So, we took our marbles, formed our own tight group, and improvised. Our “game” of marbles was much more cut-throat and competitive: each player simply dumped their stash of marbles on the ground and proceeded to size each other up.

Crouched in the grit of snow melt, we carefully assessed each other’s stash to see who had what. Our collections were a dazzle of colored glass orbs, some clear, some opaque swirls of browns and reds and some with the mysterious inner swirl of a cat’s eye. Our language was exotic as we spoke the marble code of puries, boulders, agates and peewees. We made carefully negotiated trades: two puries for a boulder, a large cat’s eye for two peewees. Friendships were on the wrong side of a good deal.

I became fiercely competitive in this non-game of marbles, coveting my friends’ collections. On my way home, my coat pocket clinking with glass on glass, I would stop at Mrs. Sweeney’s 5&10 and eye her offerings. The same amount of allowance would buy three boulders with glass on glass, I would stop at Mrs. Sweeney’s 5&10 and eye her offerings. The same amount of allowance would buy three boulders with glass on glass, I would stop at Mrs. Sweeney’s 5&10 and eye her offerings. The same amount of allowance would buy three boulders with glass on glass, I would stop at Mrs. Sweeney’s 5&10 and eye her offerings. The same amount of allowance would buy three boulders with glass on glass. The former was engrossed in an actual game of marbles, which involved a chalked circle, many marbles, and the expert flicking of “shooters”. Just watching this was too much for us, and we soon lost interest. So, we took our marbles, formed our own tight group, and improvised. Our “game” of marbles was much more cut-throat and competitive: each player simply dumped their stash of marbles on the ground and proceeded to size each other up.

Now I would hunt among my friends’ collections for a boulder, a large cat’s eye for two peewees. Friendships were on the wrong side of a good deal.

My new purchase would add a reassuring heft to my cloth marble bag. Once home, I would dump the entire collection on my bedspread and admire each marble’s bright color, its cool glass warming quickly in my hands, just like spring. Then I would ponder the next day’s trade potential. No chalked circles and flicking thumbs for us. Our game of marbles was serious business!

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Wildlife sightings:
Resident **Red Shouldered Hawks** were noisily harrassing migrating hawks just north of the Common on the last Saturday in March. Quite low in the sky, they were just above the trees circling, soaring and dive bombing all the while screeching ki-ree. A pair of **bald eagles** soared by a short time later. A **great blue heron** was spotted the same day.

**Peepers and salamanders** migrated in the warm rain of March 26 and now the wetlands are a frenzy of mating and lusty noises. Gelatinous pillows of eggs are stuck to the downed branches in the vernal pools.

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**First Congregational Church of Royalston Outreach**

**Marion’s Food Pantry:** If anyone is in need or knows of someone in need within the Royalston community please let us know. No one should be without food. We can deliver to you or you can come in to pick out what is needed.

**Weekly Meals:** We are also cooking meals and delivering them to anyone homebound, elderly, physically or medically challenged that could use a home cooked meal and some of God’s love.

For further information, please contact:
Debbie Conrad (978)895-3505
Fred Hodgeman (978)894-4996
Wendell Kathan (978)939-3990