Calendar of Events

**June 10** Thursday  
3:54 a.m.  **New Strawberry moon**

**June 13** Sunday  
1:00-4:00 pm  **Open Mic** at the Gazebo in South Royalston with the Williams Brothers Band

**June 20** Sunday  **Father’s Day**  
11:31 p.m.  **Summer Solstice** (The sun is directly over the Tropic of Cancer, ushering in official summer).

**Father’s Day is the unofficial end of black fly season.**

Ahhhh. It’s the black fly season. I think I have developed a strategy for dealing with them. A while ago I was lying on my back in the woods with about a million black flies swarming around my face. I noticed that whenever I raised my knees, the flies swarmed around my knees. Knees down, flies back to my face. Aha. A theory. Do the flies seek out the highest point of a target? I stood up, raised my hat about a foot or more above my head and most of the flies went there. I sometimes used a small pole to hold my hat above my head. Not perfect, but better than playing breakfast host to the nation of black flies. - Robert Cromwell

**June 21** Monday  
**The Royalston Shakespeare Company 2021 season begins.** Sponsored by the Friends of the Phinehas S. Newton Library. Recruiting actors and stage hands. Royalston Center from June 21 - July 2 or 3. All kids from ages 8-18 are welcome as are adult volunteers of all ages. Information, contact Grace: belgra3@gmail.com or 617.413.7145

**June 24** Thursday  
11:40 a.m.  **Full Strawberry Moon**

**June 26** Saturday  
10 a.m.  **Annual Town Meeting** - either in Town Hall or on the Common outdoors.

**June 27** Sunday  
1:00-4:00 pm  **Open Mic** at Bullock Park behind the Post Office featuring Space Bar.

Red Fox
*Photographed in Northern Worcester County 05-2021, Elisabeth Cassinari*

Tired Mama. Curled up on a sun warmed stone wall. Her gaze on her kits in the field beyond who stumble and hop in their exploration of the world beyond the den. She shifts her gaze. For just a moment. Staring directly into my lens. Somehow conveying a sense of trust as I sat for nearly two hours, both delighted and awed, watching this beautiful fox family.
Select Board Notes
Christine Long, clerk, Royalston Select Board

Venue of Annual Town Meeting Still Undecided: We said last month that ATM would again be under the big top. But because of Governor Charlie Baker’s anticipated relaxation of COVID-19 rules, we are considering using the upstairs hall at Town Hall. For one thing, we would save the rental fee for the tent, and for another, this venue would allow residents of all mobilities to enjoy our beautiful elevator and upper hall. We’ll announce the final decision on the town website and Facebook page, but when you come to town, you’ll know: If there’s a tent, come on in; if not, head upstairs. (Go to the back door if you want to use the elevator.)

Annual town will convene on Saturday, June 26 at 10 am. See the questionnaire elsewhere in this newsletter that seeks your comment on whether we should move the annual meeting from May to June permanently.

Money Articles: The majority of the warrant deals with financial issues. With a great deal of work by the departments, the operating budget of $2.5 million has once again been balanced and can be funded primarily by what we can raise and appropriate plus an infusion of free cash. We did manage to budget a two percent raise for all our employees – last year there were no raises.

Our five multi-year obligations (four vehicles and the high school Accelerated Repair Program) total $92,000 and will be paid through free cash.

For the first time in a long time, we do not need to tap the Stabilization Fund to pay for excess snow-and-ice expenses, and in fact we can replenish it a bit with the rest of our free cash and, on the recommendation of the Capital Planning Committee, about $1,800 in money left over from a few former articles.

Community Preservation Articles: The Community Preservation Committee will recommend four articles, one the routine article that “deposits” the incoming funds and three spending articles: $6,000 for the restoration of the Town Hall kitchen door and its rotting underlying sill; $5,500 for Phase II of the south village gazebo work; and $9,500 to purchase the land on which Cloutier’s Pete and Henry’s stood. The latter will extend the little park on the west side of Rte. 68 and possibly become the eventual home of a toilet facility.

Looking Ahead: The future is still worrisome. The restraint we asked of departments for two years in a row means that certain issues they have put off could become more troubling. Each year the state insists we pay an even larger share of the Athol-Royalston Regional School District budget—and that budget goes up more than the 2½ percent we can raise in new money each year. Our assessment for the coming year is up a whopping 25%. We have not purchased any new vehicles last year or this, and now our fleet is another year older. We cleaned out the Capital Stabilization Fund last year, and this year we cannot replenish it.

Both the Select Board and the Building Committee want to plumb public opinion about Whitney and possibly the broader village. To this end, we plan to hold an open forum sometime this summer and hope that residents from all parts of town attend. Watch the town website or Facebook page for the date in case we haven’t determined it by the deadline for the next newsletter.

Board of Health
Phil Leger, chair person

Governor Baker recently announced he is lifting most Covid restrictions effective May 29th. There will still be restrictions for healthcare facilities and public transportation, airplanes, and rideshares for masking etc.

Unvaccinated folks are to still mask inside and social distance etc. However, there is no scarlet letter on unvaccinated people. If you are still unsure of receiving the Covid vaccination, we suggest you speak to your primary care physician concerning your risks etc. There is no magic here. Vaccinations are why we can enter this new normal. Vaccines are readily available from local pharmacies and local clinics are still being held. Walk ins are now being accepted at many clinics. We would like to thank all the essential workers who are still doing the work day in and day out. And a big shout out to all the local volunteers such as the Wachusett Medical Reserve Corps that helped staff the many clinics held in our area. And we would like to thank everyone who went out and received the vaccine.

No decision was made at the most recent BOH meeting concerning reopening the Reusable Shed. Covid restrictions aside, the main discussion is centering around the actual cost of reopening. Since we do end up with junk that needs to be thrown away on a regular basis, and we have to police the area, is it worth the time and money? Still time to send an email as to why or why not reopen.

A reminder that new windshield stickers are now available at RRATS and are due July 1, 2021. The sticker fee helps pay for recycling transportation and processing cost etc. Don’t be a freeloader! Get your new 2021-2022 before the due date.

Ticks, ticks, and more ticks are being reported in our area. Mosquitoes are out too. Protect yourself and pets when outside.

FCC Emergency Broadband Benefit Program

The FCC EBB (Emergency Broadband Benefit) Program began mid-May, and recently announced applications are out for a one-time discount of $100 for a laptop, tablet, or desktop computer, and $50/month off of monthly internet access charges for people already receiving government assistance. The $3.2 billion is part of a much larger, $1.9 trillion pandemic relief package, designed to ensure internet access equity. Overseen by the Federal Communications Commission, the program ends either when the fund runs out of money, or six months following the end of the COVID-19 health emergency, as declared by the Dept. of Health & Human Services (whichever is sooner). Eligibility requirements are outlined at https://getemergencybroadband.org or by contacting the program at 833-511-0311. Most service carriers have links to the programs, which can also include mobile phones, and mobile “hotspots;” carrier restrictions may apply.
**South Village Revitalization News**

Hello Royalston neighbors,

Have you noticed the expanded views of the river and bridge? River Projects Chair Todd Neale thanks volunteers who helped on the River Work Day on May 15 to spiff up the Village.

If there were ever two ladies with “emerald thumbs”, they are Maureen Blasco and Rose Lawrence, who led a group of volunteers on Planting Day on May 22nd. Thank you so much to Cathy Offutt for her generous donation of edging and to Maureen, who brought a truck load of pea stone. We also received many donations of plants.

Progress on the gazebo moves along: Gazebo Committee Chair Linda Alger and member Roland Hamel are coordinating with the DPW for the relocation of the flagpole, benches and bushes, which were moved during the construction of the gazebo. Robert Fairchild has completed many hours of electrical work in preparation for the summer Open Mics sponsored by the Royalston Arts Council. The ones in South Royalston will be on the second Sundays and the ones at Bullock Park will be on the fourth Sundays of June, July and August from 1:00-4:00 p.m. Please bring your lawn chairs and enjoy some great music by local musicians!

Also this month, Tom Kellner and Larry Trask painted the gazebo posts and flower boxes, and Dan Monette will be putting up the running trim and brackets. So many people have been pitching in to revitalize the Village for all to enjoy! If you would like to be on our mailing list to learn of volunteer opportunities on future projects, email RoyalstonSouthVillage@yahoo.com.

Reminder: Please come to the Annual Town Meeting on Saturday, June 26, to support two proposals from the RSVR that were approved by the Community Preservation Committee that will improve the South Village. These proposals have the support of the SelectBoard. The first proposal is to recommend that the Town purchase the site of the former Cloutiers Pete and Henry’s Restaurant (the intent is to eventually develop restroom facilities since there is sewer and water in place and possibly a playground). The second proposal is requesting funding for railings for the gazebo which were not included in the engineering plan of last year’s gazebo grant.

RSVR Steering Committee -- Janice Trask (Chair), Nancy Monette (Vice Chair), Ruth Suyenaga (Secretary), Rose Lawrence (Treasurer), Linda Alger, Marlene Jarvenpaa, Mark Shoul, Marie Mello, Todd Neale and Alice Leonard. The Royalston South Village Revitalization (RSVR) Group is a group of residents from all parts of Royalston whose mission is to make the South Village a vibrant gathering place for the whole town to enjoy while building community and having fun in the process.

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*Rose Lawrence organized the Planting Day on May 22. Volunteers worked on the gazebo beds, the fire station and the riverside.*  
*Rene Lake-Gagliardi brought her trusty weed whacker to demolish all of the knotweed by the King Street Bridge at the River Work Day. Dickie Lawrence also worked to beautify the riverside.*
Donations to the Friends - Thank you!
Deane Marchbein
Alyce Mayo

Thank you
Ernie LeBlanc for leading the “More than a Bird” guided walk.
Joe Liebman for help setting up ‘dishy’ and working out our routers
Patti Stanko and Maureen Blasco for organizing books for the sale

Approaching Normalcy
Beginning Thursday June 3 the library will resume evening hours so that we will be open Mondays and Thursdays from 1:00-5:00 and 6:30-8:30. Monday morning hours will not resume until July as we work towards reworking the seating and layout for best use. This is an exciting time for all of us who were overjoyed to begin opening and this will reopen even more as the back stacks will also be available for browsing. State guidelines and Royalston Board of Health and Select Board recommendations will be followed.

Tails and Tales Summer Reading Programs

- After more than a year of isolation we are ready for some fun programs. This year there will be programs on Mondays at 10:00 a.m. starting on July 12 through August 2 for preschoolers and on Thursdays at 1:30 for older kids from July 8 through July 29.

Preschool Programs will be:

July 12 – Tales with Tails - Storyteller Norah Dooley will enchant young children with some wild tales about tails.

July 19 – Tales and Tools - Leane Limoges brings tools and projects to help preschoolers learn how to use tools and to create something magical and maybe with a tail!

July 26 – Make your own Tail - Brooke Coleman will help preschoolers create a tail to create a tale.

August 2 – Dog Tails - Learn about companion dogs in a program led by x. You will learn how these dogs are trained to tail and sometimes lead by the tail.

Older Kid’s Programs

July 8 – Wild Tails Create Wild Tales – Norah Dooley will have us at the edge of our seats with wild tales about ‘things’ with wild tails.

July 15 – The Caterpillar Lab – From Swallowtails to the ‘tails’ of hornworms participants will get to explore the wonderful varied world of caterpillars with experts from the Caterpillar Lab and their multitude of caterpillars and all the tales that go with them.

July 22 – The Endless Tail – Create a giant hula hoop and pretend you are a dog chasing your tail as you whirl around the Library yard.

July 29 – Sheep Herding Dogs with Kate Collins

New Library Patron

Delighted parents Jacob Morris-Siegel and Heather Harris welcomed Lilly Lynn Siegel born April 29. She weighed in at 7 pounds 11 ounces and was 21” long. Proud grandparents are Kathy Morris and Larry Siegel of town and Charlie Harris of Millbury and Deborah Green of Florida.

High Speed Internet at the Library Now

Yes, really. The Library applied for Starlink, the satellite internet from Space X, and recently received notification that we could order the dish and be connected. “Dishy” arrived and Joe Liebman offered to help set it up for us, which he did. We’ve connected it to the mesh router to extend the range of the signal. It’s been a long time coming and we’ll see how it serves us until the Town is wired.

Story Trails Wend Their Way

Currently Sharon Harmon’s book, Horatio Mortimer Loved Music, melodically wends its way around the garden and back of the Library for everyone to enjoy and beginning on June 11 Claire Green’s The Little Pine Tree will be there to delight those ambling around the building.

More Story Boards Coming

Thanks to Gordon Morrison we will be implementing our Story Board Learning Walks with some drawing lessons and Gordon’s book Oak Tree that follows one tree and the habitat it provides throughout the year. You will be able to pick up the drawing lesson, sketch book, and drawing pencil at the library near the start of the Learning Walk. 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.

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Some of the new materials at your library

**Adult Fiction**
- Abrams, Stacey: While Justice Sleeps
- Andrews, Mary Kay: The Newcomer
- Baldacci, David: A Gambling Man
- Bohjalian, Chris: Hour of the Witch
- Cameron, W. Bruce: A Dog’s Courage
- Cusk, Rachel: Second Place
- Dave, Laura: The Last Thing he Told Me
- Garvin, Eileen: The Music of Bees
- Goldberg, Lee: Lost Hills
- Grisham, John: Sooley
- Henry, Emily: People We Meet on Vacation
- Hunter, Stephen: Basil’s War
- Jenoff, Pam: The Woman with the Blue Star
- Korelitz, Jean: The Plot
- Kubica, Mary: Local Woman Missing
- Lahiri, Jhumpa: Whereabouts
- Monroe, Mary Alice: The Soulmate Equation
- Munier, Paula: The Summer of Lost and Found
- Patterson, James: The Hiding Place
- Shipstead, Maggie: 21st Birthday
- Steel, Danielle: Great Circle
- Sutanto, Jesse: Finding Ashley
- Swann, Stacey: Olympus, TX

**Adult Non-Fiction**
- Adichie, C.: Massachusetts Trail Guide
- Brown, Daniel:Notes of Grief
- Ellsworth, Scott: Facing the Mountain
- Gladwell, Malcolm: The Ground Breaking
- Green, John: The Bomber Mafia
- Harjo, Joy: The Anthropocene Reviewed
- Words
  - Knoll, Andrew: A Brief History of Earth
  - Kushner, Rachel: The Hard Crowd
  - Lanham, J. Drew: Sparrow Envy
  - Lewis, Michael: The Premonition
  - O’Reilly, Bill: Killing the Mob
  - Savage, Ellena: Blueberries
  - Van Dusen, Barry: Finding Sanctuary

**Children’s Fiction**
- Aveyard, Victoria: Realm Breaker
- Abery, Julie: Fred Gets Dressed
- Bruel, Nick: Bedtime for Bad Kitty
- Dewdney, Anna: Llama Llama Meets the Babysitter
- Floca, Brian: Keeping the City Going
- Gibbs, Stuart: Bear Bottom
- Higgins, Ryan: The Bruce Swap
- Kang, Anna: Hudson and Tallulah Take Sides
- Kelly, Erin: Maybe Maybe Marisol Rainey
- Pringle, Laurence: The Secret Life of the Sloth
- Tsurumi, Andrea: I’m On It!
- West, Tracey: Heat of the Lava Dragon

**Children’s Nonfiction**
- Aber, Julie: Sakamato’s Swim Club
- Aston, Dianna: A Seed is Sleepy
- Pizzoli, Greg: Baloney and Friends 2
- Stewart, Melissa: Summertime Sleepers

**Audiobooks**
- Bohjalian, Chris: Hour of the Witch
- Grisham, John: Sooley
- Koontz, Dean: Devoted

**DVDs:**
- The Father, The Marksman, Traces Season 1, The Sounds, Tenet (DVD & Bluray), and Wild Mountain Thyme

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**Library Garden**
It was a number of years ago that Nathan Melbourne installed a garden at the Library for his Eagle Scout project. That beginning has slowly evolved every year. The plants have flourished and others added so that today it has grown into a lovely space to rest, relax, read, contemplate and enjoy. It’s been the site of many a program and a refuge on a warm day and if you haven’t walked back there you can see how lovely it is (thanks to the work of Sonja Vaccari and Barbara Richardson this spring).

**Thanks to Ann Verrelli**
For nearly 16 years, Ann Verrelli has been an invisible force within the Library. Walking into the building after Ann has cleaned has been a joy. It is amazing what a fantastic job she can do in just two hours. She’ll find books squirreled away in dark recesses, pick everything up and dust under it – no matter how cluttered or full of books an area is. The floors gleam and the carpets look new. And she has made suggestions that have benefited us all. But she decided she wants to retire. We (read I) have been dragging our (my) feet in finding a replacement, just hoping she’d decide to stay on, but the time has come and it is with great sadness that we say goodbye to her. She has been a joy to work with, stopping by to fill me in on things she’s noticed, and I, all the staff, and trustees, and the patrons, who have never seen her but notice her work, will be saddened. Stepping in to fill her shoes, we have hired Mike Palmetier from town. Welcome Mike! And we hope for a long tenure for you as well. And Ann, I am glad we’ll still see you when you come in to borrow items.
Historical Society News
Peter Kranlik, president

Seems as winter has finally left us. The days are getting warmer, so we will be opening the museum for the FIRST and THIRD weekends. If the “Open” flag is flying, do stop in and browse.

One of the older families that resided in town for over two hundred years was the Leathe family that had their homestead on Winchendon Rd. The last member of the family was Gladys, wife of John Leathe. She sold the family farm after the death of her husband and moved to the house next door, which had been her mother-in-law’s house. The first member of the family to move to Royalston was Benjamin Leathe, who arrived in the mid 1760s. When I settled near the Leathe farm, the barn was still across the road from the house, but eventually, when is was put up for anyone to take. When no responders came forward, it was bulldozed under. The land is now owned by the state. If you take a “Sunday” drive through town, you will see many old homes that have no barns. It is a loss.

On May 6th, the Historical Society had visitors from Concord, Vermont from an area called Royalston Corners. This area of Concord got the name due to the fact that residents from Royalston, Mass. settled this area of Vermont beginning in 1795. Mr. & Mrs. David Kurz live in the old school house (c.1874) which is the only structure left along with the cemetery which is being “spruced up”. Among those buried there are some members of the Woodbury Family, who had moved from here. The Kurzs found our town very beautiful and kept saying so.

Remember: We need bids on the fence (contact Steve Chase - 249-0358) and from persons who can do plastering work on the second floor ceiling.

Royalston Roadside Cleanup -
APRIL 24, 2021, Checkpoint Charlie Scribner

The weather was perfect for the 2021 Royalston Roadside Clean Up. The temperature warmed up to 50 Deg., with a light breeze to take care of black flies. For 30 years, the people of Royalston have come together on the last Saturday in April to perform a public service. Volunteers gather at Bullock Park in the morning to get trash bags and be assigned a road to clean roadside litter. Most people start in their own neighborhoods and work to clean up trash. People team up with families and friends to take on road assignments. Trash is sorted and taken to the transfer station. Tony and Steve assist with disposal of materials. At 12:00 Charlie fires up the grill and serves hotdogs and water to volunteers.

The following people helped with the 2021 cleanup:
Thibodeau Family – parts of Winchendon Road
Bosse Family – North East Fitzwilliam Road, Brown Road
Maureen Blasco – Parts of Norcross Rd, Winchendon Rd.
Dave Williams – Rt. 68, Falls Rd.
Dan Monett and Karol Zub – Norcross Rd., Winchendon Rd.
Gordon M. and Glen – North East Fitzwilliam Rd, Athol Rd.
Checkpoint Charlie – Rt. 68, Laurel Lake Rd. If you find a Royalston Roadside Clean up sign – please return to Charlie.

Thanks to all the volunteers who help keep Royalston beautiful. Thanks to town of Royalston for disposal of collected trash.

Congratulations and Good News

Graduates (and graduates’ families)- You’ve worked for this, so celebrate. Let us know of your accomplishments here at the RCN! No such thing as too late.

Anthony Divoll’s family is proud to announce his graduation from Monty Tech. Anthony was in the auto body shop and after winning the regional competition, took second place in the state level of Skills USA in the 2021 auto body competition. He has also achieved the rank of Eagle Scout through Troop 8 in Athol.

Tobey Rose Chase will receive her MA in environmental science and policy from Clark University this June. A Trainor Scholar, her undergraduate degree was in geography and environmental studies with a concentration in GIS satellite mapping. Since graduating high school a few years ago, Tobey has facilitated a mentor program for middle school girls in Worcester, conducted original research around the effects of fences on elephants in a game reserve in South Africa, and has studied/ hiked/ traveled/ worked on five continents. Her parents, Beth Gospodarek and Stephen Chase, are very proud.

Jessica (Putney) Schanz recently graduated from Antioch University New England, earning a Master of Science in Environmental Studies, with a concentration in Environmental Education. The Monty Tech High School grad holds a Certificate of Occupation Proficiency in welding and metal fabrication. She served in the U.S. Army from 2010-2014, and honorably discharged from active duty at the rank of Sergeant. She began her post-secondary studies at Mount Wachusett Community College, transferring to Franklin Pierce University, where she completed a Bachelor of Arts in Environmental Studies and certificate in Sustainability before going on to Antioch. Jess is the daughter of Jim and Brenda (Divoll) Putney, and granddaughter of David and Shirley Putney, and John and Helen Divoll, all of Royalston. She lives on Loomis Road with her husband, Eric, and their three-year-old son, Gunnar, and is the Campground and Engagement Manager for the Trustees of Reservations, responsible for operations at Royalston’s Tully Lake Campground, the Berkshires properties of Notchview in Windsor and Field Farm in Williamstown, and at Rocky Woods in the Metro-West Town of Medfield.
Obituaries
Jon Johnson, 66, of Jarvenpaa Road, died early Wednesday morning, May 19, 2021 at home following an illness, surrounded by loved ones.

Born in Gardner on September 15, 1954, he was the son of the late Andrew C. and Jeanne M. (Oliver) Johnson and graduated from Narrangansett Regional School in Templeton with the Class of 1973.

On October 20, 1973, Jon married Louise M. (Keirn) and enjoyed 34 years together until her death on November 11, 2007.

Jon had been the farm manager at the Templeton Developmental Center for many years, retiring in 2012.

Jon was a huge car buff and loved his ’02 Camaro, ‘77 Vette and a Gremlin. He also had a Harley Davidson motorcycle, two snowmobiles and two four wheelers. Jon also enjoyed buying and selling at flea markets, especially vintage Tonka toys. His cats were his pride and joy, as was caring for his yard. A movie buff, Jon enjoyed Oscar parties with his family every year. Jon was a free spirit and loved traveling, whether country back roads or tourist spots, including a trip to New Orleans for Mardi Gras.

Jon is survived by his son, Jacob “Jake” Johnson and his wife, Jessica, of Topsfield; a grandson, Cody Johnson, of Topsfield; his girlfriend, Deb Kierstead of Orange; and numerous cousins.

Interment is in the North New Salem Cemetery, New Salem.
Donations in Jon’s memory are suggested to the Town of Athol, memo- NQ Animal Shelter, 280 Exchange Street, Athol, MA 01331.

Word has been received of the May 12, 2021 passing of George H. Bodman, 84, of Kingwood, TX, Avalon, NJ, and Royalston. He is survived by his wife of 54 years, Janet, and son John. He will be greatly missed by those of us who had the opportunity to know him, and experience his generosity. No services are planned.

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

Recipe of the Month
Hello Royalston Neighbors –
We moved here on July 12th, 2020. We are the Thibodeaux’s. Jason, Tiffany, Scarlet (16) and Cain (12). Jason grew up in Brookfield, MA and Tiffany grew up in the South Shore of Boston, but we had been living in Blackstone, MA for the past 9 years for work reasons, and had desperately wanted to escape to a country setting for many years now. We finally got our wish and are so tickled to be at 69 Winchendon Rd., in an absolutely amazing setting and a very beautiful town. We are grateful to be here. We really hope to meet more people and friends for our kids when everyone feels safer. The kids and us are enjoying having the room to have chickens and guinea fowl, hiking in the woods, and all of the fresh air! Hope to get some bees next year. We have a goal of planting at least 50 assorted berry bushes before our one-year anniversary in Royalston, and so far we are more than half way there! Here is our recipe for:

Small Batch Pectin-Free Bumbleberry Jam
- Makes 4-8 oz. jars
3 pounds of mixed berries: raspberries, blackberries, strawberries and blueberries
3 cups sugar
3 Tablespoons Bottled Lemon Juice

Directions:
Large berries should be cut into half inch pieces. Mix together berries, sugar and lemon juice in a large stockpot and let sit for 2 hours. Crush berries with potato masher until most of the juices are released, while still leaving some berry chunks in the jam. Do not use an emulsion blender.

Cook on medium-high heat until it reaches a boil. Boil for 2 minutes at a good boil. Don’t worry about any foam on top; it will all get resorbed by the end. Turn down heat to a simmer for 20-25 minutes, or until temp reaches 215-220F, while stirring very frequently. Fill your jam jars and let cool to lukewarm before placing in fridge.

Will last for up to 3 weeks in fridge, give to friends or can and use up to 12 months later. As it cools, it will thicken up more. Will be at its thickest 1-2 days later. Tastes wonderful on your favorite toast or scone recipe, on ice cream, yogurt, etc. Hope you can try it and enjoy!

Republican Town Committee Formed
Christopher Ryan, Chairman, Western Massachusetts GOP Patriots PAC announces the new formation of a Republican Town Committee for the Town of Royalston, MA. Paperwork was filed with the Secretary of the Commonwealth, William Francis Galvin, Elections Division; and the Office of Campaign and Political Finance, Boston, Massachusetts.

The Chairperson of the new Royalston Republican Town Committee is Roberta Newman from Royalston. Roberta “Bobbie” Newman has been active in the WMA-GOP Patriots PAC, and will be actively growing the committee. The first Organizational Committee meeting will be scheduled soon. Anyone from Royalston that wants to join the Republican Town Committee (RTC) is encouraged to contact Bobbie Newman at Bobbi4U04@yahoo.com.
Royalston Artist Creates Large Mural for New Springfield Office Building

Royalston resident Gordon Morrison is shown in front of a large mural that he recently completed for Way Finders, Inc.’s new office building in Springfield.

Gordon is a nationally renowned artist, illustrator, and author. He is known for his attention to detail, his thorough research, and his love of nature and the environment. His work as the illustrator of Newcomb’s Wildflower Guide, the number one best seller in flower field guides, is universally known. He has also illustrated over thirty other nature books, including several Peterson Field Guides.

His passion has extended to inspiring children to learn about and respect the natural world, reflected in a series of five books: “Bald Eagle”, “Oak Tree”, “Pond”, “Nature in the Neighborhood”, and “A Drop of Water”. He has won several national awards for his nature writing and educational books.

The mural, which is approximately three feet high and twenty-eight feet in length, was commissioned by the non-profit housing agency in 2019. It depicts the uses of the property over the centuries, beginning with its native American population. One of the early European settlers in Springfield was Miles Morgan who built his home on the site. Morgan, who was elected seven times as a Springfield Selectman, was an ancestor of J.P. Morgan.

Subsequently, the land became a railroad yard with a number of railroad stations over the years, followed by a several manufacturing uses. Most recently, it was the site of the Peter Pan Bus company, now located at the City’s renovated Union Station across the street. An adjacent hotel which is still standing hosted many famous people, including Mary Todd Lincoln who passed across the street. An adjacent hotel which is still standing hosted many famous people, including Mary Todd Lincoln who passed across the street.

Peter Gagliardi, former CEO at Way Finders who commissioned the mural, noted that Gordon did an extraordinary job of historical research to inform his work, ensuring accuracy in the depictions of buildings from the past as well as acknowledging historic events. According to Gagliardi, “Gordon’s research skills and attention to detail, evident in his local work, resulted in the invitation to create the mural. We are all very fortunate to have such a talented friend and neighbor.”

What’s Happening at the Village School?

Rise Richardson, director

Summer Programs are back at the Village School for ages 4-10 led by Sofie Vieira and Lily Thompson

Mornings from 9:00 to 1:00. Choose your week(s) for outdoor fun, including art, crafts, nature walks, scavenger hunts, singing, yoga, water play, fort building, fairy houses and lots of free play. It’s an outdoor program, masks are not required outside.

Go to https://www.villageplayschoolma.org/programs/summer/ to see the full Summer Program brochure.

Openings in the Village School for Fall 2021

There are potential openings in preschool, kindergarten and 5th grade. Call the school for more information asap at 978 249 3505.

What’s happening:

With mask wearing lifted outdoors, the children are so happy to play together, with mixed ages and breathing easy. Congratulations to the 5th-6th class on writing and performing an engaging and delightful play, Quarrel for the Crown, based on their year-long study of the Middle Ages. The video will be shown on AOTV. K-6th classes are canoeing at Tully Lake. The Kindergarten, 1st-2nd and 3rd-4th classes finish the year with Theme Share Celebrations, including singing, playing recorder and sharing their writing. On Wednesday June 9, the 5th-6th class shares their art work portfolios at 6:15, followed by graduation at 7:00 p.m.

Monty Tech

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

Monty Tech Summer Learning Opportunities

It’s been an extraordinarily difficult year for everyone, so Monty Tech is providing no-cost, summer academic programs to help incoming and current Monty Tech students transition back to full-time, in-person learning. A number of incoming freshmen will be invited to a “Rising Freshmen Academy,” an academic and technology enrichment program, from June 21-July 2. Morning and afternoon sessions of “Summer School 2021” will provide all students with opportunities for credit recovery. The “Monty Tech Boost Camp” offers academic enrichment programs to help students in grades 10, 11, and 12 regain any learning losses that resulted from the pandemic. Some programs provide transportation and lunch. www.montytech.net has links to all programs and registration forms; call 978-345-9200 if you need additional information.

Ever thought about being a School Committee Rep?

As I advised the Select Board last year, I plan to step down at the end of my current four-year appointment (June 30, 2022) as Royalston’s representative on the Monty Tech School Committee. I will have served a total of 23 years, and can honestly say, I consider every year well-worth my time. A lot has been accomplished during those years – Monty Tech is no longer your grandfather’s voc-tech – and I would like to see the accomplishments continue.

Further details about the responsibilities and benefits of serving on the Monty Tech School Board will be in the next newsletter. If you would like information sooner, please call. Prospective school com members are welcome to “shadow” me at any/all meetings, where you can meet the 21 other members (there are 18 communities in our District), administrators (most attend most school com meetings), tour the facilities (wear good walking shoes), and in general, get a feel for the expectations. I want to ensure my successor will be someone who will enjoy the commitment as much as I have...
Classifieds

Services Available

Royalston Dog Walker - I let the dogs out. Call or text 978-340-210


Horse Help! You and your horse may find an extra pair of hands, another pair of eyes & experience useful. I can assist at your horse’s home space or my farm, working with your equipment or mine. Book by the day. Call or text Suzanne: (978) 424-8580.

2 matted horse stalls available; round pen, arena, generous turn-out, 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.

Wildlife woodcarvings and hand-painted ornaments by Laurie Truehart. Three-dimensional, life-like carvings of various animals and habitat, and glass bulbs (singles or sets) featuring wild birds, ducks, other animals available. In-stock, or custom-designs available. Contact by Facebook messenger or text 978-939-3962.

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.

ARRSD calendar

June 4  Athol High School graduation 7 pm
June 15  8th grade step up
June 17  Last day of school ARRSD (half day)

In a fog?

How to prevent your eyeglasses from fogging when you are wearing a mask. Usually, you place your glasses on the skin of your nose with the mask reaching just below the glasses. Instead, move the mask a little up the nose and place the glasses on the top part of the mask. No more fogging! Try it.

Bob Cromwell
And a long haul it's been. I am not done hauling.

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might contact me.

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ing with the varmints. Harvest will continue to be modest,

planting and weeding and picking off the bugs and deal

other. Our Northern Spy apple has a ‘wingspan’ of fifty

provide fruit. Set forty feet apart, they now jostle one an

image them developing into trees, let alone trees that would

sticks wrapped and delivered. It was an article of faith to

We set out fruit trees that very first summer as well. Back

temperatures more appropriate for mid-June than mid-May.

Once again, I jumped in: some beans, squash, cucumbers,

and corn were planted, weeks earlier than normal. I even

set out some tomatoes. All are frost-sensitive; though, with

the temperatures currently in the 80s, it is inconceivable to

to me that a frost might be forthcoming. With the exception

of the beets, those early April planting did just fine. True,

do the potatoes seemingly took forever to appear but appear they did.

No sooner had they arrived than the potato beetles ar

rived as well, an early reminder of why potatoes are such a

high-maintenance crop. On the subject of insects, the black

flies are more than plentiful. Individually transplanting six

hundred or so onions-leeks- shallots under a cloud of them

is not my notion of a good time. At least the black flies are

visible; I’m not aware of the ticks until I’m back in the

house and feeling them crawling about my body. Potato


And to think I gave up my desk job for this.

Garden Notes

May 22, 2021

After that brief flurry of activity in early April, the garden

settled back into a wait-it-out phase, a phase that ended

with the onset of seriously warm weather a week or so ago,

temperatures more appropriate for mid-June than mid-May.

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And to think I gave up my desk job for this.

We are in the midst of asparagus season and it appears it

will be one of the finest ever, a good time to wax poetic over asparagus. Fifty crowns were

planted in our first summer in Royalston. Life expectancy was estimated to be fifteen to twenty

years. In this, our forty-fifth year, one-quarter of them continue to thrive. The new growth is

referred to as a shoot and shoot it does. Three days after emergence it will have ‘shot’ to an

eight-inch spear. No other garden vegetable

provides a crop as quickly.

We set out fruit trees that very first summer as well. Back

then it was a mail-order exercise, a dozen or so three-foot

sticks wrapped and delivered. It was an article of faith to

image them developing into trees, let alone trees that would

provide fruit. Set forty feet apart, they now jostle one an-

other. Our Northern Spy apple has a ‘wingspan’ of fifty

feet. And continues to grow.

Daily activities will accelerate in June. Planting and trans-

planting and weeding and picking off the bugs and deal-

ing with the varmints. Harvest will continue to be modest,

though the spinach/scallion salad bowl will be supplement-

ed with lettuce and radishes. And, hurrah, strawberries by

mid-month.

Apparently, I’ve officially ‘retired’ from the farmers’ mar-

ket. Collateral damage from you-know-what. Current plans

are to peddle product from home, so interested households

might contact me.

Clearly, at the outset (what with asparagus and tree plant-

ings), we determined we would be in this for the long haul.

And a long haul it’s been. I am not done hauling.

Larry Siegel

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Larry Siegel

Birdsong

It’s the time of year when I wake to birdsong. First it was the winter dwell-

ers – chickadees, titmice and jays – whose familiar calls had shifted to mating songs. Then, with the dawn coming earlier and earlier, the spring

migrants began to arrive. Their familiar songs told me old friends had re-
turned after a long time away. Now the mornings are filled with song but,

despite my best efforts, I cannot distinguish one from another. This lack of

knowledge seems inexcusable. These are, after all, my woodland neighbors

who sing-in the dawn. How could this whole community exist just outside

my window without me knowing who they are and what they’re up to? Get-

ting to know these birds was a commitment I was suddenly ready to make.

Birdsong was a backdrop to my childhood. Trailing after my grandfather

in his garden I learned to recognize the common calls of crow, chickadee and jay. In summer, our family’s after-supper rides included a stop near one

particular field where we listened for the whip-poor-will’s haunting call. A

robin’s song on a sultry summer afternoon was “a prayer for rain”, or so our

mother said. Despite this attention to birdsong, we were not a family that

worked to attract birds with feeders or birdbaths. I suspect that tending to

six small children was enough to keep our parents busy. The last thing they

needed was to take on the care of another whole species!

A lifetime has come and gone since those childhood days. Birds, like so

many other things, receded into the background of an otherwise full and

busy life. Now, with slower, quieter days, I am drawn to these backyard

visitors, curious about the lives behind their songs. So, this spring, with

early dawns and the trees still bare, I took my curiosity on the road.

On Friday mornings I rise at 5:30 to join a small but passionate group of

local birders. Their encyclopedic knowledge is impressive, but it is their

kind patience for the novice in their midst that keeps me coming back. When I hear a birdsong new to me, their advice is to “follow the bird” by

listening and watching. Binoculars at the ready, I scan the treetops, watch-

ing for what I hear. More often than not, my efforts are rewarded by a clear

view of a bird that is new to me: a rose-breasted grosbeak, a common yellow-

throat, a kingbird. If I am lucky, while still in my sights, the bird will

sing.

Sometimes the birds will stay a while, singing and singing. Other times they

are there and gone in a flash. At times I will witness the interaction between

two birds, and am learning the difference between attracting a mate and pro-

tecting a territory. These moments are small windows into each bird’s life, full of

mate-finding, nest-building and the relentless search for food. To witness

such moments in creatures whose lives are so wild and separate from mine

fills me with awe. The birds don’t care that our paths have crossed. But I am

changed. I may never learn to identify every bird whose song I hear. But I am

beginning to understand the importance of the life behind that song.

Deb D’Amico

Yellow Warbler

Photographed in Northern Worcester County 05-22-2021.

Elisabeth Cassini

He is a bold buttery yellow flicking from branch to branch and a sure sign that Spring is well under way. Stop and watch him. You might find him looking back at you with his little tar black eye and head tilted at a jaunty angle. His song is a high “Sweet Sweet” and you may see him in the tangled brambles that abound in our roadside wetlands.
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Wildlife sightings:
May 6 around 1:45 Dickie Lawrence saw a mama black bear and 2 cubs cross Dickley Rd. He was super excited. Also, we have seen a number of moose droppings around the property. Mark Poulon mentioned that he did see a moose by little church on Rt 68.

A healthy-looking red fox trotted down the Northeast Fitzwilliam Road field between the Barclays and Chase-Gospodareks houses about suppertime, May 19th. Shortly thereafter, he trotted back up the field, this time, with an equally healthy-looking squirrel in his mouth. The fox acknowledged Mary Barclay both directions – she was at the edge of the field but seemed unfazed by her presence.

The Royalston Community Newsletter
Friends of the Phinehas S. Newton Library
PO Box 133
Royalston MA 01368

Royalston Resident
Star Route 80
Royalston MA 01368

6 a.m. June 6th
9th annual Amanda Putney Memorial Horse Show
34 competitions in various classes
vendors, raffles, concessions
Proceeds help young equestrians with expenses associated with horse showing. To make donations for the raffles or tag sales, call Brenda Putney, 978-249-7787. Checks (made out to the MassQHYA) may be sent in c/o Brenda Putney; 185 N. Fitzwilliam Road; Royalston, MA 01368.