Calendar of Events

**Drive by Pie!**
Across from P.O., Royalston Common

**Pre-Orders are Best!!**

You can also drive by and purchase what is available that day, but to ensure you get your favorite, pre-order by calling:

Maureen 249-5138

(Please leave name, order and call back number.)

Pies available freshly baked or frozen and ready to bake in your own oven!

**November 2** Wednesday
10 a.m. – 2 p.m. **Early, in-person voting for midterm elections** at Whitney Hall

**November 4** Friday
5:30-7 p.m. **PTG Family BINGO Night fundraiser** at Royalston Community School

**Village School Lantern Walk**
7 p.m. **Open Mic is Back!** The Bluez Katz Blues Band will be playing, featuring the sensational Scotty Monett and Jim Bennett of Royalston. Come sign up to play or just enjoy the music and light dinner fare. Open mic will continue the 1st Friday of the month for the winter and spring.

**November 6** Sunday
2 a.m. **Daylight Savings Time ends** – Change your clocks! Change your batteries.

**November 7** Monday

**Black Bear Hunting Season** through Nov. 26th; Nov. 28th-Dec. 10th

**November 8** Tuesday
6:02 a.m. **Full Beaver Moon**
8 a.m. – 8 p.m. **Massachusetts mid-term election.** All voting at the Town Hall.

**November 11** Friday

**Veterans’ Day** – Post Office, P. S. Newton Library, all schools closed; no meetings
7 p.m. **SHARP!** **Turkey Raffle** by Royalston Fire & EMS, sta. #1

**November 12** Saturday
10 a.m. – Noon **Village School Open House** Come meet the teachers, talk with parents, meet alumni, tour the new building, find out about our unique curriculum and get your questions answered! Bring your children, they will enjoy activities in the classrooms just for them. Preschool for next year often fills quickly.

5:30 p.m. **Roast Beef Supper** Royalston F&G

**November 19** Saturday
9 a.m. – sell out **LBS Drive-By-Pies Sale** Raymond Bldg

**November 20** Tuesday
6:02 a.m. **New Cold Moon**

**November 25-27** Friday
10 a.m. **Wreath Sale** at # 9 on the Common. Benefits Athol and Royalston Historical Societies.

**November 28** Monday

**Shotgun Deer Season** through December 10th

December 2 **Friday**
5 p.m. **Annual Tree Lighting,** on The Common. Santa, caroling, and homemade snacks including: chowder, cookies, and s’mores. Performance by the Athol Congregational Church Handbell Choir. The lighting is at 6:00pm. Open Mic follows. (South Royalston lighting will be Friday, Dec. 9)

December 3 **Saturday**
10:00 a.m. **Holiday Program for Children** at the Library. Sharon Harmon will read her book Francois’ Christmas Crossing. Kids can complete a craft project to take home. Holiday snacks served.
Select Board Notes  
Rick Martin, clerk

New DPW Superintendent
The Select Board would like to welcome our new DPW Superintendent Jaret Thiem. Jaret has previously worked for the town DPW for three years and has been on the Royalston Fire Department for over 10 years, attaining the rank of Lieutenant. Jaret’s first day of work was October 17th. If you see him and his crew out stop and say hello and welcome him to his new and very busy position.

Hearse House Upgrades
Work has begun on the planned upgrades of the two hearse houses in Town. The first will be the house located at the Riverside Cemetery in the South Village. The house located at the uptown common cemetery will begin after a review by the Historical District Commission. The funds for these were approved years ago by town meeting and everyone is anxious to see them brought back to as close to original as possible.

Re-energized Energy Committee
We asked and we received volunteers to become members of the Energy Committee for town. There is much to be done and the committee has already begun. First items on the agenda will be a review of the town’s fleet of vehicles to begin a process of determining the feasibility of change from gas/diesel to electric power for these vehicles. There are also items to see if adding charging stations in town is feasible and if solar power stations can be a benefit to areas of town or town buildings. There are many other items and issues to do research and feasibility studies for and this always needs to keep the character of the town in mind. If you would like to help or submit ideas, please go to the town website.

COVID Funds Dispersed
In accordance with the 2021 American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), funds have been received by the Town to try to make up for some of the hardships that were caused by the pandemic. The ARPA committee submitted recommendations to the Select Board in September to reimburse many employees that were required to work during this time while many of our other areas of life were put on hold. The Select Board would like to thank all the people identified as continuing to interact with the public for the town at that time. More funds are going to be coming to Royalston and ideas for their use can be submitted to the committee through the town website. Although the restrictions by the Federal government are quite stringent, all ideas are welcome.

Drizzly skies above  
Colorful carpet below  
Autumn joy in New England

Michael Young
current Royalston Poet Laureate

From the DPW
First off, I would like to express my thanks for such a warm welcome as I start this new chapter of my life as the DPW superintendent. I am very excited and eager to settle in and get to work. As far as updates go for the DPW, we continue to get equipment ready for winter snow removal. We are starting with fall grading of gravel roads.

Thank You, Jaret R. Thiem

01368 – Support Our Post Office
As you prepare holiday cards, letters, and packages, please consider buying your postage from 01368 – Royalston’s Post Office – located at the south end of The Common in the Historical Society building. Sales of stamps, stamped envelopes, and stamped post cards by 01368, in sufficient value, are needed by the United States Postal Service (USPS) to verify our location is worth keeping open. Your stamp purchases are what makes Royalston’s Post Office possible. Stamps are available in rolls or sheets, and are “forever,” which means they can be used even when postage rates increase. Stop by Monday through Saturday, 7:45-11:45 a.m. (Closed Sunday.)

Board of Health News  
Phil Leger, chair
We are awaiting electrical work to connect the new cardboard paper compactor. Once completed, all paper and cardboard will go into this unit. Please have patience in the meantime as we are juggling containers. Understand that sometimes the containers may be full. Don’t blame the workers if this occurs.

As of November 1st, mattresses and textiles are waste bitdgt items. Mattresses in demo are no longer allowed. These are collected for recycling. Textiles are to go in one of the collection boxes. Ask one of the attendants if unsure.

With colder weather approaching, be careful when walking around. Black ice can be present.

Covid booster vaccines are available at most pharmacies. Easy to book online. Covid test kits are available at the Town Hall, Library and Post Office. With first frost, mosquitoes are done for the year but not so for ticks. Check pets and yourselves when coming in from outdoors.

First Congregational Church of Royalston Outreach
Marion’s Food Pantry:
Our pantry serves 20-30 meals/ week on Thursdays (note the new day). Please let us know if you know of someone who could use a meal. Pantry hours: Saturday 10 - 12
Please contact: Debbie Conrad (978)895-3505
Emergency Management
Royalston Emergency Management Director Jim Barclay
ema@royalston-ma.gov or phone 978-249-2904
Royalston Emergency Management Deputy Tom Musco
tgmusco@gmail.com or 978-249-9633

With most pandemic-related financial assistance now gone, and home heating costs rapidly rising, it is likely some residents will need extra help to make it through this winter. While you’re putting the finishing touches on winterizing your home – ensuring exits are not blocked, taking care to keep heating vents open, and using only appropriate heating devices inside - here are a few resources to contact NOW, before your house is unheated, and the situation is beyond your control, and becomes an emergency:

National Grid customers are eligible for free home energy audits, upgrades that can be free or a deeply-discounted prices, and interest-free financing of up to $25,000 for energy-efficient upgrades for heating (and cooling.) Check out www.masssave.com or call 866-527-SAVE (7283) to schedule a home energy assessment.

Montachusett Opportunity Council’s Energy and Environmental Services division is Royalston’s agency for free/subsidized weatherization and heating system services. For information on qualifications and assistance with applying, call 978-342-7025.

Royalston’s LIHEAP (Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program) agency is the Making Opportunity Count out of Fitchburg. Fixed benefit amounts for oil, electricity, propane, kerosene, wood, and coal are available to qualified individuals. Applications for the 2022-2023 season will begin the first of this month. First-time applicants and those recertifying can go to www.mocinc.org/fuelassistance for live links to on-line forms. If on-line application isn’t possible, you can e-mail fuelassistance@mocinc.org or call 978-345-7040 ext. 1, and leave a message. To make an appointment for a local office (Athol; Gardner; Winchendon) call 978-342-4520.

The Salvation Army’s Good Neighbor Energy Fund offers assistance to Royalston residents who are ineligible for state or federal heating assistance, are between 60-80% of the MA median income levels, but are unable to meet a month’s energy expense due to temporary financial difficulty. The Athol Corps is Royalston’s contact: 978-249-3140. Eligibility guidelines are posted at www.magoodneighbor.org/assistance

Through Joe-4-Sun, a program begun by former US Rep. Joe Kennedy, III, eligible households can receive a one-time delivery per heating season of 100 gallons of home heating oil, free of charge. There are also opportunities to reduce electricity bills by 50% through a solar co-op. To apply for assistance, call 855-Joe-4-Sun (855-563-4786) or e-mail joe4sun@citizensenergy.com

Preparedness beats panic every time!
Be informed – Make a Plan!

Election Schedules from the Town Clerk
Election November 8, 2022- 7 AM- 8 PM @ Town Hall

Important dates:
November 1- last day to apply for a mail in ballot for the November 8th election.

November 2- last early vote session at town clerk’s office 10-2.

November 8 state election - 7 am-8 pm all voting at Town Hall, downstairs.

There are contests for Governor, Attorney General, Secretary of State, Treasurer, Auditor, District Attorney, Sheriff, and Representatives in Congress on the ballot.

In addition, there are 4 ballot questions:
Question 1 would create a 4% tax on the portion of a person’s annual income above $1 million and require – in the state constitution – that the funds be spent only on transportation and public education.

Question 2 pertains to profit limits on dental insurance and Question 3 concerns liquor sales license expansion.

Question 4 would affirm approval of a law already passed by the Massachusetts legislature and then voted on again to override Governor Baker’s veto allowing residents who cannot provide proof of lawful residence to obtain standard drivers’ licenses (but not REAL ID). Because all seeking licenses will have to present passports and other verifying identification, provide proof of insurance, as well as pass their Massachusetts drivers’ tests to get a license, the law is seen as a way of improving highway safety. It is favored by a majority of police chiefs as well as state legislators. The law is explicit that these licenses do not confer voting rights.

A Voters’ Guide will be sent to each household from the Secretary of the Commonwealth’s office with more information about everything on the ballot with the exception of Question 4. For pro and con arguments and the full text of the law at the center of Question 4 , you will need to visit: https://www.sec.state.ma.us/ele/ele22/

Fire and EMS News
RF&EMS fundraising chairperson Amy M. Putney, FF/FR

It’s Royalston Fire & EMS Turkey Raffle time! Friday, November 11th, at the Center Fire Station beginning promptly at 7 p.m. There will be 24 spins, $2/spin for one large and one small frozen turkey, along with a variety of fall foods and beverages. Two ‘Thanksgiving Baskets, complete Thanksgiving meals for the day, and days’ worth of leftovers are available for a $2/chance! Basket tickets are available from any firefighter, or at the station on Monday training nights. All proceeds benefit the Royalston Fire & EMS Association, providing equipment, training, supplies, and sometimes, even apparatus for the Royalston Fire Department and Rescue Squad. Your support improves services without increasing taxes!
**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

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**Donations to the Friends**

Amy and Stephen Newland

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**Thank you**

Beth Gospodarek, Amy Newland, and Barb Richardson for staffing the Library craft table for the Agricultural Fair.

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**Holiday Craft Programs**

There will be two holiday craft programs this year. In the first on Sunday, November 13 at 2:00 p.m. in the Town Hall, I will teach participants to create a Himmeli straw ornament. This design has many names: Himmeli (heaven and sky) in Finland, Pajaki (spider) in Poland, Sodas in Lithuania, and Puzars in Latvia and more depending on the country where it is made. All are triangular shapes combined to form interlocked diamond-shaped pieces to create intricate mobiles. In the workshop each participant will create three himmeli which can be hung individually or on a small frame for a mobile. The techniques taught can be used to further add more diamonds to create larger mobiles.

Heidi Strickland will teach a class on German Paper Star Ornaments on Sunday, December 4 at 2:00 p.m. in the Town Hall. These traditional three-dimensional ornaments are formed by folding colorful paper or ribbon strips. The stars can be hung as ornaments or used in arrangements or decorative elements on packages or cards. Heidi has taught floral arranging and other crafts.

Pre-registration is required. Space is limited to 15 in each class and preference will be given to members of the Friends of the Phinehas S. Newton Library. Each participant is asked to bring a pair of small sharp scissors to each class if you have them. The classes are free and funded by the Friends of the Library, and yes, there will be delicious refreshments served.

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**Preschool Story Time**

Join other preschoolers for crafts, snacks, stories, playtime, and visiting with Brooke Coleman on non-holiday Mondays at 2:00. Come whenever you can and join in this joyful program.

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**Local Author Children’s Program**

On Saturday, December 3 at 10:00 a.m. at there will be a holiday program for children at the Library. While enjoying holiday snacks, children will hear Sharon Harmon read her book Francois’ Christmas Crossing about a stowaway owl and then complete a craft project to take home.

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**Building Updates**

The new furnace has been installed and is heating up the building quite warmly. Our long-range plans call for insulating the attic and basement ceiling of the building. An energy audit was conducted months ago but as of yet there has been no report or progress in making it more energy efficient. In the future, the plans are for a ‘greener’ alternatives which will cool as well as heat the building. In the past few months we have learned more about HVAC systems and old brick buildings than we ever expected. Grant funds from Green Communities moneys may be a way for us to accomplish these goals without capital expenditures by the Town.

Thanks to the Community Preservation Committee, Community Preservation Act funds will commence soon on the restoration of the Library roof. The current roof was installed at least 30 years ago and has served the community well, but a leak and the realization that the old shingles are starting to curl up and come loose has led us to seek funds from the CPC, who approved our funding request, and the Historic District Commission which approved our proposal on the type and color of shingles to use.

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**Boston Library eCard**

Did you know that if you are a resident of Massachusetts, a student studying in the Commonwealth, or working for a Massachusetts company, you can apply for a Boston Library eCard without making the trek to Boston? Just go online to https://www.bpl.org/ecard/ and register. The card allows you access to all online resources at the Boston Public Library, which includes Hoopla, a streaming platform that allows access to audio books, comics, e-books, movies, music, and TV. To borrow print materials and museum passes you must have a regular BPL card, which can be obtained from any branch or the main library.

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**Artist Exhibit**

As many of you know, Amy Newland stepped forward and created a series of original artwork for notecards that are available to purchase at the Library. And, during November and December, she will have a display of her paintings at the Library. For the exhibit Amy has chosen to display some of her work that especially pleases her own personal taste. Stop by to see her distinctive style.

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**Looking for Holiday Ideas?**

Stop by and browse our collection of holiday craft, gift, and cookbooks for innovative and creative ideas. Or just say humbug and grab a good book and snuggle in for some great reading or listening.
Some of the new materials at your library

Adult Fiction
Archer, Jeffrey       Next in Line
Atkinson, Kate       Shrines of Gaiety
Bacikman, Fredrik    The Winners
Baldacci, David      Long Shadows
Box, C.J.            Treasure State
Connelly, John       The Furies
Cousens, Sophie      Before I Do
DeMille, Nelson       The Maze
Ennes, Hiron          Leech
Greer, Andrew        Less is Lost
Hilderbrand, Elin    Endless Summer
Hoover, Colleen       Maybe Now
Lemberg, R.B.         The Unbalancing
Lewis, Beverly        The Orchard
Mayor, Archer         Fall Guy
McMorris, Kristina    The Ways We Hide
Millet, Lydia         Dinosaurs
Ng, Celeste           Our Missing Hearts
Novik, Naomi          The Golden Enclaves
Osman, Richard       The Bullet That Missed
Patterson, James      The Twelve Topsy-Turvy, Very Messy Days of Xmas
Picoult, Jodi         Mad Honey
Sandford, John        Righteous Prey
Sparks, Nicholas      Dreamland
Steel, Danielle       The High Notes
Strout, Elizabeth     Lucy By the Sea
Turow, Scott          Suspect
Ward, Catriona        Little Eve
Warrell, Laura        Sweet, Soft, Plenty Rhythm
Woods, Stuart         Distant Thunder
Zusy, Jeannie         The Fredrick Sisters are Living the Dream

Adult Non-Fiction
Berry, Wendell       The Need to be Whole
Bowlin, Ben          Stuff They Don’t Want You to Know
Grandin, Temple      Visual Thinking
Hamalainen, Pekka    Indigenous Continent
Lonely Planet        USA
Lonely Planet        New England
O’Reilly, Bill       Killing the Legends
Pepin, Jacques       Jacques Pepin: Art of the Chicken
Quammen, David       Breathless
Ripa, Kelly           Live Wire
Souza, Pete           The West Wing and Beyond
Tyson, Neil deGrasse Starry Messenger
Urban, Melissa       The Book of Boundaries
Wade, Greg            Bread Head

Children’s Nonfiction
Brallier, Max        The Last Kids on Earth and the Forbidden Fortress
DeCosta, Annie       Maizy & Charlie’s Germ Book
Endo, Tatsuya        Spy X Family
Fletcher, Susan      A Bear Far From Home
Green, John          Investigators #6
Holm, Jennifer       Once Upon a Messy Whisker
Loney, Andrea        Curve and Flow
Sabelko, Rebecca     Baby Deer
Shiga, Jason          Leviathan
Wood, John            The Gold Book
Wood, John            The Gray Book

Children’s Fiction
Kraegel, Kenneth     Mushroom Lullaby
Lai, Thanhha         Inside Out & Back Again
May, Kyla            Pug’s Road Trip
Mentzel, Cara        Loud Mouse
Miles, Ellen          Bingo
Pierce, Lincoln       Big Nate: Release the Hounds!
Richardson, Julia    Let’s Build a Little Train
Sicuro, Aimee         If You Find a Leaf
Tarshis, Lauren      I Survived the Wellington Avalanche, 1910
Verde, Susan          I Am Me
Weatherford, Carole   Me and My Family Tree
Weatherford, Carole   Standing in the Need of Prayer
Williams, Serena     The Adventures of Qai Qai
Witherspoon, Reese   Busy Betty

Young Adult Fiction/Non-Fiction
Angleberger, Tom      Two-Headed Chicken
Applegate, Katherine  Odder
Barrows, Annie        Like
Blaby, Aaron          Pig the Rebel
Boyton, Sandra        Moo, Baa, Fa la la la!
Child, Lauren         Clarice Bean Think Like an Elf
Clanton, Ben          Narwhalicorn and Jelly
DiCamillo, Kate       A Very Mercy Christmas
Fallon, Jimmy         Con Pollo
Giovanni, Andy        A Library
Griffiths, Andy       Tales from the Treehouse
Harper, Charise       I Cannot Draw a Horse
Henkes, Kevin         Oh, Sal
Higgins, Ryan         Hey, Bruce!

DVDs
Father Stu, Last Seen Alive, Mayor of Kingstown, Outlander Season 6, and Sonic the Hedgehog 2

Upcoming Craft Programs
As mentioned before, we have some exciting craft programs coming up in the new year. Josh Doub and Lydia Musco will be leading a clay building workshop for adults on Sunday, February 19 at 2 at the Town Hall and Ashley Levi will be enticing even those who hesitate to cook with a class on simple easy recipes. In March Jennifer Lee will lead a workshop on making a traditional, pine bark, berry basket while she tells us about Northeast Woodland American Indian culture past and present.

Yoga with Jess
Tuesdays at 6:00 p.m. in the Town Hall is the time to join in the weekly yoga class with Jess Schantz. Increase your flexibility, improve your balance, and relax for an hour each week. Bring your own mat. All abilities accommodated.
CONGRATULATIONS AND GOOD NEWS

Linda Vaidulas

A former Royalston resident, Linda Lawrence Vaidulas, released her first children’s book entitled, Little Mouse Has a Quest. The inspiration for this book was a product of her years working at the former Camp Caravan in Royalston (now owned by The Village School). The camp was a summer program which brought in handicapped children from the Boston area. The children taught her how to live with smiles and encouragement when life becomes overwhelming.

Linda’s passion for working with young children developed into a position within the Athol-Royalston School District.

Linda wishes to convey to those who read this book to continue to wonder and pursue the purpose of their life. Little Mouse finds his quest to be fulfilling in bringing peace and comfort to little children. Little Mouse no longer wonders about his purpose in life. His finished quest was a gift that brought comfort to little children. Linda’s book is available through Barnes & Noble, Amazon and iTunes and at our Library.

Submitted by Rose Lawrence

Oh the Memories!

The South Royalston School Reunion recently held their 118th consecutive meeting at the Royalston Fish and Game Club. The meeting was called to order by newly elected President, Arthur Alger. Other newly elected officers include Vice President Jan Woodbury St. Jean, Secretary Rose Lawrence and past Treasurer Dottie Yablonski.

This year, our event took a new direction. Rather than bring a pot luck item the Reunion Committee provided coffee and tea and all attendees were asked to bring a dessert. The decision was a success. Who wouldn’t want to spend an afternoon in front of a dessert table! Suggested by Arthur, the group spoke about their school memories at the Raymond and White Schools. Even those who did not attend the schools in Royalston were encouraged to speak and share their school memories. The stories were fun to share and laughter filled the hall.

Oh my, how times have changed.

It has not been confirmed, but this reunion is believed to be the oldest annually held meeting of any elementary school reunion in the country. That’s quite an honor.

We invite all former Royalston students interested in attending the 119th Reunion to contact Arthur Alger at 978-633-4266 or Rose Lawrence 978-249-6814.

Historical Society News

The Society is busy and growing. After our recent restoration project, we are taking the opportunity while unpacking the museum collections to make some improvements. We are working with an archivist to better preserve our documents, including planning for some climate-controlled areas upstairs.

We are talking about how to make room for short-term special exhibits. Work needs to be done on the fence, which is the Society’s responsibility. Of course, there is regular maintenance as well. Be on the lookout for letters in the mail asking for your support.

Thanks to volunteer Fred Gillespie for thinking ahead. He recently planted a bed of bulbs, sure to bring smiles come spring, in front of the Museum. Please reach out with your own ideas of how to make the Society better.

Ladies’ Benevolent Society

President Laurie Deveneau at 978-249-5807, lmdeveneau@msn.com

Members have flour and fruits at the ready. Pecans and pumpkins prepped. They are dusting their rolling pins and awaiting disbursement of pie tins. The baking brigade is a go for the 2022 Drive-By-Pies fundraising pie sale, which takes place Saturday, November 19, on the front lawn at the Raymond Building. This annual event – 12th, this year – is one of the largest LBS fundraising efforts conducted during the year, with proceeds dedicated to student scholarships and awards. Fresh or frozen pies can be reserved in advance for pick-up on that day. Fresh pies are pumpkin/squash, and sometimes surprises like key lime, custard, lemon meringue; pies available fresh or frozen are apple, blueberry, mincemeat, and pecan. To reserve your pies (and the frozen ones come with instructions to bake from frozen – PERFECT for Thanksgiving!) contact Maureen Blasco at 978-249-5138 or maureenblasco@gmail.com.

Royalston Fish and Game

Roast beef suppers are back! The Royalston Fish and Game Club has started up monthly fund-raising suppers. Scheduled thus far are Saturdays November 12th, and December 10th. Family-style meals feature tossed salad, bread with real butter, perfectly-cooked roast beef, mashed potatoes and gravy, green beans, and a Hoodsie Cup – strawberry or chocolate – for dessert. Take-out dinners are available. Doors open at 5:30 p.m. and supper is served about 6 p.m. Call or stop by the Clubhouse at 978-249-3004. Tickets are $15/person; rarely are any available at the door so RSVP!

Queen of Hearts Hunt is ongoing from October 21. Tickets are $1/ea, and may be purchased at the Clubhouse at any time. Weekly drawings for the cash associated with each card will be at least $25; more than $1,700 went home with a couple of winners! Drawings are Fridays at 7:30 p.m. If present when your card is drawn, winner walks with 60% of the pot; otherwise, 50%.

Recipe of the Month

Who registers your dog, runs your elections, finds the book you want, shares her happy garden plants, and cooks delicious healthy food? Barb Richardson, town clerk, of course. Slow-cooked to bring out the sweetness, colorful root vegetables make for cozy fall fare.

Barb’s Beet Salad

Because measuring takes all the fun out of cooking, this is approximately how I make my beet salad.

4 large beets (or about as many as I think will take to fill a bowl)
2 large yellow onions
A couple tablespoons of butter
Large handful of pecans or walnuts
Generous chunk of blue cheese
Some of the best balsamic vinegar you can get your hands on
Some good olive oil

Clean and lightly trim beets; boil in water or bake wrapped in foil until just tender. Once cool enough to handle run under cool water to remove skin. While beets are cooking, slice and caramelize your onions in the butter until they are a rich brown. Add a little balsamic and let rest. Toast your nuts in a cast iron skillet until you can smell them ALMOST smoke. Keep moving them around because they can go from yum to yuck really quick.

Slice beets while still warm add your onions toss with a little oil and balsamic, sprinkle the nuts and the crumbled blue cheese over the top. Do not chill this recipe, tastes best when served at room temp.
South Royalston Revitalization Committee

December features two fun family events. RSVR is sponsoring the South Village Tree Lighting at the Gazebo on Friday, Dec 9 at 6:00. And the Royalston Arts Council is sponsoring the Tree Lighting Ceremony on the Common on Friday, Dec 2 at 5:00. Please come and enjoy!

On Dec. 9, the Ladies Benevolent Society will be at the Gazebo to sell ornaments in memory of loved ones. Santa will visit on a Fire Truck at 6:30 p.m. Please bring a non-perishable food for the Royalston food pantry. There will be hot chocolate, cookies and caroling.

Rose Lawrence from the Plant Committee sent this message: Special thanks to Maureen Blasco for her spectacular and colorful arrangement of zinnias by the Fire Station as well as the ageratum and marigolds surrounding the Gazebo. The flowers enhanced the perennials previously planted by volunteers and RSVR members. The colorful flowers have been enjoyed by residents and visitors all season. Thanks so much to Patti Stanko and Kathy Chencharik for watering and tending to the flower boxes by the Fire Station, bridge, and picnic area across from the store. The hot, dry, and windy weather made for a tough summer for container plants. Thank you also to Dickie Lawrence and others who have mowed the lawn around the Gazebo and the area on the other side of the street.

Children and families enjoyed the performance and hands-on activities with aerialists Molly Baechtold and Leah Abel at the Up in the Air Fair on September 24. Besides the many volunteers who we acknowledged in last month’s Newsletter, we would like to thank Jim Bennett (sound system), Elaine Miner (Family Game basket), donors Mary Swain, Mae Williams, and Gina Agnelli.

Julie Crosby, the balloon artist at the Fair, gave a big compliment to the children, parents and Royalston community when she mentioned that of the many communities that she has performed her balloon art in, she was impressed with how polite and patient the children were, making a nice line to wait their turn with her.

Best wishes for Happy Holidays!

South Village Tree Lighting
At the Gazebo – Friday, December 9, 6:00 p.m.

*Santa and His Fire Truck *Hot Chocolate and Cookies *Please bring a donation for the Royalston Food Pantry *Caroling, LBS Memory Ornaments and more

Sponsored by the Royalston South Village Revitalization Committee

Are you Interested in Weekly Pick-up Volleyball?

Around 20 years ago, there was pick-up volleyball for a couple of hours one winter night per week in Royalston. There is some idle chat about bringing it back. Are you interested? Respond to the newsletter (chasegos2@gmail.com). If there is enough interest, it may happen.

Blast from the Past
Jim Bacon at Birch Hill Dam

Kathy Chencharik

In 1970, Jim Bacon went to work for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers at Birch Hill Dam in South Royalston. At age twenty-two, according to an article from the chief’s office in Washington D.C, he was the youngest manager in New England and probably the country as far as flood control projects go.

The construction of Birch Hill Dam began in June of 1940 as a result of damage done to homes and industry from downstream flooding in the spring of 1936 and hurricane of 1938. The process of building a dam requires a lot of borings into the soil to find out what kind of materials would be under the dam. By doing test borings during the layout of the dam, due to its weight and chance of earthquake, the most suitable location for the gatehouse or flood control tower is found. A particular set of guidelines was used in the construction of the dam. The core of the dam is impervious (incapable of being penetrated) material, with an outer layer of pervious (open to passage) material such as gravel or sand. Using both types of material, it’s a progressive type building process. Based on the height and length of the dam, the impervious core has to be a certain width and material. Before the dam was built, information such as temperature and precipitation was supplied by the National Weather Service or U.S. Geological Survey (USGS). Information gathered by the USGS gauges were part of the original design plan for Birch Hill Dam. There are still several concrete structures in the area, one of which can be seen along the Millers River near where Pete and Henry’s Cafe used to be. Like the flooding of 1936 and 1938, another event occurred in April of 1987 when the snow melt had ended and it had rained for a week. The ground was saturated and the dam was at 33.8 feet of water. If not for the dam, there would have been flooding again in South Royalston, Athol, Orange and Erving, all downstream of the dam. Since Birch Hill Dam was built, it has had about a five-time payback and was money well spent. When Jim began work in 1970, the Millers River was badly polluted by paper pulp and paper processes being done by Baldwinville Products and Seamon Paper in the Baldwinville area. They both had to do clean up work. By about 1980, the Millers River was reborn and stocking of fish was able to be done.
Royalston Community School has traditionally had sixth graders as kindergarten buddies for years, but recently we have expanded this school community building program to include multiple grades. The sixth grade is continuing to be buddies with kindergarten, the fifth grade is buddies with second grade, the fourth grade is buddies with preschool and the third grade is buddies with first grade. This gives an opportunity for social development, leadership, modeling, cross grade relationships and positive community belongingness growth. Some activities they do together involve seasonal art projects such as the fall pictures the fifth and second graders recently completed. Whether it involves reading stories, outside activities, or art activities, the positive impact is felt by all those involved. We look forward to RCS school buddies continuing to support each other throughout the year!

Athol-Royalston Middle School staff and students are settled into routines promoting belongingness across classrooms. Teachers continue to support student learning as they collaborate to improve their teaching practices, refine their teaching repertoires, and model lifelong learning for our students. Plans to foster connectedness are underway with monthly grade level meetings and a fall dance, scheduled for November 4th. PRIDE (Perseverance. Respect. Integrity. Done Everyday.) tickets across ARMS are being given to students demonstrating these core values. These tickets are entered into a raffle for various prizes voted on by our students. Recently in our 8th grade Civics class, students were using secondary documents to evaluate the contributions of the Iroquois Confederacy on the U.S. Constitution. Students were asked to critically think about the secondary document, comparing the contents to primary documents recently viewed in class. Students noted evidence from the text supporting their ideas. Within this classroom, there are norms clearly posted for discussions and overall classroom expectations. These norms include, but are not limited to: treat others as you would like to be treated, respect other people and their property, and laugh with anyone, but not at anyone.

Athol High School was notified on October 13th, by the Department of Education, that its application to become an Early College school had been accepted, and with successful completion of Part B of the application process, would be fully approved for the start of the 2023-24 school year. An implementation team is currently completing Part B. Massachusetts high schools designated as offering Early College are intentionally designed to empower students who are often underrepresented in higher education. Students enrolled in Early College are provided the opportunity to experience and complete college level courses while in high school and further gain exposure to a variety of career opportunities. Additionally, this program greatly reduces the time and expenses associated with college which increases students’ likelihood of completion. The following week, Principal King met with all students during grade-level meetings to discuss the positive impact of making healthy choices. He outlined the numerous opportunities that students have both within the school and in the community where students can connect themselves to teams, clubs or organizations that provide a structure and environment where healthy choices are encouraged. As part of the schools belongingness initiative, focus groups are being created to better hear student voices and to have a clearer understanding of how the school can create a culture where these students’ needs are being met.

Monty Tech
Jessica Putney Schanz, Royalston Rep. jschanz@montytech.net

The Monty Tech SchoolCom meeting on the 2nd has been postponed to Wed., Nov. 9, at 7 p.m. in the Media Center. The date conflicts with the MA Association of School Committees’ annual conference, which is attended by several SchoolCom members.

Exciting news: Monty Tech, in concert with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, and as many as three Monty Tech District “sending high schools” (like Athol High!) are partnering to expand access to Electrical, Carpentry or Plumbing education to as many as 80 sending high school students (selected by their own districts) for an after-hours program at a nearby satellite campus. The initial target communities would be those whose applicants far exceed the quota. To accomplish this, Monty Tech received the largest grant in school history, $1,887,127.00. Monty Tech was one of just 14 recipients of this grant, intended to expand Career, Vocational, and Technical Education (CVTE) opportunities to students in classic high schools! Current building trades students and instructors at Monty Tech will renovate a satellite location, replicating characteristics that work well on the main campus.

After the first month of school, Co-Op coordinator Kim Curry had enrolled 92 seniors into the co-op program, who are enjoying working and learning alongside industry professionals. This popular program is an extension of the vocational programs offered here at the school, and offer qualified students the unique experience of increasing technical skills and building soft skills, while still benefitting from the extensive Monty Tech support system.

The school’s second Anatomage table arrived in October, and was installed in Dylan Hager’s classroom/lab. Mr. Hager is an outstanding science instructor, who teaches the school’s popular Project Lead the Way (PLTW) courses in Human Body Systems and Principles of Biomedical Science. While the technology was purchased to support the enhanced Anatomy & Physiology course, in partnership with Fitchburg State University, Mr. Hager is happy to house the equipment, and make himself an expert in virtual dissection lessons, which will only improve student outcomes until the new course is up and running! (High achievers in PLTW may earn credit at 22 different colleges and universities nationwide!)

This past spring (SY 2021-2022), 10th grade students took the Next Generation MCAS (ELA, Math & Biology). In addition, select 9th graders took the Next Generation MCAS Biology. Our passing rate was 100% in English Language Arts, 97% in Mathematics, and 97% in Biology.
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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.


“You Name It” blankets, crocheted to order: $25. Perfect for baby gifts, nursing homes, or your own couch. Also available: hats, scarves, mittens, baby sweater sets, etc. Call Marlene at 978-249-4491.

Small Business Saturday – Nov. 26, 2022
Want to knock out some holiday shopping early, and at the same time, support your neighbors? Check out ‘the classifieds’ at the end of this edition of the RCN and see if there aren’t some opportunities there! Some of the items will require a bit of lead time since they’re one-of-a-kind, so be sure to get your requests in early!

Royalston’s Annual Tree Lighting
- Santa & His Fire Truck
- The ACC Bell Choir
- Christmas Caroling
- Wreath Sale
- Chowder, Cookies, S’mores & More
On The Common December 2nd
5:00 P.M.
Open Mic Night to Follow
Sponsored by the Royalston Cultural Council & First Congregational Church

Royalston Community Newsletter November 2022 Page 9 for sale:

2014 Road King $12,500, Screaming Eagle Air, Stage 1 Download, 18” Fat Bars, Quick Disconnect Hardware. Removable Quick Connect Windshield, Samson FishTail Exhaust Emissions Eliminated, Brand New Battery, Majority of miles highway. Runs and looks new, must be seen and ridden to be fully appreciated. Contact Paul: 978-407-5319


Custom thermal travel cups by Swank Creations. Single pieces or sets; totally kool kids' cups. Krys and Keith Swan at swankcreations@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. 249-3464.

Royalston Maple Syrup from Divoll’s sugar house. Prices: pints $15, quarts $20, half gallons $35 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


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

Squire Davis Farm has a limited number of one pound jars of honey. Call 978-249-4000 and leave message if you want some. $10.00 per jar. I will leave on porch for you to pick up. Ignore “No Honey This Year” sign. That is for the rest of the world!

Dean’s Beans Coffee You can order fresh roasted coffee once a month through the Village School, ground or whole beans. Order online and pick it up in the hallway at the school the following Friday. Go to https://www.villageschoolma.org/shop/
Garden Notes  
October 23, 2022

By now, most of you have experienced first frost and many of you have experienced a second. We are not among the most nor many. Our frost-sensitive plants, the tomatoes and peppers and beans and squash and cucumbers (and basil even) persist still. But, with the exception of cherry tomatoes and a pepper patch that looks as good now as it did in August, production pretty much ceased weeks ago. With no frost predicted for the foreseeable future, we may even make it to November. I do not recall a later fall frost, in this our forty-sixth year of gardening.

It is time for the annual day of reckoning, a review of what performed well, what performed not-so-well, and what performed not-at-all. With the exception of the onions (victimized once again with their unidentifiable malady), the roots were the stars of the season, bulking up beyond all expectations. And, if there was an Oscar for Best Performance by a Vegetable, it would be presented to the potato. I would have been delighted with a yield of three hundred pounds from the thirty pounds planted. I harvested four hundred fifty pounds. Leeks, too, are as large as they’ve ever been. Many will remain in the ground until the ground becomes undig-gable. An undug leek is likely to survive the winter, one of the few crops that does. (Parsnips are another.) Corn and celery yields were more than adequate, beans, summer squash, and cucumbers less-than-adequate. At the other end of the spectrum were winter squashes, totally eliminated by varmints unknown, and cauliflow-ers which grew (and continue to grow) to sizes unimaginable but show no indications of forming a head. I have no explanation for this variability in performance. If prior experience prevails, this year’s haves could be next year’s have-nots and this year’s have-nots could be next year’s haves. I’m but a humble gardener, not an agronomist.

After years of mumbling in respect to additional down-sizing, I have finally done it….at least on paper. Next year’s garden will have thirty-six beds (varying in width from three to four feet and in length from twelve to twenty-four feet), a dramatic reduction from this year’s fifty-one beds. In addition, I’ll be abandoning the strawberry patch and parsnip patch, both overrun with weeds, and paying far less attention to a couple of perennial flower beds. In its heyday (in my heyday), I maintained seventy some beds. This does not come easy. In one year the space will be overtaken with annual weeds. In the following year or two, grasses will compete with these weeds, and by year four, it will look no different than the surrounding fields. There will be indication that this had been a piece of ground enriched, nurtured, and maintained for four and a half decades. So it goes.

On a brighter note, fall foliage has been nothing less than spectacu-lar. Arriving early, it lingers still, providing ideal working condi-tions for the tasks still at hand.

Larry Siegel

Packing Up

Yesterday, Tom and I put away summer. With just enough hazy sunlight to warm the air and soften the colors of fall, the day was perfect for this end-of-season ritual. Packing up summer is an un-mistakable step toward the cold and dark. But it is also one more chance to revisit that season of warmth and light.

There were many tasks in front of us, so we tackled the biggest challenge first: the screened canopy. We had purchased this canopy after too many times borrowing one from a patient and generous neighbor. We christened it “The Tea House” and had filled it with a long table and several chairs. As we folded the table I remembered summer breakfasts with Tom, the July 4th family gathering, the August birthday party for Lydia’s father-in-law, and afternoons of quiet reading or iced tea with friends. We unzipped and removed the screen curtains, and I recalled watching the late summer acro-batics of dozens of hummingbirds in their frantic quest for one last sip of nectar before heading south. The screens had kept them out of the Tea House, where they might have been caught in the canopy’s folds. We collapsed the metal frame into a neat rectangle and folded the canvas and screens. Now all that remains to remind us of the Tea House is a faint square bordered by unmown grass.

Next came the planters. I had already spent a day in the warm autumn sun, rescuing my geraniums from pots where their less-hearty neighbors had long-since passed their prime. Each gerani-um had found a new home in its own pot, but now it was time to bring them indoors. As I placed each in its winter spot, I remem-bered the spring day at a garden center where I’d spent a surpris-ing amount of time deciding which shades of pink to bring home. Back outside, I pulled out the last of the potted annuals, leggy and forlorn, and tossed them into the woods.

I pulled tomato vines from their pots and tossed the soil into the kitchen garden. Tomato stakes were gathered into a bundle and tied together with twine. Plant pots were washed and stacked. Our birdbath had cracked in two the winter we’d left it outside. Tom had mended it, but we were taking no chances. So, I dumped out the water and washed it clean, remembering the antics of robins, bluebirds and phoebes who had visited the birdbath all summer long.

I loaded all these trappings of summer into a cart and headed for the garden shed where, even in autumn, it is warm and smells of earth. There I shifted summer to the back and brought winter for-ward. Birdbath, canopy, plant pots and chairs now rest against the walls. Snow shovels, bird feed-ers, ice melt, and sand take center stage, ready for the winter ahead. Another season packed away.

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Wear Orange in the Woods
Deer seasons – archery and shotgun – are underway, as is Black Bear season. There is no hunting on Sundays.
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