Calendar of Events

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

July is National Blueberry Month, celebrating the prolific fruit which grows wild along the roadsides and waterways of Royalston, thriving in our acid-y soil.

July 4
Independence Day

July 5
Aphelion – the moment during the year the Earth is at the farthest point from the sun, 94,510,886 distant.
Independence Day observed - Town offices, Post Office closed

July 8
1:30 p.m. Summer reading program at Library - Enchanted tales with storyteller Norah Dooley

July 9
9:17 p.m. New Buck Moon

July 11
1 p.m. Royalston Open Mic at the S. Village Gazebo

July 12
10 a.m. Pre-school summer reading program - Wild tales about tails with storyteller Norah Dooley

July 15
1:30 p.m. Caterpillar Lab at the library. Come see the complexity and beauty of our local caterpillars with this traveling exhibit.

July 19
10 a.m. Pre-school Summer Reading Program at the Library - Kids use carpentry tools with Leann Limoges.

July 20
Pre-dawn Delta Aquarid Meteor Shower. Watch the southern skies for a shooting star every five or six minutes. Given the full moon just two days away, it’ll take some concentration.

July 22
1:30 p.m. Make a giant hula hoop at the summer reading program at the library.

July 23
Friday
7 p.m. Royalston Historical Society annual meeting in the museum, Old School House #1 at the head of the Common. All welcome. Discuss local history, society events as well as museum improvements.
10:37 p.m. Full Buck Moon

July 25
Sunday
1 p.m. Royalston Open Mic at Bullock Park

July 26
Monday
10 a.m. Make your own tail and tale at the pre-school summer reading program at the Library with Brooke Coleman.

July 29
Thursday
1:30 p.m. Therapy dogs program at the Library. All ages invited to this summer reading program.

August is “Happiness Happens Month.”

July 29
Thursday
10 a.m. Sheep herding demonstration at the library with Kate Collins. All ages are welcome at this summer reading program.

August 6
Friday
6:15 Animal Adventures Program at the library. Get up close to lots of live animals. Ice Cream Truck!

August 8
Sunday
9:50 a.m. New Sturgeon Moon
1 p.m. Royalston Open Mic at the S. Village Gazebo

August 22
Sunday
8:02 a.m. Full Sturgeon Moon
1 p.m. Royalston Open Mic at Bullock Park

August 26
Thursday
Women’s Equality Day
Select Board Notes
Christine Long, clerk, Royalston Select Board
Annual Town Meeting under the Big Top. As we reported in June, we are once again able to meet our multi-year payment responsibilities and once again have a balanced, though bare-bones, budget.

We do anticipate a tidy end to Fiscal Year 2021 on June 30 and a smooth transition to Fiscal Year 2022 on July 1, but again as we reported last month, we’re also starting to worry about Fiscal Year 2023. Our fleet is aging, our buildings need serious work, some of our processes are getting more expensive, and some of our employees deserve more than the two percent raises we’re able to offer in the coming year. We need to meet these challenges to remain functional and competitive.

In June the Select Board approved the appointments of most employees and board and committee members for the coming year; continuity of government is assured.

Federal Funds Coming In. The Select Board has learned that the town will receive $382,000 from the Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery Fund, half this year and half next. The money can be used for any of seven listed purposes; the board will work with the town’s finance team in coming weeks to consider the best way to use these funds."

Royalston – and the Country – Opening Up. All of us are very happy to welcome the signs of recovery, including a return to live (if for now outdoor) special events like Open Mic. In fact, the Cultural Council is sponsoring six Open Mic performances this summer, three at Bullock Park and three in the new gazebo on the south common. All will feature food offerings from local businesses or nonprofits.

While attendees will certainly enjoy seeing the smiles on faces, anyone who is still unvaccinated is definitely cautioned to wear a mask. One of the troublesome new variants of COVID-19 is taking hold in Massachusetts – a worrying trend because this variant is more easily transmissible and often results in more serious illnesses. It’s been described as “COVID on steroids”.

The senior luncheon program will put away the paper bags and resume being live in the Town Hall dining room in July; the visiting nurse program will also resume. Town buildings are again open to the public, and board and committee meetings are again in-person events.

Sewer Commission Meets with Ratepayers. The Select Board, acting as the Sewer Commission since early 2020, met with ratepayers on June 16 for the official public hearing setting rates for the coming fiscal year. While sparsely attended, the meeting was helpful to both the board and attendees. The new rate will be $890 per unit (toilet); the board announced it will be exploring other rate options.

Hotspots to Lend
In mid-July the Library will have 10 T-mobile hotspots to lend to cardholders. We received a grant from the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners using American Rescue Plan Act funds administered by the Institute of Museum and Library Services for Hotspots in an ongoing effort to close the digital equity gap.

Board of Health
Phil Leger, chair person
The reusable shed will most likely reopen in July. Covid restrictions are lifted across MA. There will be some changes in order to limit the amount of junk we have to throw out at a cost to all of us. No furniture, electronics, books and magazines, broken or chipped items. If these items still have value, try Salvation Army, thrift stores or put a free sign in front of it in front of your house. Remember that sofas don’t get better with age outside. The shed will be open when we have our volunteer to curate what is coming in. If not available that day, it will be closed.

We’re still finding plastic in paper. Please empty out non-paper packaging prior to disposing. Also, we don’t take plastic bags. These gum up the machines at the processing center. Bring them back to the supermarket.

Although we do not have any active Covid cases in town presently, folks are still being encouraged to get vaccinated. This is the only way we can combat a resurgence. Vaccines are readily available at local pharmacies. A big shout out to all who have been vaccinated. A reminder that non-vaccinated people should be masking up when inside public spaces or when they cannot social distance.

Ticks and mosquitoes are active. Check yourself and your animals when coming in from outside. Empty stagnant water containers around the yard and check your screens for holes. Have a safe and fun summer.

Luncheon Club News: Dining Room to Open
Gary Winitzer
The Royalston Council on Aging is inviting all those who are interested to enjoy lunch on Wednesday, July 21st. You can eat in with us or get your meal as “Grab N Go”. The meal includes Grilled Chicken with Apricot Glaze, Israeli Couscous, Parmesan Broccoli, and Multigrain Bread. As this day is the third Wednesday of the month, Brown Bag pickup is available.

On August 4th, the first Wednesday of the month, we will have our Penny Auction.
On August 11th, the second Wednesday of the month, we will have our Blood Pressure Clinic.
To reserve a meal, please call Betty Woodbury at 978-249-9656 before 9 AM on Tuesday. Let her know if you will eat in or want your meal as “Grab N Go”.
A suggested voluntary confidential donation is $3.00 for seniors and $3.50 for others.
We thank the Select Board and Board of Health to allow us this opportunity to get back to enjoying our community together.
Royalston Emergency Management
Director Jim Barclay
e-mail ema@royalston-ma.gov or phone 978-249-2904

Coronavirus Status: It’s been a long run, but a little over a month ago, Governor Baker rescinded the COVID-19 restrictions put in place to slow the spread of the highly-contagious Coronavirus as residents were vaccinated. On June 1, Massachusetts had the lowest percentage positivity rate (0.66%) of all 50 states; all bordering states are also well-under the five percent mark. To help protect those not vaccinated, the Department of Public Health has issued new guidance regarding face coverings, all in keeping with the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) guidance. Masks are still mandatory when using public (and private rideshare) transportation, in congregate care settings like group homes and nursing homes, schools, and in healthcare facilities. Businesses have the prerogative to keep any face covering and distancing protocols in place. If masks are mandated, please comply. If no masks are required and someone chooses to wear one, it is their business, full stop. Please do not make judgements regarding those who choose (and possibly need) to continue wearing masks.

It is also important that all who are able are vaccinated – and most pharmacies now offer walk-in vaccinations! The Delta Variant of SARS-CoV-2 is here, and the current vaccine is highly effective against it. In addition, the more people vaccinated, the less likely those who cannot be vaccinated for medical reasons, will come in contact with the virus. Safety profiles for all approved COVID-19 vaccinations are excellent, and the effectiveness is among the best for any vaccination. Children 12 and older are now able to receive vaccinations; preferably before school resumes in the fall.

REMA is now in the process of closing out the “Pandemic Paperwork,” which is unlike anything EMA has dealt with in the past. If you have questions regarding COVID-19, or Massachusetts-specific COVID-19 questions, please get the FACTS from www.cdc.gov and/or www.mass.gov; please do NOT rely on social media for facts.

South Village Revitalization News
Hello Royalston neighbors,

On June 13, the gazebo was the site of the first of 6 Open Mic performances (second Sundays at the gazebo and fourth Sundays at Bullock Park) put on by the Royalston Cultural Council...thank you to Jim Bennett, Phil Leger and the rest of the Arts Council for putting these on for the community. The gazebo was dedicated to Marlene Jarvenpa. She was the driving force behind RSVR and has been an active community volunteer for many years. Gazebo Committee Chair Linda Alger said, “Marlene has had a vision of building community and because of that vision, we have new friends, exciting things to come and this beautiful gazebo.” Marlene thanked God, her family, her friends and the community.

Have you noticed the beautiful cleared area on the other side of the river? River Projects Chair Todd Neale thanks the North Quabbin Trails Association volunteers under the direction of Bob Curley and Don Shambroom, who have cleared the area and made benches from cleared trees. This area is owned by the South Royalston Improvement Corporation. Todd is in discussions with the Trails Association about a potential collaboration.

Thank you to the Plant Committee, who has put in beautiful flower beds around the gazebo and completed the flower boxes by the bridge, picnic tables and by the Fire Station. Super volunteer Dickie Lawrence pulled out 4000 knotweed! And Rose Lawrence transplanted some Siberian iris from the Pete and Henry’s lot to the gazebo flower bed, a nice reminder that our group started after the Village lost P & H a few years ago and we wanted to bring life back to the Village. We will be having another Planting Day soon to complete the landscaping by the Fire Station and the front step of the gazebo. If you would like to help, please contact Rose Lawrence at 978-249-6814 or Maureen Blasco at 978-249-5138.

For photos of the Planting Day, the River Work Day, the gazebo dedication and other activities, please visit our Facebook page “Welcome to the Village of South Royalston” overseen by our Social Media Chair Jessica Spring. She always welcomes photos of the river and Village to post.
Phinehas S. Newton Library News
Kathy Morris, Library Director
Trustees: Jeffrey Mangum, Jennifer Basso, Theresa Quinn
Open and pick up hours: Mondays 10 a.m. to 8 p.m.; Thursdays 1:00 - 5:00 p.m. and 6:30 - 8 p.m.; Saturdays: 9:00 am-12 noon
978-249-3572 www.royalstonlibrary.org

Donations to the Friends - Thank you!
Marsha Charest
Benny and Susan Gronowicz

Summer Reading Tails and Tales Bingo and Reading Logs
Read and win prizes. Once again we will have reading bingo for preteens and teens and adults. Adults and older kids will read a Library book from each category, get the square stamped, and win prizes when they reach Bingo. Younger kids can fill in their reading logs and win prizes based on the number of books they have read or have read to them. We have some exciting unique prizes for the contest which will continue until August 6.

Summer Reading Programs
We are excited to be able to offer in person programming this summer. Hopefully each program will be held outdoors. If there are large numbers of participants, we have asked for permission to use the Town Hall and will move the program in certain circumstances. All the programs promise to be a lot of fun – educational and entertaining. People of all ages are invited to attend the Therapy Dog Workshop with Bobbi Bachelder and Avery on July 29 at 1:30 and the Herding Dog Workshop with Kate Collins, several of her border collies and sheep for a herding demonstration. And due to the popularity two years ago of having an evening program, Animal Adventures will bring a large number of ‘tailed’ animals to the front of the Library. Prior to this program there will be a free ice cream social with selections from Heavenly Treats. Everyone is invited!

Help a Red-spotted Newt Regrow Its Tail!
Did you know that red-spotted newts (red efts) can regenerate their tails? Well, Spot, the Library’s red-spotted newt needs help regrowing its tail. So, every time any person 12 years and younger reads a library book or has a book read to him or her, they’ll get a bit of tail to add to the newt. We’d like to be able to have Spot grow a really long tail before the summer is over. You can pick up an information sheet and activity pages about red-spotted newts to learn more about this interesting and unique animal. Watch for more fun activities and adventures with Spot and other tailed animals.

What? ButtOn Chairs in Royalston
Thanks to Tom Musco, who heard about ButtOn chairs and approached Monty Tech cabinetmaking instructor, Michael Dion and his talented students, we now have several ButtOn chairs in the children’s room. These chairs were developed by Dr. Turner Osler to create a seat that drastically decreases back pain and prevents it from starting. (You can listen to Dr. Osler’s Ted talk ‘Active Sitting – Could we can give our kids a future without back pain.’ The plans to build the chairs are available free on-line.) Instructor Dion enthusiastically embraced the project and even adapted the design slightly by switching out a tennis ball to a lacrosse ball for more strength. The company has incorporated this improvement into their plans. We’ve had speeds up to 235 Mbps (that’s fast) but there are times when there isn’t a satellite close enough so that you do get a few dropped signals and somewhat slower speeds but overall it will make internet usage easier. When you arrive at the Library connect to Library Guest, no password required.

Left to Right: Simon Hoover, Joe Besette, Jake Cherubini. Their teacher on the right is Michael Dion the Cabinetmaking instructor at Monty Tech.
Job posting: Library Substitute and Evening Staff
Library Assistant: The Library is looking for an interested person to work very part time: two hours on Thursday evening as well as fill in for other staff members during regularly scheduled hours. The individual should have a keen interest in reading, a basic knowledge of libraries, and be computer literate. A high school diploma required; some college or library experience preferred. A full job description is available at the Library. Base pay dependent on experience begins at $14.50/hr.

Valuing Our Children Grant
It was with great surprise and pleasure that we received a generous grant from Valuing Our Children for summer programming for families. We plan to add some activities and create grab and go kits for August.

Some of the new materials at your library

**Adult Fiction**
- Bentley, Don
- Buehlman, Chris
- Clinton, Bill
- Cussler, Clive
- Evison, Jonathan
- Harris, Zakiya
- Hilderbrand, Elin
- James, E.L.
- Johansen, Iris
- Jonasson, Ragnar
- McQuiston, Casey
- Meissner, Susan
- Michaelides, Aex
- Miles, Terry
- Reid, Taylor
- Roberts, Nora
- Shriver, Lionel
- Steadman, Catherine
- Taddeo, Lisa
- Williams, Beatriz
- Thayer, Nancy
- Tucker, Nancy
- Weiner, Jennifer

**Adult Non-Fiction**
- America’s Test
- Cooper, Becky
- Hinton, Elizabeth
- Johnson, Steven
- Junger, Sebastian
- Letts, Elizabeth
- Raichlen, Steven
- Simard, S.
- Smith, Clint
- Waters, Alice
- Wright, Lawrence
- Wohlleben, Peter

**Children’s Fiction**
- Brosgol, Vera
- Carozzi, Nicolo
- Davies, Jacqueline
- Eggers, Dave
- Gott, Barry
- Harbridge, Paul
- Henderson, Leah
- Hout, Miles van
- Iwai, Melissa
- Perkins, Lynne
- Raul the Third
- Ramos, NoNiequ
- Ruzzier, Sergio
- Savage, Stephen
- Sidman, Joyce
- Sterling, Michelle
- Swanson, Matthew

**Children’s Nonfiction**
- Cole, Joanna
- Crane, Cody
- Edgar, Amy
- Kelly, Erin
- Kelly, Erin
- Muirhead, Margaret
- Redding, Anna
- Sanders, Rob
- Scott, Katie
- Slade, Suzanne
- Sorell, Traci
- Thermes, Jennifer

**Audiobooks**
- Brown, Daniel
- Charles, Janet
- Jackson, Joshilyn

**DVDs:** The Father, Hemingway (PBS), Judas and the Black Messiah, Land, The Little Things, The Mauritanian, Minari, The Nest, The Salisbury Poisonings, Tom & Jerry: The Movie, and The Vir-

**Thank you**
Tom Musco for facilitating the ButtOn chairs project
Kathy Corbet and Richard Weiner, Sonja Vaccari, Chris Long, Abraham and Halima Sussman, Barbara Richardson and many others (let us know who you are!) for plant donations for the plant sale
Robert Fairchild, Norah Dooley, Patti Stanko, Maureen Blasco, and Beth Gospodarek for help with the plant and book sale
Joe Liebman for extensive help getting our Starlink Dish installed, set up, and running
Robert Fairchild for volunteer help – who knew you had worked in a library in college!
Royalston Academy for generously funding our summer reading programs and craft kits

**Some of the new materials at your library**

**Adult Fiction**
- Tom Clancy Target Acquired
- The Blacktongue Thief
- The President’s Daughter
- The Saboteurs
- Legends of the North Cascades
- The Other Black Girl
- The Bullet
- The Girl Who Died
- One Last Stop
- The Nature of Fragile Things
- The Maidens
- Rabbits
- Malibu Rising
- Legacy
- Should We Stay or Should We Go
- The Disappearing Act

**Adult Non-Fiction**
- Cook for Your Gut
- The Complete Salad Cookbook
- We Keep the Dead Close
- America on Fire
- Extra Life
- Freedom
- The Ride of Her Life
- How to Grill Vegetables
- Finding the Mother Tree
- How the Word is Passed
- We Are What We Eat
- The Plague Year
- The Heartbeat of Trees

**Children’s Fiction**
- Memory Jars
- Brave as a Mouse
- Bubbles...Up!
- Faraway Things
- Moon Camp
- Out into the Big Wide Lake
- A Day for Rememberin’
- If Only…
- Dumplings for Lili
- The Museum of Everything
- Training Day
- Your Mama
- Fox & Chick the Sleepover
- And Then Came Hope
- Dear Treefrog
- When Lola Visits
- Sunrise Summer

**Children’s Nonfiction**
- The Magic School Bus Explores Human Evolution
- All About Fossils
- Farm Animals
- Kittens
- Puppies
- Flip!
- The Gravity Tree
- Two Grooms on a Cake
- Fangarium
- Mars is…
- We Are Still Here!
- Horse Power

**Audiobooks**
- Facing the Mountain
- The Paris Library
- Mother May I
Common Loon: It was a perfect Sunday. The sky blue, the sun warm and the breeze mild. I sat on a narrow strip of bank, tucked behind low shrubs. It is from this sheltered spot, that I watched her. For four hours. She would get up and turn her eggs and reposition herself. Her mate swam in at a deeply leisurely pace from across the water. He made quite a spectacle of himself, preening, waggling his feet and cresting up out of the water in a burst of flapping wings. If you watch nesting loons long enough, you can witness the beautiful transition from one parent on the nest to the other. The grace of the movements and the gentleness of touch on the eggs. The joy in being surrounded by all of this beauty is not only breathtaking, it is awesome. Get out and have yourself an adventure my friends!

Poem
Michael Young and Pat Worth have had bear visits on three occasions at 6 Gulf Road. Michael says, “The bird feeders are now down after the last raid, pictured here. Pat has named the bear “Beary Garcia.””

The Bear
There is a shadow dark, moving through the midday woods, as blue and black as midnight.
It’s the famished, hollow bear who smash-grabbed birdseed late one night, then came another time to dine, and fled with garbage bucket on his head.

Our dog knows one thing for sure - the bear is here.
He scented upwind danger and issues us a warning.

Beware! Bear! Beware!
Our ursine friend departs.
Returning later for another try, he finds all feeders taken down and shuffles out of town with heavy sigh.

Michael Young
Current
Royalston Poet Laureate

Memorial Day Commemoration 2021

The rattle of the Belted Kingfisher can be heard at a distance. To see this stocky bird is akin to spotting a living dinosaur, their deep gray blue crest, their long thick dagger of a beak—they appear archaic. To watch them hunt is a gift as they hover 25ft above the water and then dive with surprising speed into the water and emerge with their catch firmly clenched in their bill. You can find them perched on branches that reach out over the water, relentlessly scanning for a meal in shallow waters.

Belted Kingfisher (Female) - Northern Worcester County

Memorial Day was marked on Royalston Common with remembrance and respect. These ceremonies were organized by Beth and Glenn Hastings, among others. Glenn died on June 24.

Photo: Cassinari
CONGRATULATIONS AND GOOD NEWS
Graduates, newlyweds, reunions, pandemic babies... share the milestones here at the RCN!

Monty Tech graduates: Congratulations and best wishes to six the Monty Tech grads from Royalston who earned high school diplomas and Certificates of Occupation Proficiency (COPS) in their particular fields of study: Emma Watts, Veterinary Science; Elyssia Rosado, Culinary Arts; and Hailey Robbins, Early Childhood Education. Also graduating from Monty Tech are Michael Cormier, Automotive Technology, who earned a Monty Tech Foundation Award; Aliyah Neale, Veterinary Science, earning a Katherine Seymour Bullock Cole Scholarship, and a Judy Jenkins Musco Scholarship; and Anthony Divoll, Autobody, who also earned a Katherine Seymour Bullock Cole Scholarship, a LBS Scholarship, and a Judy Jenkins Musco Scholarship, as well as the South Royalston Reunion Scholarship and designation as “Most Dedicated Student” in Autobody.

Athol High School graduate: Madison McCool

Marnie Anair graduated Magna Cum Laude in May 2021 from Keene State College with degrees in Communications and Women’s and Gender Studies.
During her time at Keene State, she was a sister of the Delta Phi Epsilon sorority & served as chapter president her senior year. She was class Vice President, had an internship in the college’s President’s Office, & also worked as a marketing assistant for The Redfern Arts Center.
In the fall she will be attending graduate school at Salem State University, pursuing a master’s degree in Higher Education & Student Affairs & will have a fellowship in the graduate admissions office.

Glenn Bartlett Hastings, 58, of Royalston MA, passed away Thursday, June 24, 2021 at his home with his loving family by his side after a brief battle with cancer.
Glenn was born in Attleboro on October 14, 1962, son of the late Bartlett Herbert and Ruth Holly Hastings. He was a 1981 graduate of West Springfield High School where he was a member of the band, and earned the rank of Eagle Scout with the Boy Scouts of America.
After graduation, he served his country as an Air Traffic Controller in the US Army. He worked for Verizon for 20 years, retiring in 2018 to fulfill his lifelong dream of becoming a farmer.
Glenn enjoyed hiking with friends, taking people on shortcuts that were not quite short, but always an adventure. He loved kayaking and anything outdoors. He enjoyed sharing a Budweiser and storytelling with family and friends and was an avid Red Sox fan. He also had many different collections, including baseball cards, coins and beer cans. Glenn treasured sharing his home with friends and family, especially gatherings at the table for a meal where everything had been produced on The 1810 Farm.

He leaves his wife, Elizabeth (Weaver) Hastings; his mother, Ruth (Darling) Hastings of Westfield; his son Jesse Hastings and his partner, Christiane Leger of Greenfield; step-son Benjamin Weaver and his partner Liana Rodier of Cambridge. Glenn also leaves two brothers, Kenneth Hastings of West Springfield and Andrew Hastings and his wife Stacia of Westfield, his in-laws Charles and Jean Weaver of Largo, Florida, MA; brothers-in-law, Andrew Weaver and his wife Angela of Westfield and William Hank of Reading; one sister-in-law Melanie Macklow Weaver of Milford, eight nieces and nephews, Noel, Matthew, Ryan, Emily, Joshua, Jacob, Sara and Zachary. He also leaves his cousins and friends, to many to be counted, but forever loved. In addition to his father, Glenn was predeceased by his brother-in-law, Michael Weaver and sister-in-law, Linda Weaver Hank.

The family would like to express thanks to Care Central VNA and Hospice for their guidance and care over the past weeks, and also to the Royalston Community Farmers who have been at their side, caring for not only family but also all the animals on the farm.

Funeral services will be held on Wednesday, June 30, 2021 at 10:00 AM in the First Congregational Church of Royalston, 15 On the Common, Royalston, MA 01368.
Burial will follow in the Jonas Alliene Cemetery, Winchendon Road, Royalston. Calling hours will be held on Tuesday, June 29, 2021 in the Fiske-Murphy-Mack Funeral Home, 110 New Athol Road, Orange, MA 01364 from 4-7 PM followed by a tribute by the Athol American Legion to honor Glenn.

Memorial contributions can be made to the Glenn B. Hastings Memorial Fund, C/O Athol Savings Bank, 338 Main Street, Athol, MA 01331, to support Royalston Community projects and charities.
Monty Tech
Mary C. Barclay, Royalston Rep., m-barclay@montytech.net
Monty Tech Summer Learning Opportunities

Superintendent-Director Dr. Sheila M. Harrity earns “Exemplary” rating! With 15 of 22 SchoolCom members submitting assessments, Superintendent-Director Harrity received an overwhelmingly-positive review. Dr. Harrity has announced she will be retiring at the conclusion of the 2021-2022 school year, and will provide whatever assistance is needed in selecting and training her successor, so the transition will be seamless.

To help supply desperately-needed Certified Nursing Assistants (CNA) for area facilities and home care agencies, Monty Tech has entered into a collaborative agreement with North Central Career Center, receiving a “Rapid Reemployment Grant” of $30,000 to provide No Cost CNA training for ten individuals in need of employment due to COVID-19 layoffs. The 150-hour training program will result in numerous certifications – OSHA-10; Basic Life Support for Healthcare Providers (CPR & AED); First Aid; Home Health Aide; and CNA – to ensure grads are prepared to enter healthcare careers. Program partners who will benefit from this infusion of 10 CNAs are MassHire, GVNA (Now Care Central Visiting Nurses), Heywood-Wakefield Commons, Sunrise Senior Living, and NextStep Healthcare.

The MA Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development, Division of Apprenticeship Standards has just approved Monty Tech’s Welding Program, and now every junior and senior is considered a “Pre-Apprentice.” Monty Tech is the very first voc-tech in MA to receive this designation, which will help our grads find work with an approved apprenticeship provider, necessary documentation of training, and advance our grads in their apprenticeships, and upward on the pay scale.

Long overdue work on the Monty Tech baseball field has been completed. Infield dirt was removed, and baselines lowered; 65 tons of new, red infield mix was brought in, and the surface leveled. Loam and seeding will take place over the summer.

While it certainly wasn’t the usual end of year, “Prom in the Park” took place with approximately 180 students in attendance. They enjoyed food trucks, dessert tables, and entertainment outside. The 50th Annual Commencement, also not quite the usual, was accomplished (after a day’s delay due to weather), outside, and with families present.

Beat the heat ...

Ice Cream Truck at the Library on Aug 6 at 6:15

Summer Programs at the Village School
Rise Richardson, director
Summer Programs are back at the Village School for all children ages 4-9 led by Sofie Vieira and Lily Thompson. 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, 9-1 Daily. Available weeks are June 28-July 2, July 19-23, July 26-30, August 9-13 and August 16-20. Go to villageschoolma.org to see the full Summer Program brochure, print it and sign up.

Openings in the Village School for Fall 2021
There are openings in 5th grade. Call the school to arrange a visit as soon as possible at 978 249 3505.

School begins again with preschool and kindergarten orientation on Tuesday Sept. 7, and the first day of school is Wednesday Sept. 8.

Deans Beans coffee orders will begin again in mid-September

Wildlife sightings:
Mary Barclay reports, “Gaggles of geese are happily raising their goslings in Tully Lake… apparently indifferent to those who wish to observe or photograph them!”

Sadly, the RSC has canceled its workshops this summer. Postponement is something the Bard knew well as fire, plague, and politics all closed down his productions from time to time. The Friends of the Library will revisit for next summer’s theater season.
Classifieds

Needed:

Looking for a sitter for a 5 year old boy for after school until 5 pm. Also someone who could take care of him when school gets out early for 1/2 days. (There’s one every month) Please email chriscorm1965@gmail.com or call/text 508-596-5736

Services Available

Royalston Dog Walker - I let the dogs out. Call or text 978-340-2105


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, 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 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 Suzanne 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.

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

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

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free:

Electric clothes dryer - works fine, but we are now using a clothesline. Call 978 249 4904

for sale:


Custom thermal travel cups by Swank K reations. Single pieces or sets; totally kool kids’s cups. Krys and Keith Swan at swank- kreations@gmail.com.

Fresh eggs and Royalston maple syrup from Putney’s Sugarhouse - $20/quart; Eggs $4/dozen. Contact Jessica Putney Schanz at 978-939-3329 (cell); 978-249-248-8617; jessputney1989@gmail.com

Sweetwater Sugar House at the LeRays’ has local syrup available. Call 979-249-3464.

Royalston Maple Syrup from Divoll’s sugar house. Prices: pints $12, quarts $20, half gallons $32 and gallons $55. Text/ Call John 978-894-5109.

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.


Raw Squier Davis Farm honey

1 lb. jar $10.00, Self service on porch
Call if you want 2 lb. jar, $20.00, 978-249-4000. We are on Route 32 north just past mile marker 60

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

Birch Knoll Farm - Hay for sale. Contact Helen at 978-249-3163 or 774-239-5062
**Garden Notes**

June 22, 2021

The topsy-turvy weather continues to topse and turve. For those of you short of memory: there was a stretch of early June weather in early April. A week later five inches of snow fell. Five days of seriously warm conditions in mid-May were followed by plummeting temperatures, not freezing, though two days recorded the lowest maximum temperatures in history. June brought in August heat. Rain, something I almost always fret about, has fallen often enough for me to minimize hand-watering but not often enough for me to discontinue fretting.

Doing battle with the wildlife continues to be a thankless task. For the second consecutive year, rabbits are running amok. Porcupines, as always, prevail. Both are expanding their culinary horizons. Previously content with spinach and lettuce, they’ve discovered parsley and parsnips and carrots and celery and beets. Brassicas and beans would disappear as well but they are protected by electric fence. Row covers work, sort of, but a sea of white spunbonded polypropylene jars my aesthetic sensibility (me, with an aesthetic sensibility?). Those early April roll-of-the-dice plantings are approaching maturity. (Spinach, in fact, has been harvested for weeks.) Sugar snap peas are but days away, quite fortuitously, with asparagus winding down. The potato plants are in full flower which means potatoes will be available within a month. Under the umbrella philosophy of ‘if we don’t grow it, we don’t eat it’, we’ve been potato-deprived since early May. The potato meal will be a celebration. Those early seedings of the hot weather crops in May worked out as well, with germination hindered only slightly by the cool weather that followed. As a result, we can anticipate beans, cucumbers, corn, and squash a week or so earlier than normal.

In respect to fruit, the current crowning joy is the strawberry patch. I could nit-pick and grumble about the size of the berries but they are so plentiful as to make up the difference. Harvest began a couple of weeks ago and will continue for at least one more. One way or another we consume a pint of strawberries per day. That won’t be the case with blueberries, spotty as they appear. Those buds on the apple and peach trees became flowers and the flowers became fruit. There remains the possibility of insects and disease and hail (and, in the case of peaches, porcupines), but I remain guardedly optimistic.

There is a fox explosion in Royalston. Free-range chickens are a thing of the past. Our wee flock of six were enclosed for half the day, ensuring they would lay their eggs where we could retrieve them. They were let loose the second half, ensuring that the chickens could perform as chickens are meant to, scratching up grubs, eating seed heads and green matter, and exploring their surroundings. At sunset, they would return to their pen. Except when they didn’t (four of them). The remaining two are no longer ranging. (If only the fox had a preference for rabbits rather than chickens.)

We’ve turned the corner. Heretofore, gardening efforts revolved around preparations, planting, and weeding. Some plantings will continue through July but it is harvesting that will most occupy me. I can imagine less rewarding uses of my time.

Larry Siegel

**Fox**

In the dim light of a recent morning I listened to the woods wake up. Often, on these mid-summer days, I am up so early that I can catch the silence of the night just ending. Then I rise and walk through the house, gray with the light of the short midsummer night. Down in the kitchen I put the kettle on and wait. Then, one by one, the birds begin. Their calls are familiar: phoebe, robin, titmouse. I know that, later, when the sun has risen and the day is warm, there will be so many calls that I will lose track. But now, while the world is bathed in this soft pre-dawn light, their solitary calls barely break the silence.

Then I hear the snap of a twig and I know right away: the fox.

We have seen this fox many times in recent weeks, most often at the end of the day, when his soft gray coat becomes part of the twilight. He is a gray fox with a face more cat-like than his red fox cousin. Lacking the elegance of his cousin’s black boots, he makes up for it with a broad black stripe down his tail. He is swift and silent, a straight line from nose to tail. Tom and I have come to think of him as “our fox” and we exchange news of our sightings: “I saw our fox near the pine tree stump this afternoon.” “I just saw our fox cross the field.”

Usually our fox keeps to the border of the woods, but on occasion he trots right through our yard. If I am out there when he passes, we both stop what we’re doing to gaze at each other. I wonder what he is thinking, how he is registering my presence. Then time seems to stand still and I feel the slightest pull of animal to animal, human to fox. For a brief moment I consider what it would take to bridge that gap. But no, he is a wild creature after all, and we are both smart enough to be wary. It is always the fox who decides when we’ve gazed long enough. Without a second thought, he turns and continues on his way and I become not even a memory. Just another part of his world to notice, assess and let go.

So, hearing the twig snap on this early morning, I know exactly who is there. I rush to the east window and look out into the gray pre-dawn light. As I watch and listen I wonder: are you just waking up or are you off to sleep after a night of hunting? Do you have a den of hungry kits to feed or are you on your own? You don’t know it but, right now, I am watching for you. Are there times when you do the same, watching me from the edge of the woods as I go about my day?

Another snap and there he is, a stream of quicksilver, moving through the dawn. Swift. Silent. Our fox.

Deb D’Amico

**Did you know?** Potato flowers are blooming in many Royalston gardens now. Potatoes have the advantage of generating more calories of food per acreage than other staple crops like wheat. When potatoes arrived in the “Old World” as part of the burst of trancontinental contact and conquest of ideas, technologies, disease and crops in the 1500s, Europe was prone to famine. However, many were skeptical of New World foods and suspected them of being poison. (In fact, several crops in this family, like nightshade and tobacco, are poisonous.) In France, Empress Marie Antionette took to wearing potato blossoms in her hair as part of a PR campaign to convince the populace spuds were fashionable cuisine. Let them eat cake ... with a side of taters.
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What Happened at the Annual Town Meeting?
Maureen Blasco

On a windy Saturday, June 26, over 50 voters came to Royalston Annual Town Meeting in a tent on the Common to vote on the spending for the coming fiscal year. Before the business, the Select Board presented two awards. First, Keith Newton was commended for his 47 years of service as a firefighter and the day officially declared Keith Newton Day. The 2nd award went to the Common Restoration Committee: Clarence Rabideau, Keith Newton, Josh Doub and Patience Bundshuh.

Most warrant articles passed with no discussion. Article 6, the Snow and Ice account was tabled because the account was not overspent, a real rarity. Though the total amount was less than $2,400, four articles returned earmarked funds to the stabilization fund. A 2% raise for all town employees was approved. Also, two oversights in the proposed budgets required a vote to approve an extra $5,060. The final amount approved was $2,465,078.