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

Winter Parking Ban Begins today – Any vehicle left in a public way can be towed at the owner’s expense, 24/7.

December 2  Friday
5 p.m.  Annual Tree Lighting, on The Common.

7:00 p.m.  Open Mic at Town Hall will feature the Temp-airy Jazz Ensemble with James Mercer, Weldon Hendricks, Dana Tolman, Josh Metz and Greg Butko

December 3  Saturday
10:00 a.m.  Holiday Program for Children at the Library. Sharon Harmon will read her book Francois’ Christmas Crossing. Craft project. snacks

December 4  Sunday
8 a.m. -2 p.m.  Volunteer to make a community wood bank, sponsored by Nartowicz Tree Service, just south of 337 Athol Richmond Rd. Help process piles into stove-length wood. Take what you need or deliver to someone else in need. Extras will be left for pick-up by anyone who needs firewood. Bring wood splitters and “tough backs”.

December 7  Wednesday  Pearl Harbor Day
11:08 Full Cold Moon

December 8  Thursday
6:30 p.m.  LBS Holiday Basket Packing at Town Hall

December 9  Friday
6 p.m.  Tree Lighting at the Gazebo in South Royalston (please bring a non-perishable food for the Royalston food pantry). LBS will sell remembrance ornaments $5 each or 5 for $20.

December 10  Saturday
5:30 p.m.  Roast Beef Supper Royalston F&G

December 12  Monday
MA Primitive Firearms Deer Hunting Season through Dec. 31st

December 13  Tuesday
The Geminid Meteor Shower, the best Mother Nature has to offer each year, features more than a shooting star a minute during the peak days today and tomorrow, all night long. Look to northeastern skies.

December 18  Sunday  Chanukah begins at sundown

December 21  Wednesday
4:48 p.m.  Winter Solstice – First Day of Winter!

December 23  Friday  Half-Day ARRSD Schools. December break begins.

December 25  Sunday  Christmas

December 31 Saturday  New Year’s Eve
January 1  Sunday  Happy 2023

January 14  Saturday

January 16  Monday  Martin Luther King, Jr. Birthday observed – Post Office, Library, all schools closed; no meetings. Many use this as a day of service.

January 20  Friday  Historical Society Meeting at Town Hall. New members welcome. Desserts!

January 21  Saturday  3:53 p.m.  New Snow Moon
Select Board Notes
Rick Martin, clerk

Whitney Hall Marketing Feasibility Study
In August, the Select Board applied for a Rural and Small Town Grant to fund a Marketing Feasibility Study of Whitney Hall. Last month, we learned that our application was accepted. In recent years many of us have wondered how Whitney Hall might be marketed. Could it become an incubator space for start-up companies or an arts and performance center? This grant will pay for a consultant to conduct a thorough assessment of potential uses for this iconic building. The process will include public input, a marketing analysis, a break-down of possible for-profit and non-profit uses, and a list of recommendations for realizing a productive use for Whitney Hall. The Select Board and the Building Committee are working together to hire a consulting firm for this project. Watch our website and this Newsletter for updates.

Energy Committee Organization
The Energy Committee is now operational. The Committee has begun to meet. Joseph Liebman is the Committee Chair, Roberta Newman is the Committee Vice Chair, and Robert Fairchild is the Committee Clerk. Lots to do to try to steer our community down the path of a more efficient energy environment. If you see them, please thank them for their time and service and forward any ideas to the Committee through the town website.

Town of Royalston MLP Restaffed
The Royalston town Municipal Light Plant is once again staffed and operational. Cathy Offutt, Chris Haynes, and Mark Thompson have volunteered and been appointed to take on the many tasks that make up this Committee. All are part of the South Village and understand both the advantages and the challenges of having a town-operated system. The Select Board is grateful to these folks for stepping up to serve in this important role.

Town Vehicle Acquisitions
There have been two vehicle acquisitions in the past month by different departments. Fire Chief Eric Jack received an earmark from the State to acquire a pickup truck to be used by the department to haul equipment into areas of town not easily accessible. Through Chief Jack’s work, this asset has come to the town at no cost to the taxpayers. DPW Superintendent Jaret Thiem has executed the town warrant item for a replacement pickup truck for the DPW. This was valued at $60,000 on the warrant and Jaret was able to come in under budget by approximately $5,000 and was able to find a truck on a lot instead of having to order and wait 3-6 months. This will be a big asset for the town in the coming winter. Great work!

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

Happy Holidays from the Royalston Department of Public Works
DPW Superintendent Jaret R. Thiem 978-249-4223 or dpwadmin@royalston-ma.gov
Winter is on the way and that means snow. The DPW staff is ready to make sure the roads stay passable again this year. During the month of November, we were busy grading the gravel roads and getting trucks switched over for snow plowing and sanding. All the equipment was looked over and services were done as well as any necessary repairs made to get us ready.

A gentle reminder: The Winter Parking Ban begins December 1, 2022 and continues through April 30th. Any vehicle left in a public way can be towed at the owner’s expense, 24/7, even if it is not actually snowing at that time.

Board of Health News
Phil Leger, chair
Holidays are upon us. A couple of reminders when it comes to gift wrap etc. Gift wrap is recyclable if it’s paper. Please no foils, plastic, styrofoam, ties, and other packaging that is not paper or cardboard. Before depositing boxes etc., please remove these items and break down boxes. Please, please, and please no plastic bags in any recycling roll offs. This means pellet bags too. Either bring back bags to the place you received them or use reusable bags when shopping. The bags clog up the sorting machines and cause downtime and unwanted extra cost.

Paper compactor is getting closer to being operational. Electricians will be working on hook ups.

We received a $5000 grant from MADEP for the purchase of a container to collect universal waste. You will see a new shipping container on site in the coming weeks.

With colder weather now here, please watch your step when using the facility.

Vaccines for COVID and flu are readily available at your local pharmacy and health care provider. They are easy to book online. Be safe and get yours today.

COVID test kits are available free at the town hall, library, and post office. If you’re experiencing symptoms, be safe and test. Stop the spread and stay home.

01368 – Support Our Post Office!
Need something for someone who has everything, or a one-size-fits-all grab bag gift? How about some nice note cards and a sheet of stamps! Did you know that your postage purchases are what keeps the Royalston Post Office open? 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.)
As you consider gifts for family, friends, and neighbors, why not consider some incredibly useful, and potentially life-saving gifts... gifts that ensure your loved ones are as prepared as possible for unplanned situations and events that fall under the purview of Emergency Management.

Gifts can be store-bought, for example, fire extinguishers for basements, kitchens, and bedroom areas; smoke, carbon monoxide, and/or radon detectors; an assortment of new batteries for existing detectors and flashlights; LED lanterns, or flashlights with LEDs for extended power outages; first aid kits with band-aids that stick, and gauze pads that don’t; a solar-powered battery to back up cell phones when there’s no power. How about a bucket of rock salt or the ice melting substance of the recipient’s dreams? These items are all affordable, useful, and certainly can spur some educational dialogue at Yankee Swaps!

Gifts of time and effort can be some of the most appreciated gifts – and are the kind that kids can give with a real sense of pride and ownership. How about kid-created coupons for shoveling and salting/sanding the stairs and walkways for an elder neighbor? Keeping dryer and heating vents opened could save a life. Offer to replace burned-out bulbs lighting porches, garages, and walkways. Maybe an appropriate gift would be hauling wood to a covered area so it’s easily accessible if the main heat source gives out. For those who are unsteady on their feet, or who don’t drive, a gift certificate for a trip to accomplish errands, and a kid coupon to tote purchases from the car to the door could prevent an unnecessary fall.

For those who are always on the go, an emergency kit for the car is never a bad gift. LED “flares” are safe and easy to use. A mini-shovel and bag of sand or kitty litter in the trunk adds a little weight over the rear axle, and can be useful if they’re stuck in the snow. A set of heavy-duty jumper cables can save the day (as well as the expense of an emergency roadside assistance call). Non-perishable snacks, and a lightweight warm blanket for the car are nice to have.

And even though it can’t be wrapped, one of the very best things you can give is your attention to those around you. If something doesn’t look right, or if you haven’t seen any signs of life at a home, make a call. If not to the person about whom you’re concerned, call the Royalston Police Department to check things out.

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

Holiday hours:
The Library will be open regular hours (9:00-noon) on Saturday, December 24 and December 31 but will be closed Monday, December 26 and January 2.

Donations to the Friends
Roger O’Donnell and Raeann LeBlanc
Carla and Phil Rabinowitz
Cheryl Mahoney

Thank you
John Chicoine and Holly Cyganiewicz for a huge, hefty picnic table and to Jeff Thiem and Joshua Morris-Siegel for transporting it to the Library.
Judi and Bob Dempsey for the delightful decorated Halloween bags full of treats and for the holiday-themed pillowcases for children.
Robert Fairchild for help clearing out some old accumulations from the Library basement.

Paper Star Workshop
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. Each participant is asked to bring a pair of small sharp scissors if you have them. The class is free and funded by the Friends of the Library, and yes, there will be delicious refreshments served.

Library Book Group
The classic, *O Pioneers!* by Willa Cather, is the next book for the Library book group which will meet on Thursday, January 5 at 3:30 p.m. at the Library. All are welcome and copies of the book are available to borrow at the Library. There will be warm tea and refreshments to accompany the discussion.

Local Author Children’s Program
On Saturday, December 3 at 10:00 a.m., 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.

A Reminder:
There are still a few pieces of pottery from the summer reading program that haven’t been picked up yet. And, the Tiny Art Project canvases are ready to be picked up too. Thanks to everyone for some fantastic artwork! It was a great success and thanks to Gina Verrelli for putting it all together.

The Library Roof is Restored!
Trying to match the color of the existing shingles turned out to be harder than anticipated but we were able to come close with ‘Colonial Slate.’ Thank you to everyone in town for the Community Preservation Fund, and to the Community Preservation Committee for approving the project.

More Hotspots
Three new Mobile Beacon T-Mobile hotspots have just arrived at the Library. They will be added to the current three that we have had for several years. So, if you’re without internet or planning on traveling, they can be used anywhere T-Mobile service is available. They work most places in town. Funds from the ARPA grant (American Rescue Plan Act) allocated by the Town’s ARPA Committee were used to pay for the hotspots and service.

Simple Comfort Food for a Winter’s Day - Cooking Workshop
Join Ashley Livi on Sunday, January 15 at 2:00 p.m. for an enjoyable afternoon learning to prep and create a delicious, easy winter meal. Participants will learn how to make a quick bread, a hearty chicken soup, and a fruit dessert. And, of course, everyone will then get to savor the food they have helped Ashley create. Participation is limited. Please register by calling or emailing the Library.

Artist Exhibit
Amy Newland’s ‘Magic Kingdom’ display of oil on canvas paintings will continue through the month of December. Stop by and wander around the room. During January and February, Clarence Rabideau will have a selection of his artwork and other works from his personal collection on display. The works will be for sale with a percentage going to benefit the Friends of the Library.

Holiday Refreshments
Continuing the tradition (interrupted by COVID), refreshments at the Library will be offered each Saturday during December. Stop by for some warmth and goodies while you peruse the new books, the old books, magazines, CDs, and movies. Refreshments are provided by the Friends of the Library.
Some of the new materials at your library

Adult Fiction

Banks, Russell  The Magic Kingdom
Banville, John  The Singularities
Berry, Wendell  How it Went
Child, Lee  No Plan B
Connelly, Michael  Desert Star
Cornwell, Patricia  Livid
Crais, Robert  Racing the Light
Cussler, Clive  The Sea Wolves
Evanovich, Janet  Going Rogue
Francis, Felix  Hands Down
George, Elizabeth  Something to Hide
Gregory, Philippa  The Couple at the Table
Hannah, Sophie  The World We Make
Jemisin, N.K.  Foster
Keegan, Claire  The Passenger
McCarthy, Cormac  1989
McDermid, Val  Galatea
Miller, Madeline  The Mountain in the Sea
Nayler, Ray  The Prisoner
Paris, B.A.  Triple Cross
Patterson, James  We are the Light
Quick, Matthew  The Whalebone Theatre
Quinn, Joanna  Killers of a Certain Age
Raybourn, Deanna  Secluded Cabin Sleeps Six
Unger, Lisa  Now is Not the Time to Panic
Wilson, Kevin

Adult Non-Fiction

Cheek, Richard  Land of the Commonwealth
Dylan, Bob  The Philosophy of Modern Song
Farmer, Jared  Elderflora
Farrell, John  Ted Kennedy
Flores, Dan  Wild New World
Gaines, Joanna  The Stories We Tell
Garten, Ina  Go-to Dinners
Greenridge, Kerri  The Grimkes
Hill, Clint  My Travels with Mrs. Kennedy
Jaycox, Jaclyn  Ring-tailed Lemur Princesses
Kerbel, Deborah  The Late, Great Endlings
Kimball, Christopher  Milk Street: Cook What You Have
King Arthur Flour  Baking School
Mukherjee, S.  The Song of the Cell
Munno, Nadia  The Pasta Queen
Obama, Michelle  The Light We Carry
Perelman, Deb  Smitten Kitchen Keepers
Smith, Patti  A Book of Days
Sobel, David  Best Bike Rides in New England
Tougias, Mike  AMC’s Best Day Hikes Near Boston

Audiobooks

Galbraith, Robert  The Ink Black Heart
Mukherjee, S.  The Song of the Cell

Children’s Nonfiction

Aiken, Stephen  Listen Up!
Blabey, Aaron  The Bad Guys in the Others?!
Krensky, Stephen  Nellie Bly
Mack, Jeff  Marcel’s Masterpiece
Messner, Kate  Only the Best
O’Connell, Jennifer  Elephants Remember
Rockwell, Lizzy  Am I a Frog?
Sceszka, Jon  The Real Dada Mother Goose
Sebra, Richard  Puerto Rico
Stiefel, Chana  Tree Hole Homes
Stiefel, Chana  The Tower of Life
Wood, John  The White Book
Young, Andrew  Just Like Jesse Owens

Children’s Fiction

Andrews, Julie  The First Notes
Aranda, Ana  Our Day of the Dead Celebration
Brett, Jan  Cozy in Love
Bruel, Nick  Bad Kitty Does Not Like Valentine’s Day
Carle, Eric  The very Hungry Caterpillar Eats
Snacks
Castillo, Lauren  A Place to Call Home
Edwards, Michelle  Me and the Boss
Fong, Pam  A Spark in the Dark
Greenwood, Sara  My Brother is Away
Ignatow, Amy  Symphony for a Broken Orchestra
Jeffers, Oliver  Meanwhile Back on Earth
John, Jory  The Sour Grape
Kinney, Jeff  Diper Overlode (Diary of a Wimpy Kid Book 17)
Maclachlan, Patricia  Snow Horses
Mancillas, Monica  Mariana in Mexico
Rinker, Sherri  Farming Strong, All Year Long
Vaidulas, Linda  Little Mouse has a Quest

Young Adult Fiction/Non-Fiction

Dashner, James  The Maze Cutter

Yoga

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.

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.
Recipe of the Month
Bunny Leboeuf’s Cranberry Nut Pie
Ingredients
9 inch uncooked pie shell
3 cups or a little more fresh or frozen cranberries
1/3 cup sugar
1/2 tsp sugar
1/3 cup chopped walnuts
1 tsp cinnamon

for topping:
1 egg
1/2 cup sugar,
pinch of salt
6 tbs melted butter - cooled slightly
1 tsp vanilla
1/2 cup flour.

Melt the butter- set aside.
Spread cranberries over the bottom of the pie shell. Sprinkle with combined sugar, nuts and cinnamon. Set aside
Beat egg well. Add sugar and melted butter, beat thoroughly. Add flour, salt, and vanilla. Beat until smooth. Pour this batter gently over cranberries. and use spatula to carefully spread topping smoothly out to the edge.

Historical Society News
Thank you to Michael Adams - Liebman for organizing, making, promoting, and selling at the wreath sale to benefit the Athol and Royalston Historical Societies. There are still some wreaths available, which can be purchased at the Town tree lighting on Dec. 2. Upcoming projects for the Society include improving archival storage of photos and documents and even adding climate-control technology to parts of the museum. We are also making improvements to the museum displays. Special programs are in the works as well. As always, the group is very grateful for our community’s support.

Ladies’ Benevolent Society
President Laurie Deveneau at 978-249-5807, lmdeveneau@msn.com
The annual basket-packing meeting is planned for Thursday, December 8, at 6:30p.m. at the Town Hall. Please bring donations for the baskets that night, or drop off early at organizer Theresa Quinn’s house, if you’re unable to make the work party. Home baked goods, individually-wrapped candies, teas, cocoa pouches, fruits, paper goods – the baskets are fun and useful, and remind the recipients they’ve not been forgotten, even if they’re not able to be out and around as frequently as they used to be!
The Ladies’ B. will be selling remembrance ornaments at the South Village Christmas Tree Lighting on Friday, December 9th. Members will be setting up at 5:45 p.m.; the event starts at 6 p.m. Bring the whole family for caroling and a special guest from the North Pole.
Another successful Drive-By-Pies sale was held the Saturday before Thanksgiving, with nearly 90 pies selling out in about two hours! Proceeds support scholarships and awards for fresh grads and mature adults returning to school. Thanks to all who baked and bought! Thanks also to organizer Maureen Blasco!

Royalston Fish and Game Roast Beef Supper
The next monthly fundraising roast beef supper will be on Dec 10. Family-style meals feature tossed salad, bread with real butter, perfectly-cooked roast beef, mashed potatoes and gravy, green beans, and a Hoodie 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. 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%.

North Quabbin Garden Club
On Thursday, December 17, at the Millers River Environmental Center, Adrienne Bashista of Passalong’s in Florence will be speaking and showing slides about her experiences as a grower in the Pioneer Valley. Passalong’s is a Farm and Florist business focusing on weddings and special arrangements for events as well as selling cut bouquets at their flower stand at 198 Sylvester Rd. Questions will be welcome at the end.
From 6 pm to 7 pm the Garden Club is hosting a potluck. The Center supports environmentally-safe plates and utensils. Therefore attendees, as well as bringing a potluck item to share, can bring their own plate and utensils. Paper plates will be provided. If you are unable to make 6 pm, you are welcome to attend the presentation at 7 pm. Admission is free.

Recipe of the Month
Bunny Leboeuf’s Cranberry Nut Pie
Ingredients
9 inch uncooked pie shell
3 cups or a little more fresh or frozen cranberries
1/3 cup sugar
1/2 tsp sugar
1/3 cup chopped walnuts
1 tsp cinnamon

for topping:
1 egg
1/2 cup sugar,
pinch of salt
6 tbs melted butter - cooled slightly
1 tsp vanilla
1/2 cup flour.

Melt the butter- set aside.
Spread cranberries over the bottom of the pie shell. Sprinkle with combined sugar, nuts and cinnamon. Set aside
Beat egg well. Add sugar and melted butter, beat thoroughly. Add flour, salt, and vanilla. Beat until smooth. Pour this batter gently over cranberries. and use spatula to carefully spread topping smoothly out to the edge.

The next Historical Society meeting is January at Town Hall. New members sought. Desserts served.
Congratulations and Good

Brian Nunes, US Navy, is being deployed in several weeks for a tour on the nuclear aircraft carrier USS Nimitz. They are heading to eastern Asia, with stops in Indonesia, Malaysia, Japan and South Korea. Brian is stationed at Lemoore Naval Air Base in central California, a 30,000 sailors facility where he works on F-18 fighter jets. He lives nearby in Hanford with wife Dae and baby toddler Norah and two fur babies. Dae and Norah plan to reunite with him in June or July when his deployment is finished. Did you know that most navy sailors don’t ever go to sea?

Kevin Nunes is a member of the Massachusetts Air National Guard and in 3 years will complete his 20 years in the military. He graduated last year with a degree in Accounting from Framingham State University and works from home. He shares his life with wife Lindsey, who is a self-employed psychologist, and one cat.

Deb and Joe Nunes are extremely proud and grateful for Brian and Kevin’s service in keeping the United States safe for democracy.

Dear Royalston Town Members,

Carl and I are leaving a very special place, that has been a magical home for us both…

For 30 years, Carl has lived here mostly full time while I lived here intermittently for weekends in Royalston butterflying, birding and hiking with my darling of darlings. (The third vertex in the triangulation was when I took trips to Atlanta every 2 months to see my 4 grandchildren as they were growing up.)

Now, I am returning to NYC, but will be visiting Carl as much as possible. Carl is residing at Applewood Home for Elders, 171 South Royalston Road, Athol, MA, Phone # 978-249-5110.

Please feel free to drop by when you are in the ‘hood - whether preplanned or last minute. Applewood requests that you call before coming. I know Carl will be delighted to see you.

Thank you for your warmth, love and generous hospitality all these decades.

Best regards, Alyce Mayo

I am thankful to receive the Royalston Community Newsletter. Our Newsletter is a gift to the entire community and keeps the residents informed of all upcoming town events and is a comprehensive resource of general information. I look forward to receiving each new edition. Thank you Beth, Steve, Becky, Maureen, Theresa, Mary, Larry, and Amy and to those who fill the pages in-between.

Anonymous

BLAST FROM THE PAST

Kirkman isn’t our Real Name
Kathy Chencharik

When John and Lydia Kekalainen immigrated to South Royalston from Finland to work in the mills along the Millers River, they wanted to be like Americans. According to daughters Gertrude Parnanen and Lillie Dobson, people had difficulty pronouncing their last name, so they changed it to Kirkman.

They lived on a farm down the road from Neale farm. All of John and Lydia’s children were born in the house. When twins Lillie and Ralph were born, Doctor Roberts of Baldwinville charged ten dollars seeing they were twins. Back then, it cost five dollars for one. A friend, not a midwife would come and help. They had a working horse, a cow and chickens for meat and eggs. Dogs weren’t pets like today; they were watch dogs. Their dog slept on a little porch in front of their house. They never had a cat they could call their own because they were always in the barn. There was no electricity, running water, or central heating, only outdoor facilities.

To go to school, they would walk to Neale farm to wait for the bus, or station wagon, to take them to Whitney Hall. Mrs. Neale would invite them in while they waited, and give them molasses cookies and doughnuts. She was a good cook and wonderful neighbor. The school consisted of two large rooms with four grades in each. First through fourth and fifth through eighth. There were two teachers, one for the lower grades and one for the higher, who would also be the principal.

During the summer, they would pick blueberries to make a few dollars for school shoes. There were no cake mixes, everything was made from scratch. Aprons were made out of flour sacks. When Gertude went to high school, she took the train to Templeton High School in Baldwinville. It cost seventeen cents. After school, she’d return to South Royalston, then go straight through to Athol, and dash to the theater because the movie started around two. After the movie she would visit her sister Lillie, who worked in Athol for Judge Roland. Then she would catch the six o’clock train back to South Royalston. Gertrude remembers the train depot, the baggage cart, and the packages that would come in the mail for people. Especially at Christmas. One Christmas she received a great big Flexible Flyer sled. It was her pride and joy. She walked around town dragging it everywhere.

Years later, when Lillie and her brother Waino worked together in New York, they would shop at Macy’s at Christmas time. After telling the employees what they’d like, the gifts would be wrapped up for them.

Gertrude Parnanen and Lillie Dobson 1999
Monty Tech

Jessica Putney Schanz, Royalston Rep. j-schanz@montytech.net

Thanks to all of the Royalston residents who voted in the Saint-Gobain Sustaining Futures Raising Communities 2022 contest – Monty Tech WON! Ms. Johnson’s Yoga and Meditative Arts area is receiving $7,575 in supplies, including magnetic paint, writing wall, acoustic wall panels and ceiling tiles, $4,200 of which is for professional development programs.

Monty Tech held a School Safety Summit in late October, meeting with representatives of Fitchburg and Westminster public safety and community leaders to ensure all departments have physical access to the building, worked on a memo of agreement (MOA) regarding departmental access to on-campus video cameras, verified communications interoperability between Monty Tech and emergency services, continued work on formalizing an off-campus reunification site for students and families, in case of emergency, and discussed future department tours, and potential table-top & live scenario drills. Thank you to Fitchburg Police Chief Martineau and Capt. Giannini from Fitchburg PD; Chief Suarez from Fitchburg FD; Acting Chief Tamulen from Westminster PD; and Chief Butterfield from Westminster FD, for their meaningful participation.

Early November, more than 40 Monty Tech seniors visited Fitchburg State University for a tour, lunch, and meetings with faculty and administration from several specific departments, including Business, Communications, Criminal Justice, Education, and Engineering Technology (with a construction management focus). MT has an articulation with FSU, allowing students to earn college credit while still in high school.

P.J. Keating met recently with Monty Tech leaders, with an eye towards developing partnerships in HVAC-Property Maintenance and Welding. Similarly, Engineering and Advanced Manufacturing areas were visited by KADANT Solutions, regarding hiring opportunities and potential materials donations. Beacon MedTech Solutions employees, Todd Contois (CAD) and Jason Tremblay, (Advanced Manufacturing), both Monty Tech grads, met with students to share information.

Grants in the works include a $40,000 CTE (Career and Technical Education) Equitable Access Grant for English Learners, and students with disabilities. A “round 7” Career Technical Initiative (CTI) Grant, up to $1,000,000, for continuation of no-cost training opportunities for 10-12 unemployed/underemployed adults in a number of programs. The grants are expected to also cover “…obstacles students may face during the…training program,” such as transportation assistance, childcare, etc.

Keep an eye out! Monty Tech is currently working towards an after-hours partnership with Narragansett Regional, Gardner High, and Fitchburg High, to provide CVTE (Career, Vocational, Technical Education) for students outside of Monty Tech. Monty Tech’s ultimate goal is to expand CVTE opportunities to all District students.

Royalston Community School

The Royalston Community School, as part of the annual “Hunger Bowl” food drive, collected an impressive 1,294 items of food – securing first place among all ARRSD schools for the second year in a row – all of which will be added to the Athol High School Food Pantry for ARRSD families in need of assistance. AHS, ARMS, and ACES also participated in the Hunger Bowl, and with RCS, collected nearly 2,500 bag, boxes, or cans, of non-perishable food.

**HUNGER BOWL WINNER

1ST PLACE

ROYALSTON COMMUNITY SCHOOL IS THE REIGNING CHAMPIONS FOR THE SECOND YEAR IN A ROW WITH A TOTAL OF 1294 ITEMS**

What is Happening at the Village School?

Rise Richardson, director

Before Thanksgiving, everyone at the school brought in a mountain of food for the Orange Food Pantry.

All classes began Winter Gardens in late November, beginning with rocks and sand for the first week, adding moss and then miniature clay animals in subsequent weeks. They’ll take the gardens home for the holidays, adding a candle to honor the light in all of us.

1st-6th graders start cross-country skiing on Fridays in January, all around Camp Caravan and up at Jolly Farm.

The next Open House is Saturday February 11th, from 10 to noon. Tour the school, see classrooms, meet teachers and find out about admissions.

Winter Break begins Friday, December 16 at close of school.

You can order Deans Beans coffee and other goodies for the holidays at https://www.villageschoolma.org/shop/ Orders are due by Dec. 9th for delivery to the school hallway on Dec. 16.

SEPAC Meeting: On December 5, from 6-7 p.m., Athol-Royalston Special Ed. Parent Advisory Council Meets at AHS, in the ARRSD Family & Community Center, on the Lake Ellis side of the school. Ph. 978-249-2435 x 134 for ZOOM access code, or other information. This is a group that advocates for and supports students of all abilities in the district.

Royalston Community School

The Royalston Community School, as part of the annual “Hunger Bowl” food drive, collected an impressive 1,294 items of food – securing first place among all ARRSD schools for the second year in a row – all of which will be added to the Athol High School Food Pantry for ARRSD families in need of assistance. AHS, ARMS, and ACES also participated in the Hunger Bowl, and with RCS, collected nearly 2,500 bag, boxes, or cans, of non-perishable food.

**HUNGER BOWL WINNER

1ST PLACE

ROYALSTON COMMUNITY SCHOOL IS THE REIGNING CHAMPIONS FOR THE SECOND YEAR IN A ROW WITH A TOTAL OF 1294 ITEMS**

What is Happening at the Village School?

Rise Richardson, director

Before Thanksgiving, everyone at the school brought in a mountain of food for the Orange Food Pantry.

All classes began Winter Gardens in late November, beginning with rocks and sand for the first week, adding moss and then miniature clay animals in subsequent weeks. They’ll take the gardens home for the holidays, adding a candle to honor the light in all of us.

1st-6th graders start cross-country skiing on Fridays in January, all around Camp Caravan and up at Jolly Farm.

The next Open House is Saturday February 11th, from 10 to noon. Tour the school, see classrooms, meet teachers and find out about admissions.

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Classifieds

Services Available


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 horse-back. $400 per month. Training or any number of lessons $575 per month. Text Suzanne at (978) 424-8580. Current email: cobbsuzanne4@yahoo.com.

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.

First Congregational Church of Royalston
Marion’s Food Pantry
Pantry Hours:
Saturdays 10:00-12:00
Contact:
Debbie Conrad 978-895-3505

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Firewood - $260/ cord or $230 for 2 or more cords. Call Jim Putney. 978-249-3379.

Green Cordwood - Cut to 18” length, split, and delivered in Royalston for $285/cord. Kyle Nartowicz, Nartowicz Tree Service, West Royalston. Office Ph. 413-325-5985.

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 Kreations. Single pieces or sets; totally kool kids’s cups. Krys and Keith Swan at swankkreations@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

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/

Shop Local. Shop Small. Shop Smart.

Mary C Barclay
If you’re looking for unique, useful, and reasonably-priced presents, be sure to check out the RCN classifieds! Goods and services for all ages, interests, and needs are in there! You can help fill a freezer, warm someone with a cord of wood, supply custom-decorated cookies for your office staff, give the kids custom-designed travel mugs, “make” breakfast for someone with a loaf of your homemade bread and a dozen locally-produced eggs and a jug of maple syrup... Custom afghans, custom books, a sitting for family photos... how about hiring a trained babysitter and gifting a night out to exhausted parents? Your local purchases not only provide meaningful gifts, but they keep local dollars local, and help your friends and neighbors support themselves!
**The Shift**

This year's shift from summer to fall caught me by surprise. Tricked by the warm days of early November, I had stopped watching for signs of change. But even in those summer-like days, which should have been fall, earth began facing away from the sun, and the world around me turned toward winter.

The birds were the first to get ready, of course. Our migrants had long since gone, their departure triggered weeks ago by the waning light. Now only Blue Jays call from the silence of our woods as they swoop from tree to tree. Our Chickadees and Titmice have returned from their summer in the woods, and the Nuthatch's rasping call announces his presence. So, we put out our feeders and watch as they settle in. The squirrels are back as well. We saw no sign of them all summer as they went about their lives in the canopy above us. Now they spend their days on the ground, foraging for seeds.

The hard work of winter survival has already begun.

The sun rises further and further to the south, staying low in the southern sky as it makes its way west. Many days high clouds obscure the sun which shines with a soft white light that speaks of winter. Its low-slanting light peeks through bare branches to find its way into our home. So, I hang prisms at our windows to split the light, sending rainbows across our walls. Their dancing bands of color are welcome in our winter home.

The air is sharp with the smell of winter - a combination of cold air, dry leaves and earth that has gone dormant. The giant oak that shades our walk in summer has already shed its leaves. Oaks usually hold onto their leaves long after the maples and beeches are stripped bare. But this year our oak seems to have shed its entire canopy overnight, covering our walk with a thick carpet of brown leaves that crunch underfoot. They will become matted and slick come the first snows. So, Tom and I spent many hours raking them all over as they went about their lives in the canopy above us. Now they spend their days on the ground, foraging for seeds.

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And so, without my notice, fall has come and gone, and winter is on the doorstep. On a late November morning, as I returned from a trip to the mailbox, I was suddenly struck by the completeness of this change. I stood for a moment and took it all in: the white sky, the low sun, the sharp cold scent, the silence. There is no mistaking this season for anything else. With the earth’s slight shift away from the sun, winter is at hand.

Deb D’Amico
Wear Orange in the Woods

Deer seasons – archery and shotgun – are underway, as is Black Bear season. There is no hunting on Sundays.
Free firewood - Help needed to stack wood for Wood Bank
In the good neighbor department, Kyle Nartowicz of Nartowicz Tree Service (just south of 337 Athol-Richmond Road in West Royalston), is continuing his Free Wood Bank for local folks who heat with wood, and are having a hard time affording it. Kyle has offered free wood in the past, but given the financial constraints this year, he’s really upped his game and put out a call for assistance on Sunday, December 4th, from 8-2 p.m. Kyle will stage on the order of 50-75 cords of log-length wood, and is asking anyone with wood splitters and “tough backs” to help process the piles into stove-length wood. He welcomes participants to take what they need, or deliver to someone else in need – free of charge – and he intends to leave the remainder available to those who need it later in the season. Six hours, wood splitters, strong backs - If you’re able, please help Kyle help our neighbors.

This Morning
There are diamonds in the frost.
There is fire in the wood-stove.
The horse's coat has grown shaggy.
All the leaves are down
except for a tenacious oak,
hanging on to the last,
leathery leaves.
Squirrels and furry critters
scurry to fill their larder.
The season of cold and still
is upon us.

Michael Young
current Royalston Poet Laureate