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.

September is Better Breakfast Month, encouraging everyone to begin their day with a well-balanced meal. Find some facts at https://www.cdc.gov/healthyschools/nutrition/facts.htm and find some “edu-tainment” for kids at https://www.nutrition.gov/topics/nutrition-age/children/kids-corner.

September 6 Monday
Labor Day - Town offices, Post Office, Library, and schools closed 8:52 p.m. New Harvest Moon
Rosh Hashanah begins at sundown.

September 11 Saturday
Twentieth anniversary of the 9/11 terrorist attacks
10 a.m. Thanks to a generous donation, the Historical Society is restoring the cove ceiling on the 2nd floor of the Old School House #1. For this to happen, the museum displays need to be packed away for safe keeping. If you would like to help with this effort, please call Peter Kranik at 978-249-7625.

September 12 Sunday
Grandparents’ Day

September 13 Monday
10:00 a.m. preschool story time with Brooke Coleman will be returning to the Library for toddlers and their caregivers to socialize and connect. If the weather is nice, it will be held outdoors. Continues each non-holiday Monday, with stories, a craft, play-time, and a healthy snack.

September 15 Wednesday
Yom Kippur begins at sundown

September 18 Saturday
9 a.m. - noon Fall Fun on the Common
Upscale Tag Sale, featuring treasures curated by Michael Adams and organized by the Historical Society. To reserve a space to set up a table, call Maureen 978-249-5138. The Historical Society museum will be open.

Hay rides and petting zoo all morning thanks to the Royalston Agriculture Committee. On the half hour, the hay ride will include a guided historical tour of the Common.

Free children’s books and crafts sponsored by the Library.

Photo booth and games set up by the Cultural Council.

September 20 Monday
7:55 pm Full Harvest Moon

September 22 Wednesday
3:21 p.m. Autumnal Equinox – First Day of Autumn

September 25 Saturday
noon to 3 pm Picnic in the Park in South Royalston at the gazebo. Music, homemade Finnish pastries (like cardamom bread), Honest Weight craft beer, and community. Bring your own picnic or buy sandwiches at the store.

September 29 Wednesday
6 p.m. CodeRED Alert Test Call. CodeRed™ is Royalston’s method of relaying critical messages to residents, property owners, and those with a vested interest in Royalston. To register your landlines and other devices to receive notifications, please go to https://www.royalston-ma.gov and follow the CodeRED™ link.

September 30 Thursday
6:30 pm Ladies’ Benevolent Society meets at the Town Hall. All are welcome to attend regardless of gender or level of benevolence. Business meeting first, followed by the program “Autumn Pharmacist”. Call Laurie Deveneau for more information.

Save the date:
October 8 Monday
6:30 - 8:30 pm Forum to discuss possible sites for Town offices, including the Raymond Bulding and Whitney Hall at Town Hall, Second Floor. Learn the facts and express your views.

October 17 Sunday
Indian cooking workshop with chef Nalini. Limited to 15 participants. Call the library to reserve a spot. 978-249-3572

October 23 Saturday
Candlelit cemetery tours - Teen and adult actors needed! If you would like to help Old Center Cemetery come alive by portraying one of the souls buried there, sign up at the museum, the Upscale Tag Sale or by calling Beth 978-249-0358. There are short scripts for Civil War widows, Battle of Bunker Hill veterans, the first Reverend in our town and his 3 wives, grave-robbing medical students, and much more. All the tales are historically accurate. The tours are sponsored by the Royalston Historical Society.
Select Board Notes
Christine Long, clerk, Royalston Select Board

Whither Town Offices? The town has known for some time now that the town offices at Whitney Hall are inadequate – air quality is poor, the building is but marginally accessible, and the restrooms are an embarrassment.

Over the past year the town has been concentrating on the Raymond Building, using Community Preservation and Green Communities funds, as well as an accessibility grant. In the near future we will have done enough to use one room, but an architect has prepared plans that allow space for not just all current offices but also for other key entities, like the Planning Board and Information Technology.

Recently, however, some voices have asked why we do not focus instead on Whitney. The key reason is money – either proposal will require a debt exclusion, but current estimates indicate that the Raymond will cost about $1.9 million while the Whitney would need about $3.4 million.

Because either proposal will need strong public support, we want to hear your thoughts. Join us for an informational and brainstorming session on Monday, October 8, from 6:30-8:30 pm in the beautiful second floor hall at Town Hall – ride the elevator up!

Whither Town Roads? The seemingly never-ending rains of July, culminating in a very serious rain event on Sunday, July18 and again a couple days later, have created horrendous road problems throughout town. The Department of Public Works has made most of the affected roads passable but many still needing serious work. Brown Rd. remains closed altogether, and Warwick Rd. will be closed to all but automobile traffic, forcing buses and trucks into long detours.

How will we make the extensive – and expensive – repairs and upgrades? “Standard” FEMA and MEMA funds are not an option because the damage was localized and neither the state nor the county declared an emergency. Emergency Management Director Jim Barclay and DPW Superintendent Keith Newton met recently with FEMA damage assessors and hydrology experts, as well as a MassDOT engineer. “These people.” Jim reported, “were simply stunned at the extent of the damage [in Royalston] and will do their best to represent us at the federal level.”

Their help could be significant in two options we are exploring:
- Working with FEMA, MEMA and state federal officials to get a Presidential disaster declaration in order to qualify for certain federal funds
- Again applying for a BRIC grant – Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities – to conduct an engineering study of Royalston hydrology – its wetlands, flood plains, water table, and culverts – and create specific plans for mitigation of current problems and anticipating future ones.

Personal accounts and pictures of what residents suffered in July and their concerns going forward will also be powerful ammunition in these efforts. Please send yours to the Select Board at bos@royalston-ma.gov or PO Box 125, Royalston, MA 01368.

Internet for Royalston – FAQs

What is the plan for bringing fiber to Royalston? In late 2020, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) conducted a “reverse auction” allowing internet service providers to bid for the opportunity to bring high-speed internet service to underserved communities throughout the country. Winners would be required to bring fiber cable to at least 96% of households within each community, using federal dollars to fund the work. Charter Communications won the census block that includes Royalston. We will be using state funds to connect the remaining 4% of households to bring fiber connectivity in Royalston to as close to 100% as is feasible possible. The Massachusetts Broadband Institute (MBI) is ushering Royalston through this process.

How long will this take? Charter is required to complete the entire process within two years of a signed contract. The plan is to bring customers online as the fiber is installed. In other words, by the end of two years after a contract signing, all homes will be connected.

Where are we in this process? Final details between Charter and the FCC are being ironed out. Charter has committed to providing high-speed internet service for Royalston, but we have not yet signed a contract. Our representative at MBI is pushing hard to streamline this process. Officials at the state level, including the Lieutenant Governor, are well aware that Royalston is in desperate need of reliable, fast internet service. They are doing all they can to make this happen as quickly as possible.

I am a South Village resident and an SV MLP RoyalstonNet customer. How does this decision affect my service? There is no change to your service. All current customers of SV MLP RoyalstonNet will continue to receive internet service through this town-owned system, as they have in the past. We anticipate that, once the Charter project is completed, South Village customers will have the option to continue with RoyalstonNet or sign on with Charter.

I hear about Starlink. What is it Starlink is a SpaceX company providing internet service through Low Earth Orbit Satellites (LEOS). This technology provides fast connectivity with very little lag time. Starlink is available in our area, and Royalston residents who have signed on with Starlink, including our library, are happy with their service. However, because it is still in beta, the number of customers it can serve is limited at this time. Starlink is in no way connected with Royalston’s work with Charter. It is simply another option for residents to explore.

Hotspots to Lend at Library

Since mid-July, the Library has 10 T-mobile hotspots to lend to cardholders. They were purchased through a grant from the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners using American Rescue Plan Act funds administered by the Institute of Museum and Library Services as part of an ongoing effort to close the digital equity gap.
Royalston Emergency Management
Director Jim Barclay, e-mail ema@royalston-ma.gov or 978-249-2904

CodeRED Alert Test Call – Sep. 29, 2021 at 6p.m.

CodeRED™ is Royalston’s method of relaying critical messages to residents, property owners, and those with a vested interest in Royalston. The system is used for truly critical messages, such as an evacuation order, a major event affecting a large segment of our population, a missing child/elder, or by direct order of the Select Board. Your contact information is private. Caller ID shows CodeRED™ calls from 1-866-419-5000 as either “Emergency Notification” or “Emergency Comm.”, or from 1-855-969-4636 as either “General Notifications” or “General Comm.”. For the last message sent, simply dial the number to play back that message. To register your landlines and other devices to receive notifications, please go to https://www.royalston-ma.ma.gov and follow the CodeRED™ link.

Coronavirus Status: 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 – you may get facts, but you’re likely to get more opinions than facts.

As it has for well over a year, COVID-19 still has the upper hand, and with the addition of variants resistant to the full effect of the vaccines, and the lower-than-average vaccination rates in North-Central MA, it’s likely we will be under COVID-19 restrictions into the coming year. With school now underway, we can also expect to see rates of community transmission (as of Aug 12, 2021, considered “substantial”) increase. The number one action you can take to reduce community transmission is to wear a mask in enclosed spaces. The number one action to reduce the number of people hospitalized or killed by COVID-19 is to be fully vaccinated. Keep up on Massachusetts and Worcester County transmission rates at https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#/county-view.

Autumn Storms: We already had a hurricane drill with Henri, but it is likely we’ll have more storms bringing wind and rain...oh, and thunder, and more to the point, lightning. The usual emergency preparations apply. Have plenty of non-perishable foods, sealed drinking water, medications, pet food and medications, flashlights with fresh batteries before a major weather event. If you have a generator for power outages, make sure you fully understand how and where it should be used and give it a test run. Sump pumps should be serviced and tested. If stormy weather is predicted, bring in and/or secure any objects that might be carried in the wind. Be sure vehicle windows are closed. Keep your cell phones fully charged and vehicles’ fuel topped off. For specific details on autumn weather events like hurricanes, tornadoes, and electrical storms, go to www.ready.gov and check out the information. There are some kid-appropriate links with actions for them, too.

Board of Health Phil Leger, chair person
Reminder that annual vehicle stickers have been due since July 1st. See attendant to purchase for new fiscal year.

The reusable area is now open. We have a volunteer curator, Alan Vieu to help keep the area organized and free of junk items. Please be courteous of each other and please use social distancing for safety.

Haz/mat collection date is September 25th to be held at the Orange Transfer Station. To pre-register go to franklincountysolidwastedistrict.org and to find out what can be taken.

Mosquitoes and ticks continue to proliferate. Take precautions when going and coming back from outside. Drain stagnant water around your house, fix screens etc.

Covid is still with us unfortunately. Booster shots will be available for vaccinated folks. Unvaccinated are strongly urged to get vaccinated. If you want some sense of normalcy back, get vaccinated. We are starting to see some cases in town after a stretch of none.

Fire Department Updates

I am thrilled to announce that the Royalston Fire Department was awarded an assistance to Firefighters Grant for $178,396. This amount includes $95,000 for new portable radios, $11,664 to host a two day pump operator course for 12 members, and $71,732 to host a 137 hour firefighter 1 course for 10 RFD members. The town’s share of this grant is only $8,495. This grant will allow our firefighters to have modern radios capable of communicating with all of the surrounding towns, and also access the statewide system. The radios that are being replaced are close to 20 years old and are non NFPA compliant. This grant will allow the department to replace our aging radios with new tri-band radios that can talk to all of our mutual aid communities, making it so our members will only need to carry 1 radio vs the possibility of 3 with Franklin county switching to the 800 band in the near future.

This grant will also allow for all active firefighters not currently certified in firefighter 1, the ability to take the training in Royalston with the training being done by a private company that specializes in firefighter training. This will save our members from having to travel over an hour each way to training after they have already put in a full work day at their full time job.

We have had a great response from our partnership with the Red Cross on the smoke detector program, and have installed smoke and carbon monoxide detectors in numerous homes. Unfortunately, The Worcester County Sheriffs office has discontinued the house numbering program. I am working with Athol and another state agency to obtain house numbers for those who had requested them. I apologize for the delay. I would still encourage all who are able to ensure they have visible house numbers on their home and at the beginning of the driveway if the house is set back from the roadway.

The Fire Department continues to train regularly; we had a large multi-agency drill involving 7 other Fire Departments on June 14th where we were able to stretch just short of a mile of large diameter hose and practice relay pumping. Our members recently took part in a tanker shuttle drill in Petersham where our tanker made several trips from the pond where our newly repaired Engine 3 drafted and supplied thousands of gallons of water. I want to thank the taxpayers for funding the repairs to Engine 3 as it performed like new and will continue to serve the town for many years to come. Other recent trainings include testing the dry hydrants at the St Laurent Campground, CPR, Narcan training, and high angle rescue training.

Using grant funds, the Fire Department has also been able to purchase several electrostatic sprayers for spraying disinfectant and have placed them at both fire stations and Town Hall, and have two more on order that are planned for the Police Dept. and Board of Health.

We are also looking for anyone interested in joining the Fire Department, either as a firefighter or first responder for the rescue squad. With most of our members working out of town daytime coverage for fire and EMS can sometimes be quite low. If anyone is interested in joining please send me an email with your contact information to chieffrd@ royalston-ma.gov and I will contact you.

Respectfully, Chief Jack
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!
Pauline and James Baab
Jennifer and Royce Johnson
Sharon Otten and Stephen Altiere
Donald and Marlene Jarvenpaa
Virginia Moore
Gary Winitzer
Nancy Schnetzer
Sonja and George Vaccari

Thank you
Royalston Academy for funding our craft kits and summer reading programs.
Valuing Our Children for summer program funding.
Friends of the Library for all the extras for summer reading: refreshments, prizes, and help.
Royalston Fire and EMS members Brenda Putney, Jaret Thiem and Rebecca Krause-Hardie for help getting all the water out of the Library basement
Noah Siegel for his help with getting the water out of the Library basement.
Book trail authors: Diane Kane, Sharon Harmon, Claire Green, Phyllis Cochran, and Marsha LaCroix.
Carter Foisy who started volunteering at the Library right after moving back to town
Robert Fairchild for lots of volunteer help
Amy Newland, Beth Gospodarek, Maureen Blasco, Tobey Chase, Joshua Morris Siegel, and Patti Stanko for help with Summer Reading Programs.

New Staff at the Library
As many of you know from our celebration last October, Gina Verrelli is no longer staffing the desk at the Library but is still doing some of the behind the scenes work. Our two substitutes, Deb D’Amico and Christine Sawyer have also left us; Deb to commit more time to her already busy schedule and Christine whose real job conflicts with the Library schedule. We are sad to see them depart as they were both assets to us. We advertised and hired three people to fill in as substitutes so that Barb and I can take some time off. Welcome to our new recruits: Samantha Beauvais, Robert Fairchild, and Kristi Schellie.

When Will It Be Over…..?
Like everyone else, we crave normalcy, or some semblance of normalcy, without the worry that we or someone else will contract Covid-19. We thought we might be turning a corner but the new variant has made that corner not somewhere we want to be. As we continue with our lives, we hope that the Library can continue to be a part of each and everyone’s life in town. We offer lots of services, just call or email and ask. Our hours are returning to normal. And as it’s been for these long months of Covid, things can change overnight. We hope the changes will be for the better.

Art Exhibit
We have a delightful exhibit of paintings and photographs of animals with tails in conjunction with the Summer Reading Theme ‘Tails and Tales’. I would like to thank Sonja Vaccari, Kate Collins, and Clarence Rabideau for stepping in on no notice to create a charming exhibit of animals with tails. Enjoy this collection during September and October.

Indian Cooking Class with Nalini - sign up!
It’s been a long time coming, but we have finally rescheduled the Indian Cooking Class for Sunday, October 17 at 2:00 p.m. at the Town Hall. Nalini Goordial, chef at Nalini’s Kitchen at the Quabbin Harvest Coop in Orange will be demonstrating preparation, seasoning, and details on preparing several Indian dishes. Space is limited to 15 people so call or email the Library to sign up. Priority will be given to those who signed up for the original class, scheduled for February 2020. The program is funded by the Royalston Cultural Council.

T-Mobile Hotspots Have Arrived!
The Library now has ten T-Mobile hotspots to loan for two weeks to Library card holders age 18 and older and who are in good standing (no overdue or lost/missing items). The hotspots work in many areas of town and can accommodate up to 10 devices. Currently we still have the three Sprint hotspots, which use different towers than the T-Mobile hotspots even though T-Mobile has acquired Sprint. The T-Mobile hotspots have been in use for a few weeks and most are happy with them. No provider of service is ideal in Royalston but these will hopefully provide internet access to many more people. They also are great for travelers to connect. In cooperation with the MBLC, we are going to be testing other options on the hotspots to see if we can obtain better service throughout town. The hotspots are provided by a grant from the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners Public Library Hotspot Lending Project funded in part with funds from the Institute of Museum and Library Services, a Federal agency that fosters innovation, leadership, and a lifetime of learning.

Upgrades in Internet, Computers, and Printing Capabilities
Maybe you have noticed the increase in the number of people using the internet outside the Library. It may be because we have installed the Starlink dish on the roof and a mesh router to send the signal further from the building and now have very fast internet speeds. Look for the Royalston Library Guest to connect to the internet. There is no password required. In addition, we have purchased a new all-in-one computer for the back room, which also is much more responsive. There is also a new copier/printer allowing high quality printing in the Library and remotely. All of these are to provide better service to those in town and those traveling through town.

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Some of the new materials at your library

**Adult Fiction**
- Abbott, Megan: The Turnout
- Atkins, Ace: The Heathens
- Baker, Chandler: The Husbands
- Bartz, Andrea: We Were Never Here
- Brown, Sandra: Blind Tiger
- Burke, James Lee: Another Kind of Eden
- Cameron, Lindsay: Just One Look
- Castillo, Linda: Fallen
- Cook, Robin: Viral
- Coulter, Catherine: Vortex
- Davidson, Ash: Damnation Spring
- El Akkad, Omar: What Strange Paradise
- Erickson, John: Murder in the Middle Pasture
- Faye, Lyndsay: The King of Infinite Space
- Feito, Virginia: Mrs. March
- Ferrell, Carolyn: Dear Miss Metropolitan
- Fielding, Joy: Cul-de-sac
- Gayle, Mike: All the Lonely People
- Heller, Miranda: The Paper Palace
- Jia, Ha: A Song Everlasting
- King, Stephen: Billy Summers
- Kitamura, Katie: Intimacies
- Lackberg, Camilla: Silver Tears
- Lake, Joss: Future Feeling
- Lapena, Shari: Not a Happy Family
- Macomber, Debbie: It’s Better This Way
- McConaghy, C.: Once There was Wolves
- Moyes, Jojo: Night Music
- Mozley, Fiona: Hot Stew
- Murphy, Julie: If the Shoe Fits
- Paris, B.A.: The Therapist
- Patterson, James: The Red Book
- Preston, Douglas: Bloodless
- Sahota, Sunjeev: China Room
- Silva, Daniel: The Cellist
- Slaughter, Karin: False Witness
- Steel, Danielle: Nine Lives
- Stevens, Chey: Dark Roads
- Thor, Brad: Black Ice
- Wendig, Chuck: The Book of Accidents

**Adult Non-Fiction**
- Amano, Hugh: Let’s Make Dumplings!
- Ellis, Helen: Bring Your Baggage and Don’t Pack Light
- French, Jess: Earth’s Incredible Oceans
- Haig, Matt: The Comfort Book
- Noble, Bill: Spirit of Place
- Pollan, Michael: This Is Your Mind on Plants
- Raden, Aja: The Truth about Lies
- Sebba, Anne: Ethel Rosenberg

**Children’s Fiction**
- Adamson, Ged: Scribbly
- Boynton, Sandra: Boo! Baa, La La La!
- Burgess, Matthew: Bird Boy
- Elliott, Rebecca: Bo and the Merbaby
- Goodall, Jane: Pangolina
- Holm, Jennifer: Whisker Wizard
- John, Jory: Cat Problems
- John, Jory: The Good, the Bad, and the Spooky
- MacLachlan, Patricia: When Grandfather Flew
- Manley, Curtis: The Rescuer of Tiny Creatures
- McPhail, David: I had Ten Hats
- Theroux, Paul: Daniel Visits a Pumpkin Patch
- Usher, Sam: Under the Waves at Waimea
- Van, Muon: Free
- Weiss, Fiona: Wishes

**Preschool Story Time**
Beginning Monday, September 13 at 10:00 a.m. preschool story time with Brooke Coleman will be returning to the Library. If the weather is nice, it will be held outdoors. We hope that it will be able to continue each non-holiday Monday, with stories, a craft, playtime, and a healthy snack. It’s a wonderful way to have children socialize with others of a similar age and for caregivers to share some time together. Listen to the message machine and check Facebook and the Library website for updates and information.

**Yoga Update**
Like the seasons, changes happen. Charlotte Weltzin, our longtime yoga instructor, will be handing over the reins to one of her students, Jessica O’Clair, who will be doing her yoga teacher training with our class. Janet Bettey, another beloved yoga instructor was also Charlotte’s student who did her training with our class and then continued for many years until she and her husband moved to the Cape. Charlotte will still be teaching at the North Orange Church and doing zoom classes while also pursuing further studies. Class will still be on Tuesday evenings at 6:00 p.m. at the Town Hall. All skill levels are welcome. Bring your own mat. At present masks are not required but as with all things, changes may occur.

**Young adult**
- Gutman, Dan: Albert Einstein was a Dope?
- Gutman, Dan: Muhammad Ali was a Chicken?
- Lewis, John: Run

**DVDs:** The Courier, Dream Horse, The Hitman’s Wife’s Bodyguard, Mortal Combat, Raya and the Last Dragon, The Spongebob Movie: Sponge on the Run, Those Who Wish Me Dead, Unforgotten, The War with Grandpa, and Wrath of Man
Historical Society News
Peter Kranak, president
The museum is open the FIRST and THIRD weekends. If the “Open” flag is flying, drop in and browse.

Come, help catalog the collection - Pierre Humblet is updating the catalog of the thousands of items in the museum’s collection. Also, thanks to a generous donation, we are restoring the cove ceiling on the 2nd floor of the Old School House #1. For this to happen, the museum displays need to be packed away for safe keeping. We need your help.

If you would like to help with cataloging or packing, please call Peter Kranak at 978-249-7625.

Upscale Tag Sale and Fall Fun- September 18 from 9 - noon. Come to the Common. The Historical Society will be selling curated treasures and one of a kind items, and you can too. Call Maureen 249-5138 to reserve your space at the Upscale Tag Sale. The Agriculture Committee will have hay rides and a petting zoo. On the half hour, there will be “historical hay rides” with Society tour guides pointing out how the uptowners lived, especially in the late 1800s and early 1900s. The library will have free children’s books to give away, crafts, and the town scrapbook on display. The Cultural Council will have a photo booth and old fashioned games. The historical society museum will be open.

On October 23, historical cemetery tours are planned. Actors are needed to bring to life the stories buried in the Old Center Cemetery. For more info, call Beth 978-249-0358. Save the date to find out more about “Who are the people buried in your neighborhood” at this free and informative event.

North Quabbin Garden Club
The North Quabbin Garden Club starts their fall program on Thursday, September 16 at 7 pm at the Millers River Environmental Center. This year the club is focused on how local gardeners can deal with climate change. There are no fees and all are welcome. Masks should be worn inside the Environmental Center in accordance with the CDC and Athol Bird and Nature Club. On September 16, Denise Bennett of Maple Hill Nursery, a knowledgeable horticulturist, will tell us about how climate change is affecting gardens in New England. How should we change our practices for both flowers and vegetables? What could we do differently to be more successful as temperatures change, seasons become extended and we deal with extremes in rainfall and weather patterns. Denise will give us her observations and advice on how we could all do better.

Pauline Allred, co-president

Royalston South Village Revitalization News
Picnic in the Park
The South Village Revitalization Committee will sponsor a picnic on Saturday, September 25, from 12-3 at the Village gazebo. Bring your family and enjoy a lunch along with music provided by Ryan Hood, a favorite local musician and a few special surprise guests!
You can bring your own lunch or pre-order from the Village Store. You can choose from Yogi Bear Bag (turkey), Boo Boo Bear Bag (ham), Jellystone Bag (tuna), and Roger Smith Bag (roast beef). All sandwiches come with cheese and lettuce on 8 inch roll. A special veggie sandwich Cindy Bear Bag will also be available. All sandwich bags will include: chips, potato salad, a cookie and an apple. Beverages will be available for purchase. It would be helpful to pre-order your sandwich bag by Fri., Sept. 24 by calling the Village store at 978-249-9798. Orders will gladly be accepted on event day as well. Bags will cost $8-$10 depending on your choice. Hamburgers and hot dogs will also be available.

For all you craft beer lovers, we are fortunate to have Honest Weight Artisan Beer from Orange, MA coming to pour us some of their delicious brews! Just remember that all alcoholic beverages must be consumed in the designated area!
We also will have Finnish pastries made by Joyce Neale and LuAnn Simula They won’t last long, so get yours early.

This is a good opportunity to meet up with friends or if you are new in town you can meet and make new friends! This is a rain or shine event. We will have 6-8 pop up tents or umbrellas in the event of rain or, you can bring your own shelter. A handicap comfort station will be available and all donations are welcomed if you would like to contribute to our “Flush Fund.” Send to RSVC care of Rose Lawrence 9 Dickley Rd. Royalston, MA.
We hope you have driven through the Village lately and have seen the beautiful river view along 68. Thanks to Dickie Lawrence for his continued efforts to improve our view. It will be so beautiful when the leaves turn color.

Thanks to our landscaping and planting crew consisting of Rose & Dickie Lawrence, Rene’ Lake-Gagliardi, Cathy Offutt, Maureen Blasco and Linda Alger, the final planting for this season was completed around the fire station. The gazebo gardens were spruced up and soon it will be time for some Fall mums. Our flower boxes and gazebo gardens have been lovingly taken care by this crew and we are most grateful for their time planting, pruning and watering all summer.

The gazebo railings will be installed the beginning of September by Dan Monette and volunteers. This should be the final work on the gazebo. Our sincerest appreciation goes out to the many people involved in making this project happen. It is a special place where we hope to enjoy community events for many years to come.
Many thanks to the Royalston Cultural Council for including us in their Summer Open Mic Series held at the new gazebo. We had two very successful events with great local talent performing.

It was nice to use the new gazebo and to see so many people enjoy the great music.

We hope to see you all at our Picnic In The Park Saturday September 25th 12-3!
CONGRATULATIONS AND GOOD NEWS
Graduates, newlyweds, reunions, pandemic babies... share the milestones here at the RCN!

The Flash in the Can girls are out with a new Flash in the Can Two book with short stories to read on the go - wherever you go. They will be having a book signing at the Royalston Country Store in the South Village on September 19th at 10:00 a.m.

Please join them for some fun in the store where the whole idea for the book originated with Diane Kane and our very own Kathy Chencharik.

Local writer Sharon Harmon also has 3 stories in the new book. Good coffee and goodies also available to purchase. Support our local writers and also the nifty store. Check it out! They would love to see you there.

I, Royalston Artist Gordon Morrison Invite you to a showing of his work at the Petersham Art Center. The opening will be on Sunday, September 19th from 4 pm to 6 pm.

The bulk of the work is nature based, or influenced. Most of the paintings are surreal, while the remainder are more realistic. My hope is that you will find this comparative mix to be interesting and thought provoking. Looking forward to sharing it with you.

The Exhibit will be on view until October 20th Regular hours are Thursday - Sunday 12 pm to 4 pm Petersham Art Center, 8 Main Street, Petersham Mass

Royalston Community Newsletter September 2021 Page 7

Milestones
June M. (Dunham) Smith, 79, of 5 Baldwinville Road, died peacefully Friday morning, July 9, 2021 in Heywood Hospital, Gardner, after a complicated battle for her life.

She was born in Winchendon on June 19, 1942, daughter of the late Lewis and Arlene (Stowell) Dunham and grew up in Royalston.

June was a 1977 graduate of Mt. Wachusett Community College with an Associate Degree in Community Service. She was a lifelong community-centered social worker for many years for North Central Community Service and later did personal home care for the elderly. She enjoyed working on her computer and especially enjoyed spending time with her family. A loving and devoted Christian, June attended the So. Royalston Congregational Church. She loved spending time with her children and was an avid gardener. In her younger years, she was involved in scouting, Troop 38.

She leaves three children, Scott Smith and his wife Tracy of Philipston, Stanley Smith and his wife Carla of Phillipston and Deborah Smith of Worcester; five grandchildren, three great grandchildren; her siblings, Roger Dunham of Royalston, William Dunham of Polk City, FL, Alice Leonard of Polk City, FL, Doris A. Smith of Royalston and Sally J. Berry of Orange. In addition to her parents, she was preceded in death by two brothers, Lewis A. Dunham Jr and Harry Dunham and a sister, Rita L. Gates.

A memorial service will be held Saturday, September 4, 2021 at 12 noon in Second Congregational Church, Royalston.

Gary L. Hamlin, age 66, died unexpectedly at his home in Monson, ME on July 30, 2021. Gary was born in Winchendon, MA and was raised in Athol as a son of the late Everett A. and Olive T. Taylor. Gary attended Athol schools and was a 1973 graduate of Athol High School. After graduation Gary enlisted in the U. S. Navy and served on the aircraft carriers the USS Nimitz and the USS John F. Kennedy. He lived in West Royalston for several years.

Gary’s lifelong love of the outdoors really bloomed during the many summers he spent at YMCA Camp Wiyaka in Richmond, NH. Gary was a hard worker whether it was operating his own trash disposal business or building his own lakeside log home. Gary had also worked for several years at Girardi Distributors in Athol. He also always enjoyed having a good time with family and the many good friends he met along the way.

Gary is survived by his cousins Ruth Spooner and her husband William of Warwick, MA and Marie Erali of Athol. He is also survived by the Taylor family including Sylvia (Taylor) McManus and her husband Ralph of Framingham; Richard Lima of St. Louis; Andrew Lima, and his children of St. Louis; James Lima of Marion, Nancy Taylor, and her daughter of California; Lloyd Taylor of Tully and several Taylor cousins as well as many friends and his faithful four-legged companion, Gracie. In addition to Everett and Olive Taylor, Gary was also predeceased by Daryl (Taylor) Lima.

Anyone who is considering a charitable contribution in Gary’s memory may wish to consider the American Diabetes Association or any charity of personal choice.
Monty Tech, Mary C Barclay, representative

Monty Tech has re-opened for the 2021-2022 School Year under pandemic protocols, with in-person, face-to-face classes, and vocational programming. There’s an updated policy for masking that reflects the guidance from the Centers for Disease Control, which is in keeping and compliant with the MA Department of Public Health, and Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, as well as the local Boards of Health responsible for Monty Tech. The short version: All students will, at bus stops, on Monty Tech-provided transportation, on the Monty Tech campus, and on off-site at Monty Tech-sponsored events, projects, and work sites, wear a face mask, as defined in the Monty Tech Pandemic Policy EBCFA. Acceptable face masks are: “A disposable or re-usable, appropriately-layered mask that fully covers the nose and mouth, that fits snugly, but comfortably against the sides of the face, under the chin, and is secured with ties or ear loops, and as with other apparel, shall not display inappropriate phrases, or words, as determined by Faculty and Administration.”

Community transmission rates are being carefully monitored, along with trends in COVID-19 vaccination rates both in school and sending communities, and hospitalization rates. These data points will be presented at each School Committee meeting, and available to the public.

Monty Tech is pleased to announce re-establishing a partnership with the Fitchburg PD, and enthusiastically welcomed student resource Officer Keith Bourne in August. SRO Bourne is a 28-year veteran of FPD, and was three years the SRO at Memorial Middle School.

Monty Tech used $661,823 in ESSER II funds (Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief funding for the Pandemic) to improve air quality through HVAC and ventilation upgrades in various areas on campus, and to support summer school instructors, additional hours for psychological services, a special education instructor, and a number of consultants. Instructional technology, and supplies for additional learning supports were also added. All human and physical resources were added to support SEL (Social-Emotional Learning) deficits either created by, or exacerbated by the pandemic.

The New England Association of Schools and Colleges voted in June to continue accreditation of Monty Tech, offering recommendations for: 1. Demonstrating a commitment to improving instruction; 2. Utilizing a range of resources to address pressing storage needs throughout the facility, and 3. Developing a committee to address issues of equity, social justice, and inclusivity in school operations and programming. The next comprehensive review is slated for spring, 2026. In July, Monty Tech “…received an outstanding review” on the final Coordinated Program Review report, centered on Career, Vocational, and Technical Education.

Monty Tech accepted a $109,988 FY22 STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math) equipment and professional development grant from the MA Life Sciences Center. Funds will expand the life science programming, including an all-new microbiology course. Also accepted was a $250,000, FY22 Skills Capital Grant to purchase new equipment, and expand Welding/Metal Fabrication training capacity to 16 students, with training booths available to both day and evening students. All-new TIG, MIG, and Stick Welding applications will be purchased. The plan is to expand the number of welders going into the regional workforce pipeline. (This makes more than $2 million dollars awarded to Monty Tech by the Skills Capital Grant Program -$2,029,686, to be exact!)

Village School
Rise Richardson, director

With the fun outdoor Summer Programs over, school starts on Wednesday, September 8. Children and adults will wear masks inside. We plan to spend a lot of time outdoors, without masks. All classes are full, except for a few openings in 5th grade. In September and October, the classes will go canoeing on Tully Lake.

Dean’s Beans Coffee: You can get yours delivered once a month to the Village School. It’s available whole beans or ground. Find the order due dates and the order form at https://www.village-schoolma.org/shop/ and order online. It’s easy! You can pick up the coffee just inside the school entrance.

Royalston Community School

It was big smiles and welcoming elbow bumps as students strode the red carpet into the Royalston Community School this August 25, the first day of school 2021-2022. Welcome to Becky Janda, new RCS principal.

Recipe of the month
Cooler temperatures in September may mean a return to bubbling thick stews. Here is a comfy dish contributed by Amy Newland of Falls Rd.

Dal with Spices

- 2 cups small orange lentils
- 6 cups water
- 2 teaspoons salt
- 2 to 4 tablespoons veg. oil or ghee (I use olive oil)

Optional bonus garnishes:
- chopped cilantro, dollop yogurt, peanuts, or raisins

Boil the lentils in salted water with oil. Stir occasionally. While dal is cooking, toast the cumin and mustard seeds until they start to pop (just minutes on high heat). After lentils have cooked for 20 to 30 minutes add the toasted seeds with remaining spices to dal pot. Cook for another 10 minutes and serve on white rice.

If your garden is overflowing with greens, you can chop and add to dal at last minute. A sliced cucumber and yogurt salad with chopped herbs is a great side dish.
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

**Babysitter available.** Completed Red Cross Babysitter Training. Please call Hailey Dilg at 978-248-9828.


**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 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: cobbzanne4@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.

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**Wildlife sightings:**

A red fox has been lazing in the Chencharik’s yard on River Rd. lately.

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**free:**

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

**for sale:**

**Laying hens. 20 week old Rhode Island Reds.** $12/bird. Call Sheila 978-249-2183

**Custom thermal travel cups** by Swank Kreation. Single pieces or sets; totally kool kids’s cups. Krys and Keith Swan at swank-kreation@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 978-249-3464.

**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 20 lbs-$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.

**Nature books and prints.** Commissions accepted. Call Gordon Morrison at 978-249-2947.

**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  
August 22, 2021

To think, when I last wrote, I was fretting over the lack of rain. I fret no more. Just over thirteen inches fell in July, ten of them in the first two weeks. Roads washed out. Basements flooded. We continue to feel the collateral damage. Stuck doors. Drawers that won’t open. Mold abounds. And mosquitoes have been nothing short of horrific. Fearsome, actually. It is what it is.

It’s been a challenging year. You think? But I am referring to the garden year (having successfully avoided the Covid year). Surprisingly, the large quantities of water did not inflict undo damage on the plants. Most just shrugged it off, going about their business of maturing foodstuff. The rabbits, on the other hand, did inflict undo damage on the plants, like eating them to the ground, most significantly carrots and beets and celery and lettuce. And green beans. A year without beans is almost unthinkable. It’s only a bean, you might say, but, freshly-harvested, it is a special treat. Your supermarket “fresh” bean has been picked and transported and wholesaled and set out for your considerations. If they look like they’re a week old, they probably are. So I keep at it. I don’t have enough fingers to count the number of times I’ve planted them, including four in August. They are protected (?) with a double layer of mesh and row cover. Those August seedings are a roll of the dice. Beans require at least seven weeks to begin to yield, with the harvest period extending for several weeks. Beans do not survive freezing temperatures and September frosts are not unheard of in these parts (though it’s been a good number of years since we’ve experienced one).

Corn has been a pleasant surprise. I consider corn a dry-weather crop, able to endure rainless stretches. This season it is a successful wet-weather crop. Because I transplanted as well as direct-seeded on two occasions and because I planted three varieties of different maturity dates, we will consume fresh corn for two months. Irrespective of the particulars of dinner, four ears of corn will be included. Sharing August’s pleasures has been the peach crop. Alas, the peach harvest is concentrated, lasting but three weeks. Large numbers were frozen and we ate to our heart’s content (though I am not sure one could eat enough to content a heart!).

I have not always been this calm around insects. When I was a child my fear of insects did not discriminate between harmful and harmless. The swoop of a dragonfly or the sudden hop of a cricket sent me running. As an adult I realized how unfair this was to the many insects that meant me no harm. So, when my nieces and nephews were small, I spent long summer days introducing them to the insects that share our world, hoping to instill in them a sense of respectful awe. They learned to hold out their fingers for dragonflies and watch as a spider captured its prey. Now they are young adults, sophisticated in the ways of the world. Yet they still marvel at a praying mantis and will call me to the screen on a summer night to look at a particularly spectacular moth. Success!

That grasshopper has stayed on our screen into mid-Morning. For long moments we consider each other and I am filled with won...
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Take charge of your learning. Let me help you.
Student and adult learners welcome.
Though this year’s August
has not yet run its course,
And thunderstorm fireworks are
still a part of life,
A taste of fall
spices the air.

For a brief, sweet, fleeting moment
fall’s breezy breath in my hair
Seems to cool all life’s burning cares,
creating a flash of time
When jangling, discordant ambiguities
fall freely into rhyme.

Michael Young

current Royalston poet laureate

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.

Please contact: Debbie Conrad (978)895-3505, Fred Hodgeman (978)894-4996, and Wendell Kathan (978)939-3990

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

Royalston Resident
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Whither town offices?
The Raymond Building? Whitney Hall?
Learn the facts and express your views.
Monday, October 8, 6:30-8:30 pm
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