Calendar of Events
A complete listing of department, committee, commission, and board meetings is posted: www.royalston-ma.gov
Winter Parking Ban continues until April 30

April 3 Monday
10 a.m. - 8 p.m. Annual Town Election at Town Hall.

April 6 Thursday
12:35 a.m. Full Pink Moon

April 7 Friday
7 p.m. Open Mic at Town Hall. The House Band will be the Bluez Katz with Scotty Monette, Charlie Scott, Jim Bennett, Doug MacCloud, and Jamie Hatch. Musicians can arrive at 7 to sign up for a slot. Hot drinks and light supper available for a reasonable cost. Sponsored by the Cultural Council.

April 8 Saturday (River Rat weekend in Athol)
10 a.m. sharp Annual Easter Egg Hunt on The Common Rain or shine! Dress for the weather, and don’t forget a bag or basket to gather the eggs. Hunt followed by chocolate melt inside the Town Hall. Volunteers needed. Contact Sara Dilg at 978-248-9828.

April 9 Sunday Easter

April 12 Wednesday
7 p.m. SOS – Save Our Store Community Meeting at Town Hall Upstairs. The store has closed.

April 17 Monday School vacation begins
Patriot’s Day, a Massachusetts and Maine holiday which commemorates the battle at Lexington and Concord in the Revolutionary War. Post Office, Library, all schools closed; no meetings

April 18 Tuesday State and Federal Tax mailing deadline

April 20 Thursday New Flower Moon
1:30 p.m. Monadnock Falconry with Henry Walters, Kite Flying, Poetry Writing and Cake Consumption Vacation Program Watch a trained falcon soar, then make your kite soar, and write poems about it while you eat kite cake. Meet in the Bundschuh field next to the Library. Funded by the Royalston Academy. In case of rain – meet in the Town Hall upstairs.

April 22 Saturday Earth Day

April 27 Thursday
6:30 p.m. Ladies’ Benevolent Society meeting in the Town Hall. All are welcome. The Society is in its 199th year.

April 28 Friday Arbor Day
7 p.m. Conserving and Preserving Headstones information workshop at Town Hall led by Ta Mara Conde of Historic Grave-side Services. Learn about archeologically sound ways of cleaning and resetting gravestones. Follow-up work day in the Old Center Cemetery on May 13 (rain date May 20).

April 29 Saturday
9:00 to 12:00 Royalston Roadside Cleanup. Meet at Bullock Park for an assignment or pick up your own street. Dress for conditions: use gloves and reflective clothing. Free disposal of picked-up trash at transfer station. Meet at Checkpoint Charlie picnic tables for chili and hot dogs at 12:00.

Save the Dates:
May 4 Thursday
3:30 p.m. Library Book Group will discuss Caste by Isabel Wilkerson. Discussion and refreshments. Books at the Library to borrow.

May 5 Friday
7 p.m. Rescheduled Historical Society quarterly meeting and pot luck supper at the home of Peter Kranial, corner of Winchendon and Stone roads. All welcome to come help plan upcoming events and museum improvements.

June 3 Saturday
9 - 11:30 a.m. Saturday Morning on the Common: Village School pancakes, birds of prey, and silent auction and the famous Library plant sale

Late June - July 3 Watch for specific dates next month
Royalston Shakespeare Company- Free kids’ theater workshop production of the Tempest. The early summer dates are still being finalized to work around school snow day schedules.

June 10 Saturday
10 am Annual Town Meeting, upstairs in Town Hall
Select Board Notes
Rick Martin, clerk

DPW Fuel Spill
Last month, there was a diesel fuel spill reported at the DPW buildings. It was estimated that approximately 100 gallons of fuel was spilled to the ground due to an unattended truck during a fill-up. The DPW superintendent immediately called Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection to report the spill. The Mass DEP assigns a cleanup company to perform all mitigation processes and monitor the extent of the damage done to the surrounding environment. Unfortunately, the fuel migrated across Brown Rd. toward Lawrence Brook and the surrounding wetlands. As of this writing all contaminated soil has been reclaimed and removed and monitoring equipment has been installed in several areas as this monitoring has to continue for at least six months. The good news is that preliminary results show that the spill was contained and did not affect the brook or the wetlands. The bad news is that at this time the clean-up costs stand at about $90,000 to the town over and above the costs that insurance will cover. The process continues and this may change. We will update here in the future.

Pete and Henry’s Lot Plans
A presentation was given this month by a committee organized by the Royalston South Village Revitalization Committee concerning plans to turn the old Pete and Henry’s lot into a park. Although still in the preliminary stages, the plans provide for a park open to all in town honoring the area’s history and providing activities for all ages. The Select Board was impressed by the presentation and plan and approved the forwarding of this to the Community Preservation Committee for application for a grant to fund the preliminary work.

National Grid Power Line Work
Representatives of National Grid gave a presentation to the Select Board and representatives from the Historical District Commission outlining work planned on the main power lines that cross through Royalston. The work will take place over the next five years. The lines you may know best are the lines that cross Athol Road next to the Fire Station. The towers that stand now are almost 100 years old and the lines are about 80 years old. An upgrade is needed. New towers and lines will be put in place with increased load capacity in anticipation of more power being needed by the four states that these lines serve.

Budget Time
All department heads have submitted their preliminary Fiscal Year 2024 budgets to both Royalston’s Select Board and Finance Committee. This month began the review of all budgets and the town’s anticipated revenue for FY24. Things look good on the income side in the preliminary view from all sources. But it will be a short two months to get this budget assembled in time for the Town Meeting at the beginning of June. Meetings are scheduled and open to the public. Come out and see the process!

Town Clerk News
The Annual Town Election is April 3rd at the Town Hall from 10 AM-8PM.

Candidates:
Select Board- Ryan Hood, write-in: Shelby Bronnes
Assessor-BLANK
Cemetery Commission-BLANK
Board of Health- Philip Leger *
Library Trustee- Theresa Quinn*
Planning Board- Thomas Musco*
John N. Bartlett Fund- Nancy Melbourn*
John N. Bartlett Fund- Gary Winitzer*
2 Seats for the JNB Fund-BLANK
Athol-Royalston School Committee Member:
write-in candidate for Royalston seat: Kiley Hall
4-way contest for 2 Athol seats:

Remember it’s time to register your dog and send those street list forms back, PLEASE!

Board of Health News
Phil Leger, chair
Spring is in the air.
Remember that demo is not free. See attendant prior to dumping for an assessment, please and thank you.
Transportation costs continue to rise with fuel surcharges the main driver. We are trying to maintain current pricing. Our goal is to break even, not profit. Stay tuned.
A reminder, if bringing fluorescent light tubes in for recycling, please bring them back in the boxes that them came in. We cannot ship them loose.
COVID vaccines and boosters are available at most pharmacies. Be safe, get vaxed.
Ticks continue to be a concern and remain active in our area.

Luncheon Club and COA
11:30 a.m. – 1 p.m. Meals are $2 for seniors (60+) and $2.50 for pre-seniors. Please call Betty Woodbury at 978-249-9656 before 5 PM on Monday, to reserve a seat for lunch that Wednesday.

First Congregational Church - Marion’s Food Pantry:
We know times are tough. Anybody in need – please come visit the pantry, or we can deliver if home-bound during pantry hours, Saturdays 10am to Noon. Contacts-Deb Conrad (978)895-3505, Jeff & Sue Smith (978)895-7887.
Candidates’ Statements

**Shelby Bronnes**

For those of you who do not already know me; my name is Shelby Bronnes. I have been a life-long resident of Royalston and I am running as a write-in candidate for the open seat on Royalston’s Select Board.

This town has given me so much and I believe it has shaped a lot of who I am today. Through attending both the Village School and Royalston Community School as a child, to participating in our Town’s 250th celebration, I have seen friends, neighbors and strangers come together for fundraisers and summer festivals displaying the strong genuine and caring community that this town has nurtured. I believe in this town’s roots and that we can maintain the true beauty and uniqueness our town is known for. I would be proud to represent this town as a member of the Select Board.

Though I am young, I have a strong education with both a Bachelor’s degree in Public Health, cum laude from Worcester State University along with a degree and license as a Physical Therapist Assistant through the Mount in Gardner; along with being a selected member of honor societies such as Omicron Delta Kappa for leadership and Eta Sigma Gamma for health education and ethics. I also have life experiences that have taught me teamwork, how to keep an open mind but to also problem solve with integrity. I have belonged to many sports teams growing up and captained a few. I have been an EMT for several years including for the town. I recently built a house here which required a lot of attention to detail, decision making and prioritizing affordability. I have a strong leadership background which allows me to understand the importance of this role; to balance the needs of individuals in relation to the needs of the town. Though this is a tough job, I lead head on with the determination to do what is best for this community, considering all options and supporting unbiased opinions through all situations.

I would deeply appreciate your vote for the open Select Board seat. I look forward to the opportunity to support this town. Election Day is Monday April 3rd. Please write-in Shelby Bronnes, with address 8 Taft Hill Rd for Royalston Select Board.

**Ryan Hood**

Hello, My name is Ryan Hood and I am a candidate for the select-board in town. I grew up here in town and went to the Raymond School and the S. Royalston School. I graduated from Athol High School in 1987. My parents were Bill and Sharon Hood. My family has owned property in town for nearly 60 years.

My candidacy is based on the need for our town to do as much as we can to preserve our way of life, fiscal responsibility, fairness, and impartiality. I firmly believe we have an incredible amount of diversely talented residents that offer so much to our community. I believe we should be open to the concept of modernizing aspects of our government to be more efficient and to protect valuable records. At the same time, I think it is as equally important to value our unique way of life here in town.

I consider myself to be open-minded, compassionate and I believe I have a good leadership skillset that would be valuable as your representative to the selectboard. I bring experience in management as well. I have also lived in many other locations in my life, so I have a good concept of what things work well, and those that don’t work so well. I fully support our town employees and appreciate the hard work they put in daily. I also support the efforts to revitalize the South Village, and to do what we can to retain the country store.

Royalston South Village Revitalization News

**SAVE OUR STORE!**

Royalston Country Store is Closed

The Royalston South Village Revitalization Committee has issued an SOS, calling upon the community of Royalston to come together to Save Our Store at a town-wide Community Meeting on Wednesday, April 12 at 7:00 p.m. upstairs at the Town Hall.

The Royalston Country Store, located in the South Village, closed its doors as of Sunday, March 19. During the pandemic, business had dropped off significantly and the current owners saw that they could not carry out their dream of a renovated building with a new look and a new business model.

Heather Golding, owner and the sole staff member, had worked long days, seven days a week, to keep the business open as long as she could. She disclosed that the building will soon be on the market. “I hope that a new owner can come in and make the changes she could.”

The Royalston South Village Revitalization Committee, which has been championing a new vision for the village, has agreed that the store is a vital asset for the village and for the community as a whole. In the spring of 2019 the Royalston South Village Revitalization Committee was formed. The group grew out of one of the neighborhood meetings sponsored by the Capital Planning Committee. The goal of the meeting was to identify ideas, concerns and plans for the future of our town. We quickly agreed that the revitalization of South Royalston was of utmost importance and so our committee was formed. Our mission - to revitalize the South Village while building community in the process.

Mud Season: Department of Public Works

**DPW superintendent Jaret R. Thiem** 978-249-4223 or dpwadmin@royalston-ma.gov

DPW superintendent Jaret R. Thiem reminds residents that when mud season hits, certain roads will be posted with weight limits. Logging operations may be suspended, and delivery trucks may have to be rerouted. Please mind the weight limits, which are in place to protect the roads. Research indicates that observing weight limits can increase road life by 10%... decreasing tax-funded repairs. If you are expecting delivery trucks that may exceed limits, it would be a good idea to advise them in advance, so they can adjust accordingly.

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Donations to the Friends
Paul Montero
Tom Musco and Deb D’Amico
Christine and David Cheney
Vyto and Pat Andreliunas
Deb and Marc Burroughs-Biron

In Memory of Marlene Jarvenpaa
Virginia Gingras
United Ag and Turf

Thank you
Clarence Rabideau for his donations to the Library from the sale of his paintings.
Amy Newland for making great posters.
Zoe Rabinowitz for volunteering for any sort of chore we task her.
Joe Liebman for tech help.
To those who cooked for the delicious lunch at the Bark Basket workshop: Maureen Blasco for quiche pies, Beth Gospodarek for her lentil soup, and Amy Newland for her cookies.
To all those who helped clean up after the pretty messy (but cool) bark basket workshop.

Art Exhibit
Clarence Rabideau has added several of his works and some from others to the exhibit at the Library. All are for sale with a portion of the proceeds donated to the Library.

Library Book Group
Caste: The Origins of Our Discontent by Isabel Wilkerson will be the next book in the Library Book Group which will meet in the Library on May 4 at 3:30 p.m. Copies of the book, which “examines the unspoken caste system that has shaped America and shows how our lives today are still defined by a hierarchy of human divisions,” will be available to borrow from the Library after the first week of April. Join the group for lively discussion and light refreshments. Call Maureen Blasco at 978-249-5138 for more information.

Yoga Resumes
Jess Schanz will be returning to the yoga mat on Tuesdays at 6:00 p.m. in the upstairs of the Town Hall beginning April 4. This is a great opportunity to get back in shape for the spring gardening season and to recover from winter inactivity. Bring your mat, relax, and gain flexibility and balance.

 Monadnock Falconry, Flying Kites, Cake, and Poetry April Vacation Program
On Thursday, April 20 at 1:30 in the Bundschuh field by the Library, you can watch as a falcon sails through the air, make your kite sail through the air, and then relax with some cake while you write a poem about kites, falcons, or spring. Henry Walters of Monadnock Falconry is not only a falconer but also a poet and teacher. He will share with us how he and his falcon, Mahood, work together. After graduating, Henry went to Ireland’s School of Falconry, where he apprenticed with some of the finest falconers in Europe. He earned his falconry license in Massachusetts before moving to New Hampshire, where he worked as a seasonal raptor biologist for New Hampshire Audubon and co-founded New Hampshire Young Birders Club. He is the author of two books of poetry: Field Guide A Tempo and The Nature Thief, both of which are available at the Library. Dress for the weather. In case of rain, the program will be held in the upstairs of the Town Hall. Bring a kite or use one of ours. This program is funded by the Royalston Academy.

Tax Preparation Assistance
The Community Action VITA Free Tax Assistance Program has IRS-certified volunteers to help people file their tax returns. There are tax clinics in Greenfield, Northampton, and Orange. Income limits apply. You can schedule an appointment by phone at 413-376-1136 or online at www.communityaction.us/taxes. The Library also has Massachusetts and Federal Tax forms and will make copies of forms for free.

Preschool Story Time
On non-holiday Mondays at 2:00 p.m., join preschoolers and their caregivers for crafts, stories, play time, snacks, and connecting with other families with Brooke Coleman. There is no registration necessary; just come whenever you can. It’s a great way to relax and socialize with others while enjoying the benefits of the Library.
Some of the new materials at your library

**Adult Fiction**

Atwood, Margaret  
*Old Babes in the Wood*

Barnhill, Kelly  
*The Crane Husband*

Bartz, Julia  
*The Writing Retreat*

Beaton, M.C.  
*Death of a Traitor*

Bennett, Claire  
*Checkout 19*

Berry, Steve  
*The Last Kingdom*

Box, C.J.  
*Storm Watch*

Brown, Diane  
*Black Candle Women*

Catton, Eleanor  
*Birnam Wood*

Chakraborty, S.  
*The Adventures of Amina Al-Sirafi*

Cohen, Harlan  
*I Will Find You*

Dodd, Christina  
*Forget What You Know*

Gerenblatt, Julie  
*Daughters of Nantucket*

Greeney, Mark  
*Burner*

Hart, Emilia  
*Weyward*

Head, Cheryl  
*Time's Undoing*

Hoefer, Colleen  
*Never Never*

Jones, Stephen  
*Don't Fear the Reaper*

Landay, William  
*All That is Mine I Carry with Me*

Leon, Donna  
*So Shall You Reap*

Makkai, Rebecca  
*I Have Some Questions for You*

Mallery, Susan  
*The Sister Effect*

McKenzie, Elizabeth  
*The Dog of the North*

Mizushima, Margaret  
*Standing Dead*

Moustakis, Melinda  
*Homestead*

Napolitano, Ann  
*Hello Beautiful*

Novey, Idris  
*Take What You Need*

Penner, Sarah  
*The London Séance Society*

Roth, Veronica  
*Arch-Conspirator*

Shannon, Samantha  
*A Day of Fallen Night*

Steel, Danielle  
*Worthy Opponents*

Swanson, Peter  
*The Kind Worth Saving*

**Adult non-fiction**

Egan, Dan  
*The Devil's Element*

Maloney, Brenna  
*Buzzkill*

May, Katherine  
*Enchantment*

Olson, Lynne  
*Empress of the Nile*

Pastor, John  
*White Pine*

Zernike, Kate  
*The Exceptions*

**Young Adult**

Gratz, Alan  
*Captain America*

De la Cruz, Melissa  
*The Headmaster’s List*

Gratz, Alan  
*Captain America*

Santat, Dan  
*A First Time for Everything*

**Audiobooks**

Hawkins, Rachel  
*The Villa*

Krueger, William  
*The Levee*

**DVDs**

*The Banshees of Inisherin, The Good Fight the Final Season, A Man Called Otto, and Puss in Boots: Last Wish, Turning Red*

**Children’s Fiction**

Ayoade, Richard  
*The Book That No One Wanted to Read*

Barnett, Mac  
*Twenty Questions*

Becker, Aaron  
*The Tree and the River*

Crowe, Caroline  
*Our Incredible Library Book and the Wonderful Journeys it Took*

Gibbs, Stuart  
*Whale Done*

Higuera, Donna  
*The Yellow Handkerchief*

Ho, Joanna  
*One Day*

Kazi, Natasha  
*Moon’s Ramadan*

Krans, Angela  
*Finding Papa*

Litwin, Megan  
*Bug Catchers*

Lowry, Lois  
*The Windeby Puzzle*

Lucman-Dawson, A.  
*Freewater*

McDunn, Gillian  
*The Real History of Juneteenth*

Medina, Juana  
*Elena Rides*

Pennywrapper, Sara  
*Leeva at Last*

Raczka, Bob  
*You Are a Story*

Salati, Doug  
*Hot Dog*

Salas, Laura  
*Zap! Clap! Boom!*

Schu, John  
*This is a Story*

Scott, Jordan  
*My Baba’s Garden*

Shea, Bob  
*The Great Truck Switcheroo*

Stith, Shauna  
*Black Beach*

West, Tracey  
*Curse of the Shadow Dragon*

**Children’s Nonfiction**

Bolden, Tonya  
*Rock, Rosetta, Rock! Roll, Rosetta, Roll!*

Boxer, Elisa  
*Hidden Hope*

Butler-Ngugi, A.  
*The Real History of the Gold Rush*

DeGroat, Cayla  
*The Real History of Thanksgiving*

Gaston, Stephanie  
*Ketanji Brown Jackson*

Higuera, Donna  
*The Yellow Handkerchief*

Ho, Joanna  
*One Day*

Kazi, Natasha  
*Moon’s Ramadan*

Litwin, Megan  
*Bug Catchers*

Lowry, Lois  
*The Windeby Puzzle*

Lucman-Dawson, A.  
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Shea, Bob  
*The Great Truck Switcheroo*

Stith, Shauna  
*Black Beach*

West, Tracey  
*Curse of the Shadow Dragon*

**Beyond Books:**

This is a reminder that the Library has folding tables and chairs, digital projectors and screens, and a Kill-A-Watt electricity usage monitor and park passes which patrons can borrow.
The 23rd Annual Royalston Egg Hunt, Saturday, April 8th

Mr. Bunny and friends invite you to celebrate the annual Egg Hunt on Royalston Common. The festivities will start promptly at 10:00 AM on Saturday, April 8th from the steps of the Town Hall. It will be held rain or shine; participants are advised to dress for the weather. There will also be an opportunity to have photos taken with Mr. Bunny. The Easter photo panel created by local artist Gordon Morrison was very popular last year, and children will again be able to enjoy it. The morning’s activities will once again include the longtime-favorite chocolate candy-making in the Town Hall immediately following the egg hunt. Children should bring a bag or basket to hold their eggs during the hunt and to hold their candy afterwards, to take home. We ask that everyone please recycle the emptied plastic eggs in the bins set up for that purpose in the Town Hall.

Want to help out? Volunteers are needed for the morning of the event! Please contact event organizer Sara Dlug at 978-248-9828 for more information.

Ladies’ Benevolent Society News

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

The Ladies’ Benevolent Society of Royalston is gearing up for a busy year. At their 2023 kick-off meeting in March, members held a business meeting, were apprised of financial status, scholarships, and 2023 programs planned. Fundraising ideas were discussed, along with continuing discussion on the LBS’s upcoming anniversary.

Officers for the ensuing year are: President- Laurie Deveneau; Vice President- Kristin West; Treasurer- Maureen Blasco; Secretaries -Kristie Schelli and Lorraine Casinghino; Programs Committee- Nancy Melbourne, Andrea Lively, and Donna Caise; Scholarship Committee- Beth Gospodarek, Nancy Melbourne, and Theresa Quinn; Remembrance Secretary - Patricia Worth; and Devotions- Christine Cheney.

The LBS is actively recruiting new members, hoping to grow the group as it works towards the 200th anniversary on December 31, 2024. All are welcome to attend meetings, which are scheduled for Thursdays at 6:30 p.m. in the Town Hall on April 27th; June 29th; August – TBD; September 28th; October 26th; and December TBD.

Royalston Emergency Management Agency

Director Jim Barclay ema@royalston-ma.gov or phone 978-249-2904, Deputy Director Tom Musco tgmusco@gmail.com or 978-249-9633

Last year was considered an “average” Hurricane Season with 14 tropical depressions and eight hurricanes (two of which – Fiona and Ian – were considered serious). Tropical Storm Risk predictions for the coming season (May 15 – November 30) suggest another average to 15% below average season, with 13 named storms, six hurricanes, three of which will be major. Unfortunately, predictions are not always correct, and there’s no telling where major hurricane will turn up, and Northeastern U.S. is expected to see a 90% increase in hurricane losses over the next three decades. As with all hazards, preparedness is the key to surviving the event with minimal impact, and to rapid recovery.

Assess your risks: If a hurricane wends its way inland – and the Connecticut River is a known pathway – know the risks specific to your home or business. If possible, take measures to reduce risks when anticipating a high-wind weather event.

Review important documents: Make sure your IDs, insurance policies, medical records and other personal documents are up to date, and in a secure location; remotely accessed digital copies are an excellent idea, along with copies that can be grabbed on the way out the door.

Assemble “go bags” in advance: Pack up enough supplies for you and your family for several days – including medications, pet supplies, disinfectant supplies – things you may not be able to access from home if an evacuation is necessary.

Stay informed: Sign up for https://www.ready.gov/alerts mobile alerts from FEMA. Sign up with https://www.fema.gov/about/news-multimedia/mobile-products , an app that allows you to receive real-time weather alerts, send notifications to loved ones, locate emergency shelters in your area, among other things.

Preparedness beats panic every time!
Be informed ~ Make a Plan!
Royalston’s own Mason Mello will be performing in LUCKY STIFF, “…a musical comedy about diamonds, dogs, love, and death.” Mason, a junior in Monty Tech’s CAD Drafting and Design, has performed with the School’s Drama Club for the past three years, in addition to performing with the Royalston Shakespeare Company for a decade. Mason is the son of Marie (Holmes) and George Mello of Pleasant Street. Also with the cast is Carley Smith, daughter of former resident and Royalston police officer Eric Smith. Performances are at 7 p.m. on Thursday, March 31st, and Friday, April 1st, at 7 p.m., and a 2 p.m. matinee on Sunday, April 2nd, at the Monty Tech Performing Arts Center. Tickets are $15 and are available at the door. Break a leg, Mason and Carley!

Congratulations to Nancy (Clark) Melbourne who, after nearly 14 years on the Athol-Royalston Regional SchoolCom, has decided to step down. Nancy and James’s children had already graduated from AHS when the late Chet Hall encouraged her to run for the position, and work on some issues that had affected her three children, Jameson, Nathan, and Mieka. She was successful and has been representing Royalston and working for the good of all students in the Athol-Royalston Regional School District since 2010.

Amanda Putney Horse Show

The tenth annual Amanda Putney Memorial Horse Show is scheduled for Sunday, June 4, 2023 at the Cheshire Fairgrounds in Swanzey, NH. The “Fun Open Breed Horse Show” features day end awards in Western, English, Walk/Trot, Halter, Leadline Classes, as well as equestrian games. A raffle is held in conjunction with the show, with an impressive array of items, including 50 bales of hay, cordwood, and a draft-sized Meadowbrook Cart. All proceeds from this show go to a fund established in Amanda’s name, to benefit youth by underwriting horse showing expenses.

On her birthday, shortly before her death on December 7, 2012, Amanda presented a speech to the Mass Quarter Horse Association membership as part of her run as Royal Court Queen. The focus of her reign was to be to, “…find a way to make showing Quarter Horses more affordable for youth and young adults.”

Donations for the raffle and cash donations towards the scholarship fund are gratefully accepted. For additional information or to make donations, contact Marge Tanner at 603-746-3813; margetanner@aol.com.

Milestones

Welcome to Anna Lee Schanz, daughter of Jessica (Putney) and Erich Schanz of Loomis Road. Anna arrived at Heywood Hospital at 8:38 a.m. on February 16th, 2023. She weighed in at 7lbs 6.5oz and was 20.8” long. She joins her proud big brother, Gunnar, who is five years old. Delighted grandparents include Brenda and Jim Putney of Royalston, and Noel and Barbara Schanz of Pismo Beach, California; great-grandparents Shirley Putney, and John and Helen Divoll, all from Royalston. Congratulations to the entire family!

Obituary

Elizabeth L. (Cormier) Charbonneau
June 8, 1942 – March 19, 2023
Elizabeth Louise “Betty” (Cormier) Charbonneau, 80, of Royalston, MA passed away peacefully at the Wachusett Rehabilitation and Nursing Center on March 19, 2023.

Betty was born on June 8, 1942, in Waltham, MA, where she was raised and educated at St. Charles Borromeo School. Betty loved spending time with her family and friends. She was never happier than when she and Peter were dancing together (Tea for Two), which they began to do daily in later years. Visits from her children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren were treasured times. She loved tending to her vegetable garden every summer, blueberry picking at St. Laurent Campground (her second home) and cooking and baking with her harvest. She doted over her flower gardens. She was an avid reader and enjoyed knitting and sewing. She loved playing cards and board games, especially Scrabble (but we could never beat her) and Trivial Pursuit. She had a mind like a steel trap! Betty also loved to travel, especially cruising, and if you couldn’t find her on the ship, you just had to look in the casino and chances are she would be at her favorite slot machine.

She will be dearly missed by her adoring husband of 62 years, Peter C. Charbonneau. She is also survived by her children, Debra J. Reid and her husband Steven of Dedham, MA, James M. Charbonneau and his wife Margaret of Walpole, NH, Jean M. Pinto and her husband Christopher of Worcester, MA, Michael J. Charbonneau and his wife Susan of Port Charlotte, FL, Maryanne Charbonneau of Pawtucket, RI, Kevin Charbonneau of Royalston, MA, Peter C. Charbonneau and his wife Jessica of Foxboro, MA, Joseph S. Charbonneau and his wife Christina of Ogden, UT, and Paula Gravelle and her husband Peter of Ayer, MA, 18 grandchildren and 9 great-grandchildren; her siblings Arthur Cormier of Waltham, MA, Mary-Anne Bennett of Pelham, NH, Lorraine Dowcett of Waltham, MA, Joan Utleys of Hudson, MA, Patricia Donahue of Attleboro, MA, Linda Trainor of Wakefield, MA, Laura Flaherty of Waltham, MA, Ann Foucher of Waltham, MA and Jerome Cormier of Warwick, RI; and her many nieces, nephews, and cousins. She was predeceased by her parents Joseph and Florence (Venuti) Cormier, brother Michael Cormier, sister Margaret (Jigarjian), son Paul Charbonneau, and grandson Benjamin Charbonneau.
What is Happening at the Village School?
Rise Richardson, director

Its mud season! With the snow gone, and snow pants put to rest, children are building forts in the woods, digging deep in the sandbox, jump roping, playing basketball and Capture the Flag and damming the overflow from the rain pond. 1st-6th children will hopefully spend a day at the Farm School.

All classes are grinding corn to make corn muffins for the Teddy Bear picnic. On a sunny dry day, the whole school will picnic outside, with everyone’s teddy bear attending.

SAVE THE DATE This year, the traditional Saturday Morning on Royalston Common is happening on June 3rd, including a Pancake Breakfast, a Silent Auction, Live Birds of Prey and more.

There are openings in kindergarten for next fall, please call the school for more information at 978 249 3505.

Athol Royalston Regional School District News
Submitted by Superintendent Matthew Ehrenworth, mehrenworth@arrsd.org ~ 978-249-2400

Addressing Food Insecurity inARRSD Families: We are excited to announce a collaboration with Launch Space. Together we are able to provide additional food choices through our Community Food Pantry at Athol High School. We are also working together to offer healthy, nutritional, educational, pop-up demonstrations and classes for students and families. February 2022, we supported 41 families; February 2023, we supported 167 families.

Teacher Recruitment: The Athol-Royalston Regional School District is partnering with UMass Amherst in its efforts to recruit high-quality teachers for its classrooms. This event, planned for April 5–6, from 4:00–6:30 pm, will feature ARRS defense administrators who will hold a brief panel discussion on topics relevant to entry level teacher candidates. The administrators will then host small groups in mock interviews with the hopes of making connections with prospective hires. We are also planning to invite newly-graduated education majors to ARRS defense for a field day later in the spring. This is one of many paths we are pursuing currently to attract certified teachers to Athol and Royalston.

Helping students obtain MA State IDs: On March 9, 2023, we took our first group of students to the Registry of Motor Vehicles (RMV) to obtain MA State IDS, Driver’s Permits and Driver’s Licenses. We are able to cover the costs of the fees associated with the RMV from a grant received from the Teachers’ Association. Providing students with the opportunity to have necessary identification and the ability to obtain their driver’s license is one more way we are helping to prepare our youth for graduation.

Royalston Community School (RCS), focusing on the district’s initiative of Belongingness, collaborated with the student council for a “Hobby Day” just prior to the February break. Students and staff were asked to come dressed in a favorite hobby. They were then given time to share their hobby, and in some cases, invite their classmates to participate in that hobby. In addition, the student council created and led movement stations in the gym for every class to participate in throughout the morning. Michael LaFosse from Origimido Studio, sponsored by the Royalston Academy, came to share with each class an origami lesson and story.

Kindergarten Registration has begun. If your child will be 5-years-old before September 1, 2023, pick up paperwork at RCS or call 978-249-2900 for more information.

Monty Tech
Sara Dilg at 978-248-9828, Royalston Rep. s-dilg@montytech.net ~ 978-248-9828

We have a new Royalston representative to the Montachusett Regional Vocational Technical School District. Sara Dilg of Bliss Hill Road (of annual Easter egg hunt fame) was appointed at the last March Select Board meeting. Sara is a technical writer, who, since the pandemic shutdown, has been working remotely. Sara and husband Michael have a daughter, Haley, who is a junior in Monty Tech’s Engineering Technology program.

The class of 2027 has just been placed in their vocational areas, with 314 of 369 students placing in their first-choice area. Nine shops – Advanced Manufacturing, Cabinet Making, Electrical, Graphic Communications, House Carpentry, HVAC, Health Occupations, Veterinary Science, and Welding Metal Fabrication – were filled with all first choice students. Assistive technology has helped increase access and equity in vocational programs. All 21 programs have students receiving services under Special Education, 504/ADA, and English Language students. Every freshman explored at least one non-traditional (according to gender identification) program area. Tenth grade students interested in changing focus, have been exploring vocational openings.

The Teachers’ Association 2023-2026 contract was ratified at the March meeting, following the unanimous recommendation of the Workforce Subcommittee.

Monty Tech recently held the first adults’ workforce training graduation, all of whom successfully completed their after-hours, 100% grant-funded training programs. Grads included 10 from welding; nine from Culinary Arts; and 11 from Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning. Each student received tools or equipment for their graduation gift.

Athol-Royalston Middle School (ARMS) is working through a process to be designated as a “No Place for Hate” (NPFH) school. A team of students, parents and teachers have gathered to discuss aspects of this project connected to work being done by the District’s equity team. ARMS has an interim Lead Administrator, Tari Nugent Thomas. She will serve in the role formerly held by Ms. Stanley, who is assuming the role of Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCB A) for the District. She will work more directly with students across all grade levels. Ms. Thomas will be coaching ARMS Assistant Principals Ms. Gilmore, and Mr. Hill, in an effort to grow our internal leadership capacity.

Athol High School was approved by the Department of Education for its designation as an Early College program for the start of the 2023-24 school year. In an Early College program, high school students take strategically sequenced, real college classes with strong career orientations during their regular high school day, at no cost to themselves or their families. They receive enhanced academic and guidance support to ensure that they thrive in the rigorous college coursework and in the unfamiliar, sometimes daunting, college environment. They will graduate from Athol High School with significant college credits, reducing the cost and time to degree completion. Then they graduate with the proven confidence, habits, and skills needed to be successful in college and career. Students will be eligible to start applying for Athol High School’s Early College program in April 2023. All students, grades 9-12 who are attending Athol High School are eligible to apply.
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 turnouts, 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 Susanne 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.


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

Support your Newsletter
Volunteer Friends of the Library have produced the Royalston Community Newsletter for more than 20 years, and supplied it, at no cost, to every Royalston home. Subscriptions ($25/year) and sponsor boxes ($25/box-issue or $200/year) support this valuable resource. Contact chasegos2@gmail.com or 978-249-0358 to place an ad.

Squier Davis honey is available at Horse and Buggy in Winchendon and Keene.

for sale:

Flat Plate Solar Hot Water Panels manufactured by Alternate Energy Technologies (Model AE-26 - 4’x6’-6”). Ideal for domestic hot water or home space heating systems. $50/Ea. (new $975 Ea.) 9 available. Call Walt (978) 249-8068.

Jade Tree – 35-40-year-old very large jade tree in full bloom. Blooms every year. Needs a new home. $75 or b/o. 978-249-6872.

Grass-fed ground beef. 1 lb. packages for $8. 978-249-4260.

Firewood- $275/ cord or $260 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 Kreation. Single pieces or sets; totally kool kids’s cups. Krys and Keith Swan at swankkreations@gmail.com.

Eggs $5/dozen. Contact Jessica Putney Schanz at 978-939-3329 (cell); 978-249-248-8617; jessputney1989@gmail.com. (No maple syrup this year.)

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

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/
Garden Notes  

March 22, 2023

This marks the onset of the twenty-fourth year of Garden Notes. Who would have figured?

I cannot seem to grasp the fact that a couple of weeks hence I will be scratching about in the garden. I cannot even see the garden, snow shrouded still. That last storm was icing on the cake for one bizarre winter, weather-wise. There have been times I have gardened in March. These are not the times. It will come to pass, of course, it has always come to pass.

It should be a surprise to no one that there is little in the way of garden notes as I struggle to fill my column. Like all other aspects of my gardening life, indoor plantings have been cut back. I’ve made my first steps (baby though they may be) by starting onions and leeks on the seventh and celery and peppers a week thereafter. Tomatoes and basil will be started in early April and brassicas a couple of weeks later. While most are direct seeded in the garden, I do start a few corn and butternut squashes indoors, just a few weeks before they are set out in early June. Planting onions and leeks is a tedious affair. The inclination of the seeds is to pour out of the package; my goal, however, is to individually drop them in order to provide some growing space. It is no easy task. The downside to growing seedlings in our house is the fact that they are growing in our house. They move from east window to south window to west window to maximize exposure to sunlight. Temperatures are decidedly unattractive. Early spring often finds us opening the doors to warm up the house. Fortunately, at a certain point, they are transferred to Maureen Blasco’s greenhouse, where they transform from a struggling environment to a thriving one. An ode to the greenhouse.

With overnight temperatures barely dropping below freezing, sap runs have pretty much stopped. While the sap was not particularly sweet, it was particularly plentiful. Recall, the rule-of-thumb in respect to yields is one quart per tap. We harvested twice that this year.

So......Ray Sawyer was by delivering some hay and I mumbled something about the increasing idleness I was experiencing. He reminded me that I was eighty-years old and perhaps, perhaps it was time to embrace that idleness, sitting back, feet up, and looking back upon prior accomplishments. Perhaps. Though, soon enough, with a garden to tend, sitting back will be put on hold.

Larry Siegel

Splinter

Last week Tom had a splinter, which is not surprising for someone who works with wood. Removing splinters is usually Tom’s forte, but this one had eluded him for several days. By the time I was called upon for assistance the splinter was deep and nearly invisible. Despite this challenge, or perhaps because of it, I took charge with confidence. Dealing with small injuries happens to be in my DNA, not because of a lifetime of woodworking, but because of my father.

My father was a pharmacist. His store was across from our town’s park, whose baseball diamond in summer and open-air ice rink in winter drew all manner of risky recreation. Because of this, the pharmacy became the town’s first stop for minor injuries. Dad’s cool-headed response to bumped foreheads and cut lips earned him the trust of the townspeople, many of whom called him “Doc”.

Because Dad’s pharmacy was near our apartment, I would often stop in on my way home from school or pay him a visit on a sultry summer afternoon. While the long soda fountain and the rack of comics had their charms, my favorite way to spend time was watching Dad at work in the small alcove where he filled his customers’ prescriptions.

This was the “prescription bench”, a place of serious business. One wall was lined with jars of crystals and powders, some marked with red skull and crossbones. Drawers held empty glass vials and open tubes waiting to be filled. The workspace itself was a wonder of tiny spatulas and marble slabs, tools used for mixing ointments and creams. An array of mortar-and-pestles stood ready for crushing crystals into powder. There were scales with miniscule golden weights for measuring mere grams of those powders which Dad would then carefully place into empty capsules. A vat of simple syrup was kept warm and ready to become the base for cough medicines. As I watched Dad at work, there was no question in my mind – my father knew magic that could heal.

Dad brought that magic home, ministering to all manner of ailments that befell his six children. He cooled our bug bites with Witch Hazel, and created his own insect repellent to daub on our jackets and caps. He tended our fevers and upset stomachs with his own concoctions, and was careful to tell us exactly what was in each spoonful and how the medicine would work.

Dad’s splinter removal method was basic but fool-proof: Soak the finger in a custard cup of very hot water and Tincture of Green Soap. Have handy a needle, tweezers, a box of matches, and a bottle of rubbing alcohol. Light a match and heat the needle’s sharp tip to sterilize it. Dry the soaked finger and roll the needle’s point across the skin until the splinter’s tip surfaces. Pull the splinter free and remark about its length and the pain it had caused.

As I turned to Tom’s splinter, I thought of all of this – the powders and crystals, the tiny scales, the ointments made from scratch, the burning hot needles, the sting of alcohol. While none of these were needed to remove Tom’s splinter, what came to me most clearly was how my father’s calm mastery of his craft is with me still. It is in the respect I have for the medicines my doctors prescribe, in my desire to understand exactly how those medicines will work, and in the confidence I bring to a tiny splinter.

 Deb D’Amico
"Spring peepers are about as long as a paperclip, and weigh as much as a nickel. A male peeper can output about 100 decibels from point blank range. For perspective, OSHA recommends hearing protection for anything more than 85 decibels. And peepers rarely sing alone. Your local swamp can easily be as loud—and full of lovesick longing—as a crowded bar."

Northern Woodlands Magazine, Spring 2023

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Seed packets
Seed packets do not
a garden make
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You have to get your
hands dirty.
The plant is in the seed.
The poem in the words.
Yet you have to
tear open the envelope,
let seeds rest in the
palm of your hand,
then poke a hole in the
dark, rich soil of early morning hours,
drop in the seed with a prayer or a promise,
and gently cover it over
to sprout.
Then the plant
will rise to the
sun of a new day.

Words may rattle around
like seeds in the mind,
but poems germinate
in the rich
humus of the heart.
Michael Young
Royalston Poet Laureate

The Royalston Community Newsletter
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Women’s Pick-up Volleyball
Mondays 6:30 - 8 p.m.
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Stretch, have fun, meet people.
Proven antidote to cabin fever.
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Scholarships Available
Forms are available through
your high school guidance office or Phinehas Newton Library

Send forms to: Kristen West c/o Royalston Academy Scholarship Committee, PO Box 35, Royalston, MA 01368.

The Katherine Seymour Bullock Cole Memorial Scholarship (up to $1000) is available to graduating high school resident of Royalston going on to a higher education.

The Judy Jenkins Musco Scholarship is available for Royalston residents interested in pursuing educational activities including college, home schooling, educational travel, and educational and literacy programs.

The Ladies’ Benevolent Society Scholarships are open to all residents (regardless of age or gender) pursuing higher or continuing education opportunities. For more information, contact Theresa Quinn 978-249-3819, theraquinn@aol.com. Deadline for submissions is April 25, 2023.