Calendar of Events

A complete listing of department, committee, commission, and board meetings is posted: www.royalston-ma.gov

Motorcycle Safety Awareness Month is May. The visual cues are very different for motorcycles than four-wheeled vehicles – they’re often closer than you think. So, as the tag line says, “Look Twice! Save a Life!”

May 1
Monday
May Day

May 3
Wednesday
May Day Celebration at the Village School. May pole and traditional Morris dancing. Community welcome.

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
1:34 p.m. Full Flower Moon
7 p.m. Rescheduled Historical Society quarterly meeting and pot luck supper at the home of Peter Kranik, corner of Winchendon and Stone roads. All welcome to come help plan upcoming events and museum improvements.

May 6
Saturday
6:30 - 7:30 p.m. Father*-Daughter Dance at the Athol Community Elementary School. Bring your own dad or adopt one for the night (of any gender)- dress up, dance, giggle and eat a lot of snacks. There is a professional photographer available starting at 6 p.m. for an additional cost. Tickets $20 / couple or selected family. Benefits the Athol-Royalston Education Foundation, a group that raises money for “outside the budget” projects in the local public schools.

May 13
Saturday
10 a.m. Conservation and Preservation of Headstones n the Olde Centre Cemetery, led by National Park Service trained expert Ta Mara Conde of Historic Gravestone Services, sponsored by the Royalston Historical Society. If able, bring jugs of plain tap water and soft plastic or plant-bristled scrub brushes. The same techniques practiced here are applicable to all New England cemeteries.

May 20
Saturday
8 a.m. to 1 p.m. North Quabbin Garden Club Plant Sale at Millers River Environmental Center in Athol.

May 29
Monday
Memorial Day observed – Post Office, P. S. Newton Library, all schools closed.
2 p.m. Memorial Day Exercises on the Common
3 p.m. Memorial Day Light Luncheon at Town Hall, provided by LBS.

The tradition of decorating graves in May began immediately after the Civil War, possibly in Mississippi, possibly in upstate New York, possibly in any of the other dozen communities which independently began this practice, when women, going to place flowers on the graves of their fallen beloved soldiers, noticed the neglect of the “enemy” dead. They considered the gravity of burial so far from home for the families. They considered the lost humanity of the killed soldier, likely a very young man. These women cleaned and added flowers to all the graves. This empathetic action grew into a national day of remembrance in 1868.

Save the Dates:

June 3
Saturday
7:30 - 11:30 a.m. Saturday Morning on the Common: Village School pancake breakfast at Town Hall, birds of prey, tag sale, and more on the Common; silent auction at the church. Starting at 8:30 - the famous Library plant sale and book sale at Old School House #1.

June 10
Saturday
10 a.m. Annual Town Meeting, upstairs in Town Hall

June 17
Saturday
5 p.m. Fire & EMS Chicken BBQ at the Center Fire Station. The chicken will be accompanied by bread and butter, potato salad, corn, and watermelon. Adult meals are $20; $12 for kids 12 and under. Advance tickets are available from any Fire & EMS member, and a limited number will be available at the event.

June 28 - July 7
Royalston Shakespeare Company- Free kids’ theater workshop production of the Tempest. Actors, stage crew, set designers, and costumers all needed. Everyone is cast. No experience necessary, but attendance at each rehearsal is required. Sign up at the Library.

10 a.m. Conservation and Preservation of Headstones in the Olde Centre Cemetery, led by National Park Service trained expert Ta Mara Conde of Historic Gravestone Services, sponsored by the Royalston Historical Society. If able, bring jugs of plain tap water and soft plastic or plant-bristled scrub brushes. The same techniques practiced here are applicable to all New England cemeteries.
Select Board Notes
Shelby Bronnes, Clerk

Recent Town Election
At the last meeting in March the Board bid a fond farewell to Chris Long, who has served the town as Select Board member for twelve years. Her many years of hard work are much appreciated, and her wise counsel and institutional knowledge will be sorely missed by all of us. At the April 4th meeting, the Board unanimously approved that Deb D’Amico will remain chair, Rick Martin assumed the position of vice chair, and newly elected member Shelby Bronnes will become clerk. The Board thanks the voters who came out on April 3rd, and the people who worked the polls as well.

Fuel Spill Update
Clean-up of the March fuel spill at the DPW is complete and dumpsters containing contaminated soil have been removed from site. A boom is still in place In Lawrence Brook upriver from the bridge on Route 68 and will be in place for six months monitored by the DEP. It has been estimated that the cleanup will cost the town roughly $100,000. We are looking into ways through our insurance company and State representatives to get some relief from this amount. Efforts are ongoing throughout multiple departments. The cost of this cleanup will need to come from a transfer of current FY23 funds which will be taken care of on the day of our Annual Town Meeting.

Town Budget
We continue to review and make adjustments as needed to the town’s FY24 budget. We have heard from all department leaders and anticipate hearing from our Capital Planning Committee early in May. Once we have their recommendations the Board will work with the Finance Committee to finalize the budget. This year we have prioritized giving our employees a 5% raise to make up for the lean Covid years and to help as a hedge against the increased cost of living we are all juggling. We always wish it could be more and we are so grateful to all our employees who work so hard for the Town.

Town Meeting June 10, 2023
We remind our voters that our Annual Town Meeting will take place on Saturday, June 10, 2023 at 10AM upstairs at the Town Hall. As you know, the business of the Annual Town Meeting is for voters to approve spending for the next fiscal year (FY24). Your Select Board and the various town departments have worked very hard over the late winter and spring to create a budget that meets our town’s needs while staying within our means. As always, we hope for a large turnout at our Town meetings.

Luncheon Club and COA
The Council on Aging sponsors the Wednesday Luncheon Club at the Town Hall. Coffee and tea are ready at 11 a.m. A nutritious and tasty lunch in the company of others is served at noon. Please call Betty at 978-249-9656 or Gary at 978-249-8957 before 5 PM Monday to reserve a seat. A confidential, voluntary donation of $3.00 is appreciated.

Memorial Day Exercises
Linda Alger and the South Royalston Revitalization Committee have been organizing Royalston’s Memorial Day exercises, scheduled for Monday, May 29th, 2 p.m. on The Common. Brenda Putney will again be placing flags in cemeteries in advance of the day. Peter Newman is organizing the honor guard. Monty Tech is supplying a color guard. John M. Divoll will be serving as emcee. Nancy Skowonski’s grandson, Christian Hansen of Templeton will serve as the marshall. Ladies’ Benevolent Society will cater a light luncheon at 3 p.m.

Royalston Department of Public Works
DPW Superintendent Jaret R. Thiem 978-249-4223 or dpwadmin@royalston-ma.gov
We have entered our busy season! With the two major storms wreaking havoc, it’s no surprise to see all of the downed branches and trees on the roadsides. Along with brush chipping, we are right in the middle of early spring road grading and patching. In addition to our DPW crew, we have hired an outside tree company to handle the countless hanging limbs all around town. Please remember we’re actively looking to fill a vacant, full-time position, and currently have a total of just three workers. We are doing our very best to make progress on the many tasks we have at this time of the year.

That being said, the DPW crews will have completed spring cleanup and mowing of cemeteries in advance of Royalston’s Memorial Day observation, on Monday, May 29th. Please be sure to remove any holiday decorations, empty planting boxes, etc. That will allow workers to move right along with the mowing and trimming. Paving crews will begin work on Northeast Fitzwilliam Road, starting at Taft Hill Road, and going right to the NH line. This work should be completed early June. The DPW will also be replacing some culvert pipes along that stretch of road. The project is being funded by the WRAP (Winter Recovery Assistance Program) Grant, and funds must be expended by June 30th.

Brown Road Update: The Brown Road culvert project is going out to bid. Once the bid closes, we should have a better idea of the cost, as well as an expected completion date. The engineering has been completed, as have the necessary DEP (Department of Environmental Protection) requirements. Stay tuned for more updates. Residents noticing something that needs to be done should not hesitate to call the DPW. We will take care of it as soon as possible.

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.
Royalston South Village Revitalization News

Dear Neighbors,
On April 12, the RSVR hosted a meeting to discuss the future of the Royalston Country Store which closed its doors on March 19. More than 50 residents came together at the Town Hall to learn about the current situation and strategies that other towns have used to save their country stores. Thank you to the following volunteers who organized this meeting on short notice: Peter Gagliardi; Loryn Killay, who designed the flyer; Kelly Dolan and Jessica Spring – social media; Rose Lawrence, Maureen Blasco, Sonja Vaccari, Janice Trask, Linda Alger, Tim Wright, Bill Chapman, and Roy and Donna Smith.

RSVR Steering Committee member Linda Alger opened the meeting with an update on the extensive activity over the last 4 years – building the Gazebo, fairs, advocating for the purchase of the Pete and Henry’s land to make into a park, etc. She spoke about the history of the store, which has served Royalston for over 200 years. Then guest speaker Chuck Berube of Petersham outlined that town’s efforts to save its country store. Berube once owned the Petersham Country Store and was one of the community leaders instrumental in that town’s successful effort.

Berube reported that a volunteer committee raised money from more than 60 people and also arranged for the East Quabbin Land Trust to acquire the store, using the donated funds. With the Land Trust on board as the landlord, the committee recruited a local experienced chef and restaurant owner to operate the Country Store.

Berube said that separation of the roles -- landlord and store operator, was a key to their success. Local commitment to the store was essential. In addition to raising the sale price, the community raised additional money to upgrade the store. The community support at the outset and the ongoing community participation as regular patrons make it work.

Following intense discussions, 8 small working groups considered the information that they received. Each group reported its recommendations for the Royalston Country Store. Those present favored a community effort to ensure that the building continues to be a store and that the store offer the services that today’s residents want.

To pursue this objective, the organizers of the meeting asked for people to volunteer to serve on a Sub Committee of the Revitalization Committee. Twelve residents volunteered: Amy Newland, Michael Palmatier, Kristi Schellie, David Bourbeau, Patti Stanko, Nancy Monette, James Taylor, Norah Dooley, Joe Liebman, Dee Burroughs-Biron, Mark Thompson, with Peter Gagliardi as chair. The sub-committee’s organizational meeting was held at the Second Congregational Church in the South Village one week later.

The sub-committee is waiting for the official listing of the property so that next steps can be taken. The committee is actively investigating various options and is looking forward to gaining more information about financing, acquisition, and restoration of the historic building, creating a business plan for the next iteration of the store, and fitting the store into the larger picture of economic development in the South Village. The sub-committee believes that the store is an essential asset to the Revitalization Committee’s economic development plan which is well underway.

If you would like to volunteer on this project, please call Peter Gagliardi, chair of the SOS sub-committee at 413-531-7585 or email him at petergagliardi@msn.com.

Thank you to Linda Alger and members of the Steering Committee who are helping to organize this year’s Memorial Day Program on the Common in front of the Town Hall.

Royalston Police Department News

RPD PR Officer Christopher Deveneau – 978-249-5838 (leave msg.)

Chief Curtis Deveneau is expressing “great appreciation” to Patrol Sgt. Robert Plummer for his quick actions on April 3, 2023, when during the course of his assigned day patrol, he received a report of a possible house fire on Woods Road. He immediately responded from the area of The Common and found smoke bellowing from the eaves of the home. Observing vehicles in the driveway, his first priority was to alert anyone inside. Following several attempts, with no response to banging on doors, he forced his way in and began calling out. He immediately observed open flames in the ceiling area, and getting no response from anyone inside, he retrieved a fire extinguisher from the patrol vehicle. He re-entered the home, extinguished the flames, then began another search for anyone inside. A few animals exited the home during his search, but there were not occupants at that time. The Fire Department arrived, and quickly contained the fire threat. The structure was saved, and additional animals rescued.

Chief Deveneau also reports he has completed a Commonwealth Grant for Traffic Safety, and the Town was awarded funds to complete enhanced patrols for speeding, distracted driving, and impaired operation. Additionally, the award included funds to acquire another solar-powered Speed Enforcement Sign, to be placed at the north end of The Common. The devices, which include one at the south end of The Common, and two at the ends of the South Village, will make the areas safer for pedestrians.

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. Contact-Deb Conrad (978)895-3505, Jeff & Sue Smith (978)895-7887.
**Phinehas S. Newton Library News**

Kathy Morris, Library Director

Trustees: Jeffrey Mangum, Jennifer Basso, Theresa Quinn

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**

**Poppy**

Thank you Zoe Rabinowitz for volunteer work and not infecting us with COVID.

The Santillo and Bundschuh families for graciously allowing us to use their field for the falconry demonstration and kite flying.

Sonja Vaccari for bringing Henry Walters of Mondadnock Falconry to our attention.

Kristen West for making, decorating, and donating a delicious and beautiful cake complete with kites for our falcon and kite flying Earth Day celebration.

Maureen Blasco who diligently repaired kites and made sure we had plenty of supplies for kite flying – the new kites were pretty spectacular. Also thanks to Maureen for dealing with the changes in the newsletter’s mailing permits and nonprofit requirements. Obviously, it has been a stressful and time consuming process and she jumped in with two feet.

Peter Pelletier for expertly figuring out how to open the Library’s motion detectors so we could replace the batteries.

**United Way Food Collection Box at the Library**

United to Feed North Central Mass, a part of the United Way of North Central Massachusetts, is hosting a food drive from April 1 through June 6 and has left a donation box at the Library for people to donate non-perishable foods and personal care products. In Massachusetts, 1 in 11 children and 1 in 14 people face hunger daily. The food will be disturbed to food pantries in the area including the Salvation Army of Athol, the Gardner CAC, Montachusett Veterans Outreach Center, and the Winchendon CAC. For more information, contact Anne McCarthy at 978-345-1577 ext. 313 or Anne@uwncm.org.

**Art Exhibit**

Clarence Rabideau has changed several paintings in his exhibit and added new ones in place of the ones sold. Stop by to enjoy and if you decide to purchase one you are contributing to the Friends.

**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. The book “examines the unspoken caste system that has shaped America”. Join the group for lively discussion and refreshments. Call Maureen Blasco at 978-249-5138

**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.

**Annual Library Plant and Book Sales - June 3, 2023**

Saturday, June 3 from 8:30 - 11:30k come to the famous Friends of the Library Plant and Book Sale at the Post Office (Old School House #1). Find a completely new selection of books in all genres for all ages at excellent prices. Call the Library to donate books for the sale.

Expect the usual common and uncommon varieties of high quality perennials, vegetables, herbs, annuals, bulbs and tubers, houseplants and surprises from local gardeners, offered with experienced advice and a smile. Why not donate some diggings, sow a few seeds, and put aside some space in your gardens for the Friends? Donations of plants can be brought early to the sale Saturday morning or dropped outside the Library the week before.

All profits benefit the Friends, who use the money to support the Library and its programs as well as produce and distribute this newsletter 10 times per year. New members are always welcome.

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**Royalston Shakespeare Company**

The Royalston Shakespeare Company, our long-running kids’ theater workshop will create a workshop production of *The Tempest* from June 28- July 7. Thanks to many snow days last winter, the schedule is a bit convoluted. Rehearsals will run mornings from 9:30 - 12:30 Mon - Sat. The July 4 rehearsal will be recommended but optional. The culminating performance will be Friday, July 7 at 7 pm. at Town Hall.

This free, fun theater workshop that has been sponsored by the Friends of the Library and funded with support from the Royalston Cultural Council since 2001. Many Royalston kids have gotten to know theater, Shakespeare, and each other in the happy process. Actors, stage crew, set designers, costumers all needed. Everyone is cast. No experience necessary, but attendance at each rehearsal is required. For more information or to sign up, contact the library.

**Summer Reading Program Planning**

The theme for Summer Reading is ‘Find Your Voice!’ and we are looking forward to having a great lineup of loud programs. With the large number of snow days we will not be starting until at least July 6. Programs for all ages will be Thursdays at 1:30 pm and preschool programs will be Mondays at 10:00 am.
Some of the new materials at your library

**Adult Fiction**

Baldacci, David  
Beanland, Rachel  
Brashears, Monica  
Clark, Mary Higgins  
Conklin, Tara  
Dallas, Sandra  
Frazier, Charles  
Griffiths, Elly  
Henry, Emily  
Hepworth, Sally  
Hoffs, Susanna  
Jackson, Joshilyn  
Jennett, Meagan  
Jimenez, Abby  
Kane, Diane  
Kelly, Martha Hall  
Lee, Min Jin  
Lehane, Dennis  
Miranda, Megan  
Morton, Kate  
Oakley, Colleen  
Roper, Jane  
Sanderson, Brandon  
Sandford, John  
Scottoline, Lisa  
Sittenfeld, Curtis  
Stabenow, Dana  
Sterling, Michelle  
Sternbergh, Adam  
Walls, Jeannette

**Adult non-fiction**

Egan, Timothy  
Fine, Karen  
Grann, David  
Hallisey, Leigh  
Kelly, Mary  
Kingsbury, Noel  
Kline, Emily  
Petri, Alexandra  
Schafer, Gina  
Schueman, Tom  
Schwartz, Morris  
Smith, Clint  
Smith, Elizabeth  
Unger, Craig  
Volf, Miroslav  
Walters, Henry  
Webb, Leah  
Williams, Mo  
Winchester, Simon  
Wohlenben, Peter

**Children’s Fiction**

Blair, Landis  
Boyton, Sandra  
Elliott, Rebecca  
Emberley, Michael  
Fitzgerald, Isaac  
Frazee, Marla  
Gardner, Michael  
Hale, Shannon  
Henkes, Kevin  
Lindstrom, Carole  
May, Kyla  
McDonald, Jill  
Rylant, Cynthia  
Sayre, April  
Selznick, Brian  
Sudyka, Diana  
Theule, Larissa  
Vere, Ed  
Wechterowicz, P.

**Children’s Nonfiction**

Alexander, Kwame  
Biesty, Stephen  
Blumenthal, Deborah  
Fogelson, Marni  
Gibbs, Stuart  
Hallisey, Leigh  
Handford, Martin  
Khaliilallah, S.  
Markovics, Joyce  
Nelson, Louise  
Nelson, Louise  
Owings, Lisa  
Owings, Lisa  
Rathburn, Betsy  
Salyer, Hannah  
Schechter, Robert  
Singh, Rina  
Virts, Terry  
Weatherford, Carole  
Wilgus, Alison  

**Audiobooks**

Grann, David  

**Yoga**

Join Jess Schanz each Tuesday evening at 6:00 p.m. in the upstairs of the Town Hall for an hour of stretching and balancing and breathing. Bring your own mat. Jess has blocks and straps for stretches. The classes are sponsored by the Friends and any extra donations go to the instructor.
**Historical Society News**

*Peter Krania, president*

On Saturday May 13 at 10 a.m., come to Olde Center Cemetery near the Common for a **hands-on workshop cleaning and preserving headstones with expert Ta Mara Conde of Historic Gravestone Services.** The more volunteers that participate, the more will be accomplished. If able, bring jugs of pain tap water and scrub brushes with plant-based or plastic bristles. The techniques learned in this hands-on workshop are appropriate to all New England Cemeteries. The rain date is May 20. Free. This program is supported by the Royalston Cultural Council.

In October, the popular “living history” cemetery tours will be back, possibly using Riverside Cemetery as the setting. A group of people is researching lives of the people buried there and beginning to work on scripts. If you would like to take the role of an old soul this October, contact Beth Gospodarek 978-249-0358.

**Volunteers are needed.** If you would like to staff the museum, plan events, maintain the Museum or the fence, or help archive, please reach out by coming to a meeting, using our web-site, or by calling Maureen Blasco 978-249-5138.

The next quarterly meeting will be May 5 at 7 pm at President Peter Krania’s home at the corner of Winchendon and Stone roads. Proposed acquisitioning and de-acquisitioning policies will be discussed. If you can, bring your favorite dish for a potluck. If not, just come and meet some nice people with a shared purpose. Bring a friend too.

**Ladies’ Benevolent Society News**

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

Members of the Ladies’ Benevolent Society met recently for an annual planning meeting. Donations of $50 to the Village School, and $100 to the Amanda Putney Memorial Scholarship Fund were voted. Member Patricia Worth provided new birthday cards for the Remembrance Secretary.

Program Committee members presented their plan for the year. In addition to May’s Memorial Day Luncheon (Monday, May 29th, Town Hall, 3 p.m., following the 2 p.m. Memorial Day Exercises) programs planned include Women’s Health with Charlotte Welzin on June 29th, at the home of Kristi Schelli; an August Summer Splash/Potluck at Packard Pond; September 28th Green Building Practices, with host Andrea Lively; and October 26th, Fire Safety Education with member and Royalston firefighter Brenda Putney hosting. The annual Drive-By-Pie sale is slated for November 18th, again under the direction of Maureen Blasco, and the annual Holiday Baskets packing is December 7th, with hostess Theresa Quinn.

The Ladies’ Benevolent Society of Royalston is one of the oldest, continuously operating community service groups in the Commonwealth. The 200th anniversary is December 31, 2024, and the membership is working on a schedule of events for their anniversary year. It is also actively recruiting new members. Men, women, and older children are welcome to attend programs of interest, which are usually on the last Thursday of each month, following the 6:30 p.m. business meeting.

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**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*

Preparing pets for disasters is important. It is similar to prepping two-legged family members: #1 – Make a plan. #2 – Build an emergency kit. #3 – Stay informed.

First and foremost – Ensure your pet can be identified! Ideally, they are microchipped and registered, and the contact information has been kept up-to-date. Make sure to include emergency contacts not in your immediate area. Be sure to have well-fitting collars with current registration and vaccination tags, and a tag with owner contact info.

When directed to evacuate in an emergency, it is assumed pet owners will be bringing their pets. More and more emergency shelters now have contingency plans to accommodate pets, either at the shelter, at remote (staffed) facilities, or through foster care. This is in an attempt to avoid abandoning pets who survive unspeakable conditions or die horrible deaths without their human caretakers.

If advance warning allows, it is wise to know a safe place where you can take your pets before disasters and emergencies happen. This is one of the best situations for your pets and stresses them far less than emergency evacuation to a shelter. Plan with neighbors/family/friends to make sure someone is available to care for or evacuate your pets if you are unable to do so.

Make a “go bag” for your pet, rotating food and medicines on a regular basis so it’s always ready at a moment’s notice. In a waterproof container: A photo of you and your pet(s) to assist in reunification in case you’re separated; current copies of all vaccination, registration, and pertinent certifications, in case they need to be seen by emergency sheltering personnel. For sanitation, keep some disposal bags, pet litter/box, paper towels, and a bleach-based cleaner. To help keep your pet calm, a favorite toy and familiar bedding can reduce stress. This should be kept in a crate or carrier, in an easy-to-access location.

Large animals pose unique concerns. Ensuring all animals are identifiable is vital. If not microchipping, a safe collar/harness with that info is next best. In advance of the need, ensure that emergency destinations have food, water, necessary handling equipment, and vet care available. In the event evacuation is impossible, it would be helpful to have thought, in advance, if it is better to confine large animals to the barn, or turn them loose.

Calling an animal a “service animal,” or a “support animal” does not make it a service or support animal. There are specified health, training, and certification requirements for the various categories. Check with your veterinarian to determine the appropriate way to verify that your pet is a legitimate service or support animal.

Go to www.ready.gov for in-depth information, contacts, and print-outs to properly prepare your pets for disasters.

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*Preparedness beats panic every time! Be informed – Make a Plan!*
Congratulations and Good News

Got something to crow about? This means you graduates! Send it along to the RCN at chasegos2@gmail.com or drop at library.

Congratulations

Caitlin Joy (Barclay) and Kevin Renzaglia, who were married on 2.23.23 at The Ironwoods Beach, on the Island of Maui, in Kapalua, Hawai‘i.

They enjoyed a Hawai‘ian honeymoon filled with sushi and snorkeling. They enjoyed one day on the open water, snorkeling with turtles, sharks, and tropical fish, even encountering whales within five to ten feet. They had the rare experience of witnessing, while underwater, a female Humpback whale and her calf, with an escort of bottlenose dolphins.

Caitlin and Kevin are back home in Mesa, Arizona, with their puppy Nani Tsunami, and cats Bebe and Finley. Caitlin is currently employed by Aya Healthcare, and she and Kevin are just starting a consultancy, LOD Solutions, available to assist companies with logistics, optimization, and delivery.

Amanda Putney Horse Show

The information sheet has been posted on Facebook, on the Amanda Putney Memorial Horse Show page. A total of 34 classes are offered; most $10/each. Versatility Class is $25, Leadline (three classes) $15, All-Day inclusive fee $75. To limit waiting on show day, competitors are requested to pre-enter the show prior to June 1, (a post-entry fee of $25 will apply after that date.) Day-end awards will be presented for 12 divisions – Western Adult, Western Sr., Western Jr., English Adult, English Sr., English Jr., W/T Youth (18 & under), W/T Adult, Lead Line, Games W/T, and Games. Stalls and camping prices were not posted at the time this was published. Donations are being solicited for the fundraising raffles and auctions – contact Karen Brooks at baileybrooksfarm@msn.com or 978-297-2102. Sponsors are still being accepted – contact Brenda Putney at brenput@yahoo.com or 978-249-7787. Questions regarding the show – contact Marge Tanner at margetanner@aol.com or 603-746-3813.

Obituaries

John J. Guiney III, 73, of Gardner and formerly of South Royalston, died peacefully at his residence Saturday, April 1, 2023 with his family at his side.

John was born in Boston on August 29, 1949, son of the late William P. and Geneva (Leavitt) Guiney. He grew up in Stoneham and Wakefield, MA and was a graduate of Wakefield High School and Curry College. He had played golf and hockey in high school and college. John served in the Massachusetts National Guard. John had worked as an electronics technician for many years until his retirement. In his later years, John repaired and rebuilt computers. He had lived in South Royalston for 30 years until moving to Gardner five years ago.

He leaves his wife of 40 years, Barbara A. (Rice) Guiney; two children, Jessica Glover and her husband Matthew of Washington DC and Christopher P. Guiney and wife Roxanne of Shoreline, WA; a brother William Guiney of Chatham and sister, Paula Fish of No. Reading. He also leaves nieces and nephews.

Joann M. (Putney) St. John, 66, of Pequoig Avenue, died on Monday, March 20, 2023 at Boston Medical Center. Born in Framingham on February 25, 1957, she was the daughter of David C. and Shirley A. (Serre) Putney and was raised in Royalston. She met her future husband, Edward J. St. John Sr. in Boston and were married in June of 1991 and enjoyed over 31 years of marriage until Ed’s death on December 24, 2022.

Joann was a cook for several nursing homes, including the Baldwinville Nursing Home. A lover of the outdoors, Joann enjoyed deep sea fishing, lilacs and the ocean, especially York, Maine. She was a talented cook, an avid reader, loved writing and enjoyed baseball.

Joann is survived by her mother, Shirley Putney of Royalston; a daughter, Laura St. John and her fiancé, Leo Hamel, of Athol; a brother, Jim Putney and his wife, Brenda, of Royalston; nieces, Emily Putney, Jessica Putney and Amy Putney; her best friend of 40 years, Linda Tonks of Chelmsford; and her cats, “Julio” and “Jax”. Besides her husband, Joann was predeceased by her father, David C. Putney on April 3, 2022, as well as a niece, Amanda Putney on December 7, 2012. There are no calling hours or services at this time.
Monty Tech
Sara Dilg at 978-248-9828, Royalston Rep. s-dilg@montytech.net ~ 978-248-9828

Monty Tech is celebrating its two SkillsUSA wins: not only will SkillsUSA competitors in Massachusetts be wearing a T-shirt designed by a Monty Tech student, but competitors nationwide will be wearing a pin designed by the same student! Monty Tech is also pleased to report that 199 juniors and seniors are taking advantage of co-op opportunities.

As we adjust to post-pandemic life, the effect of COVID on students’ learning and on their social and emotional health remains a concern. Monty Tech addresses these challenges with new initiatives, from school violence prevention to mental health support services in the form of a partnership with Care Solace, which helps families find mental health providers and assists them in navigating their insurance benefits.

Furthermore, in the recent community-wide Monty Tech survey on current and future values, the respondents indicated that the need to foster respect for one another has become more important. Therefore, Monty Tech will be focusing on respect as a theme for the coming year.

Upcoming events include the following:
* Cultural Diversity Night: May 19 at 5:30 p.m.
* Monty Tech Foundation Scholarship Scramble Golf event: June 16
* Ride of your Life in August, a partnership with Heywood Hospital and the Montachusett Suicide Prevention Task Force

On Wednesday May 3rd at 9:00 a.m. sharp, the Village School will host an old fashioned May Day celebration at Camp Caravan. Children can join in May Pole weaving and dancing. There will be singing of traditional songs and rounds. Rumor has it that the aging Millers River Morris Men will appear and leap and pound the earth to drive out winter and awaken the earth and bring fertility to the crops, the fields, and the animals! Young and old will join in the uplifting Shepherds Hay to complete the event. This event will last under an hour, just enough time to greet the spring and evade the black flies. Rain date to be posted on website.

This month each class will celebrate Biodiversity Day with outings to Lawrence Brook and the forest and pond at Camp Caravan to count species and draw some of their discoveries.

The month starts with a traditional May Day celebration, May Pole and all, for which all the students have learned songs and dances. The students are planting a garden, looking towards next fall’s harvest. All the students love being in the garden – with the extra bonus of finding all kinds of interesting bugs.

On May 26th, the annual Village School original play is performed at the school, the culmination of intensive work by the 5th-6th grade class, based on their year-long study of the Middle Ages.
Classifieds

Found: A set of keys. Kathy Barry from 68/Warwick Rd. reports, “My husband was walking down this road toward Rt. 32 and found a set of keys near the yellow gate. If anyone has lost them please call 413-230-4566.

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 horseback. $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.


Royalston Community School
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.

Wildlife Sightings

Amy Patterson took this picture of a Bald Eagle on the Millers River from River Rd on April 18. Kathy Chencharik also sent a similar photo of a very similar male Bald Eagle on River Road.

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.


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 K reations. 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/

Squier Davis honey is available at Horse and Buggy in Winchendon and Keene.
**Garden Notes**  
*April 22, 2023*

While 80°F readings in April, especially before mid-month, are not unheard of, they are not heard of very often. In comparison, the maximum reading last April was 70°F. It was warm enough (you think?) and, somewhat surprisingly, the soil was dry enough and I’ve always used opportunities like this to put in early plantings. Several reasons motivated me. I needed some early product for farmers’ market. I wanted to mature and remove the first crop to re-plant for the fall. And, probably most likely, I was eager to get started, to experience dirt under my fingernails. But, I have retired from the market. I no longer double plant beds. And, somewhat distressingly, I’m experiencing a decided lack of eagerness. I have yet to put a seed in the ground; peas and spinach and arugula and parsnips and radishes must bide their time.

I have not been totally idle, tending to the perennial beds. When we first moved here, a priority was to set out perennials and fruit trees. We assumed we would be here for the long haul. It was 1977. I guess we got that right. Of the fifty asparagus plants, about a third remain, just what we need to keep us awash in asparagus for an eight-week period beginning early May. I cannot imagine how we might deal with the yield from fifty plants. Frozen asparagus appeals to me not at all; I prefer a bit of crunch, preparing the asparagus by thinly slicing and either stir-frying or adding it raw to a mixed salad. Horseradish was set out that first year as well. It is indestructible still in place after forty-six years. It hasn’t grown nearly as aggressively as the literature suggests, but a little horseradish goes a long way. Our third planting was a couple of rhubarb roots. We divided and re-divided (again with the market in mind) and now have nineteen plants. With no market. A mature rhubarb plant is a massive thing. Once established, it is a major undertaking to de-establish it. Long after the garden reverts to a field, the rhubarb will persist. It will be my legacy.

Beds were worked up last fall, so require little more than a bit of jostling to prepare them for planting. Annual weeds have yet to appear; except for the alliums (garlic, scallions, and chives) and Kathy’s winter wheat, there is little in the way of green in the garden. I cut some chives a couple of weeks ago, not because the dish cried out for them (it did not), but simply to gloat about harvesting something. In prior years, we’d be digging parsnips as well, but the long-standing patch played out last year and there are none. We await asparagus for a harvest somewhat more substantial than a bunch of chives.

This and that: forsythia blossoms are virtually non-existent, apparently a casualty of the late winter storm. It remains to be seen whether other shrubs will suffer a similar fate. Peaches, our most reliable fruit trees, are decidedly unreliable this year. There are few flower buds. Few flower buds translate to few flowers, which translate to few peaches. The season’s first crop failure. And, noted without comment: I have spotted my first porcupine and I have spotted my first rabbit.

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**Spring Peeper**

This has been an uncertain spring. A day or two of unseasonable heat bracketed by weeks of clouds and cold and piles of snow that refused to melt does not feel like spring. As I reach for a warm coat and gloves before heading out, I feel stuck in winter mode. So, the insistent chirping from our woods on a recent evening was a welcome surprise. The peepers are calling – a sure sign of spring.

Spring peepers have always fascinated me. As a small child I loved our family’s spring car rides in search of their call. After dinner we would pile into the car, kids and grandparents in back, Mom and Dad in front. Our father would drive us to a particular meadow where the spring peepers sang. With the car pulled over and the engine off, we would roll down our windows. The chorus of peepers was so loud! I remember that meadow as a mystical place, bathed in soft grey light. There we sat in rapt silence, enchanted by the call of so many tiny creatures.

Years later, when we moved to New Hampshire, it seemed the peepers came too! This time the drive was to an overlook where the valley floor dropped away to the west for miles and miles, from the Intervale of our home to Mount Washington and the Presidential Range. The valley held vast pastures divided by fences and dotted with cows. The Saco River wound through the valley and, in spring, would often overflow its banks. This created ephemeral pools where the peepers gathered. Standing at the edge of that overlook we could hear their calls in the valley below. There must have been thousands. Sometimes we marveled at how far their call could travel. Mostly we just listened.

The spring peeper community in our Royalston woods is small. Most evenings a lone frog’s call is answered by one or two others. Back and forth the conversation goes and I wonder if they will ever find each other. Every spring I wish for a whole chorus of frogs to call to us from our evening woods, like the peepers from my childhood. But I welcome our tiny brood, nonetheless.

On a recent evening, just at dusk, I found a tiny frog clinging to our sliding door. Each toe ended in a suction cup that held fast to the glass. On its back was the wobbly X that gives this creature its Latin name: pseudacris crucifer – “false cross”. I was thrilled – this was an actual spring peeper! The frog blinked its large eyes, perhaps in confusion: “How on earth did I get here?” But I was delighted to see him. After a lifetime of hearing the spring peepers’ distant calls, I was finally nose-to-nose with one. Welcome magical creature, tiny chorister, harbinger of spring!

*Deb D’Amico*

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*Larry Siegel*
To the Royalston Community:

The United States Postal Service has informed the Friends of the Library (after 24 years!) that the sponsorship ads traditionally on this page, do not meet requirements for non-profit mailing. If we want to continue mailing the newsletter, there cannot be ads that bring in revenue to the Friends.

We appreciate the consistent support of all our sponsors. We realize it was true support, rather than advertising with an expectation of a big return.

Here is a list of those great supporters:

Days Gone By Antiques - Bob and Lorraine Casinghino

Paul Montero - Professional Land Surveyor

Sam’s Canine Companions - Sherry A. Miner

Mark O’Connor - Excavation/Contracting

Luna Body Therapeutics - Carolyn Cullen

Renovations R Us - Bob LeBlanc

The Kitchen Garden

Red Apple Farm

Thanks to Charlie Scribner for organizing yet another Roadside Clean-up. Here is a bit of what the Marshall family picked up on Route 32. Obviously, it makes a difference to get out there on the last weekend and April for spring cleaning.

Wonders all Around
Most residents recognize that in Royalston, we are pretty lucky when it comes to natural wonders, both large and small.

A favorite wildflower blooming in early May is bloodroot (Sanguinaria canadensis). It emerges with bristly leaves wrapped around the flower bud early in the season. The flowers appear before there is a lot of competition for pollinators and the petals fall away quickly.

A member of the poppy family, the root, which “bleeds” red sap when cut, has traditional medicinal uses to kill skin tissue. It has been used to treat warts, ring worm, and fungal infections. An FDA approved extract has been used in toothpaste to fight gingivitis. Wild bloodroot should not be taken internally as it is toxic.
Noticing the Signs
I knew she had arrived by her perfume
as I stepped outdoors,
sweet, with hints of
moist earth and
growing grass.
Looking around, few flowers
yet to be found, but
daffodils and forsythias
are well on their way.
Night coming on with a
covering of stars in
a cloudless sky.
An evening serenade
of peepers thrilled
the still air.
My nighttime troubled by
a winter bed quilt
TOO WARM.
Kick it off!
Morning sun dawned a
sunrise surprise,
all peach and apricot blush.
Surely,
Spring has arrived.

Michael Young
Royalston poet laureate

Preschool Storytime
at the Library
2 p.m. each Monday
Stories, socializing, songs, snacks and crafts
Free
Call the Library for more information

Royalston Cemeteries
In anticipation of Memorial Day, cemetery clean-up will be taking place over the next few weeks. It is requested that all holiday decorations, dead arrangements, and empty planters be removed to facilitate the on-going work. Those working at grave sites of loved ones are reminded that plantings may not include trees, and shrubs may not exceed the height of the monument. Plantings are limited to one foot (12") immediately in front of the monument.