## Calendar of Events

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

**NationalGratitudeMonth** focuses on appreciating what is positive in our lives. The outcomes for gratitude include improved overall health and well-being, including fewer stress-related illnesses, more physical fitness, and happier, satisfying personal and professional relationships.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>November 1</td>
<td><strong>Wednesday</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Studded Snow Tires allowed</strong> from November 1st through April 30th</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>No Classes ARRSD</strong> – full-day professional development</td>
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<tr>
<td>November 2</td>
<td><strong>Thursday</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td>6:30 - 8 p.m. <strong>Public Meeting about Whitney Hall</strong> to be held upstairs at Town Hall: Come hear the Keen Independent Research team’s preliminary findings in its marketing study of Whitney Hall.</td>
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<tr>
<td>November 3</td>
<td><strong>Friday</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td>5 p.m. <strong>Village School’s Annual Lantern Walk</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>November 5</td>
<td><strong>Sunday</strong></td>
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<td>2:00 a.m. <strong>Daylight Savings Time ends</strong> – Change batteries in all smoke, carbon monoxide, and radon detectors (Yes, even if the batteries are still good! Save them in non-emergency devices!)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2 p.m. <strong>Library Craft program</strong> for teens and adults at Town Hall. Decorate a festive wooden sign. Limited to the first 20 people to register by calling the Library at 978-249-3572. Free. Sponsored by the Friends.</td>
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<tr>
<td>November 10</td>
<td><strong>Friday</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Veterans’ Day Observed</strong> – Post Office, P. S. Newton Library, all schools closed; no meetings</td>
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<td></td>
<td>7 p.m. <strong>SHARP! Turkey Raffle</strong> by Royalston Fire &amp; EMS, sta. #1</td>
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<tr>
<td>November 13</td>
<td><strong>Monday</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>ARRSD Hunger Bowl Food Drive</strong> all this week</td>
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<td></td>
<td>4:27 a.m. <strong>New Beaver Moon</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>November 16</td>
<td><strong>Thursday</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td>3:30 p.m. <strong>Library Book Group</strong> meets to discuss Jodi Picoult’s <em>Leaving Time</em>. All welcome. Copies of the book are available to be checked out at the Library.</td>
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<tr>
<td>November 18</td>
<td><strong>Saturday</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9 a.m. to sellout (roughly 10:30 or 11) <strong>Drive by Pie</strong> benefits scholarships and other good works of the LBS.</td>
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</tbody>
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### Drive by Pie!

**Across from P.O., Royalston Common**

- **Pre-Orders are Best!!**
  - Pumpkin $15
  - Apple, frozen or fresh $16
  - Mince $16
  - Blueberry, frozen or fresh $16
  - Pecan $20.

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

**Maureen 249-5138**

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

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

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<tr>
<td>November 21</td>
<td><strong>Tuesday</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Early Dismissal ARRSD</strong> – Half-day for parent-teacher conferences</td>
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<tr>
<td>November 23</td>
<td><strong>Thursday</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Thanksgiving Day</strong> – Post Office, P. S. Newton Library, all schools closed; no meetings</td>
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<tr>
<td>November 25</td>
<td><strong>Saturday</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Small Business Saturday</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>November 27</td>
<td><strong>Monday</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td>4:16 a.m. <strong>Full Beaver Moon</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8 a.m. – 6 p.m. <strong>Royalston F&amp;G Deer Check Station and Breakfast Stop</strong></td>
</tr>
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**Save the Date**

**Sunday December 3**

2:00 p.m. **Make a Holiday Garland** from cinnamon sticks, dried fruits, greens and ribbons. Space is limited for this free program at the Town Hall. Call or email the Library to register.
Select Board Notes
Shelby Bronnes, Clerk

Whitney Hall
The Whitney Hall Feasibility Study, conducted by Keen Independent Research, has been underway for several months now. Members of that team will be presenting their preliminary findings at a public meeting being held on November 2 from 6:30 to 8:00 at the Assembly Hall (upstairs) at Town Hall. We hope to have a large turnout as the board anticipates using information from this study to guide the town toward important decisions about the future of Whitney Hall. The Select Board is very grateful to all residents who took the time to voice their views, either in person, participating in the online survey, or via email and phone call to the research team.

Green Communities Grant
At a recent meeting, the Board approved and signed a Green Communities Grant application completed by Royalston’s Energy Committee. If awarded, the town would receive $165,089 for materials and labor to improve weatherization of municipal buildings, including the Police/Fire Station, the Library and Town Hall. As part of our Green Community designation, Royalston has access to funding that enables us to reduce energy use and costs by implementing clean energy projects to municipal buildings. This grant program provides technical assistance and financial support for these initiatives, which is much needed in small towns like Royalston. The Board is grateful to the Energy Committee for their work.

Police Department Grant
The Select Board and Police Chief Curtis Deveneau are keeping a close eye on the staffing of our police department. At a recent board meeting, Chief Deveneau presented his FY24 first quarter report. He noted that, over the past nine months, Royalston has lost about half of its part-time officers due to retirement, and officers leaving to take full-time positions elsewhere. This has resulted in a lower department volume than in previous years. The board has asked the chief to investigate options for our force going forward; some responses included recruiting new staff, and potential of regionalizing with a neighboring town. While no decisions have been made, there is no question that, given the trend we are seeing, Royalston will need to be open to change in this area. We look forward to facilitating community-wide conversations about our visions for the future of policing in Royalston.

First and Second 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, Wednesdays 2 - 4 p.m. Contacts- Deb Conrad (978)895-3505, Jeff & Sue Smith (978) 895-7887.

Government Funding for Internet
Many of you are taking advantage of the new Spectrum System for the Internet in town. But did you know that the Federal Communications Commission is offering money for your internet bill?

The FCC through the Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP) is offering qualified participants $30 per month from your bill if you meet certain requirements for income levels or are on certain government programs like Medicaid, SNAP, Public Housing, Veterans Pension or Survivor Benefits, and many other programs.

What you need to do is call 877-384-2575 or email to APSupport@usac.org and apply. You will get an acceptance letter from this program which you will forward to Spectrum, and they will take $30 from your monthly internet service bill.

Included in the ACP is another program where you can receive money for the purchase of a laptop, desktop computer, or tablet.

It is not very often someone is giving away money, so please take the time to ask if you qualify and enjoy our brand-new internet service in the Town of Royalston.

Agricultural Commission Updates
Sadly, the Agricultural Commission’s Second Annual Fall Fair was cancelled due to the unrelenting rainy weekend weather. Jen Janowicz reports all of the vendors have expressed an interest in having booths next year. She will, “...try to work out a plan B for rain,”! If you have questions or would like to be notified for a next Fall Fair, please contact her at 508-723-2729.

Royalston Emergency Management Agency
Director Jim Barclay ema@royalston-ma.gov or phone 978-249-2904
Deputy Director Tom Musco tmusco@gmail.com or 978-249-9633

CodeRED™ Alert Test Call DO OVER!
The annual CodeRED™ Alert Test Call in September, while successful in terms of notifying numbers in the data base, demonstrated that the data base used for calling is “stale.” This is due to largely to the facts there are no longer “white pages,” and a large number of people now have cell phones as a primary contact point. Deputy Director Tom Musco is currently working with Verizon and CodeRED™ personnel on a database overhaul, and it is our hope that existing contact information voluntarily added will remain when this update is completed.

Please watch the newsletter, Town website, and Town social media for a new CodeRED™ Alert Test date, likely in December or January. At that time, information will be provided regarding enrolling any phone numbers or e-mails into the updated system. Preparedness beats panic every time!

Be informed ~ Make a Plan!
Board of Health News
Phil Leger, chair

Approximately 40 people received their seasonal flu shot at a clinic held at the Town Hall. We would like to thank the COA and Gary Winitzer for organizing the clinic with assistance from the RBOH. Theresa Quinn performed the prescreening as folks entered the building. We also thank the Athol Pharmacy who sent a pharmacist and tech as well as the vaccine. The Wachusett Medical Reserve Corps sent 2 nurses who were happy to be in our historic town hall. Thanks to our new elevator, we are able to use it for events.

With colder weather on the horizon, be careful around the facility, especially around the roll offs. We are exploring the invitation from Winchendon to join their facility. The proposal is very advantageous budget wise. More to come on this. In the meantime, Dick Brown is assisting us in getting an estimate for extending 3-phase power to the transfer station. We were hoping that a solar facility may be built on Town land by the landfill. This would have brought the needed power to the facility at no cost to the town. This project is now in limbo as National Grid has put a moratorium on solar projects due to storage capacity limits. The cost of bringing the needed 3-phase power will be an important factor in deciding the future of the transfer station.

In the meantime, a reminder for those of you who haven’t gotten their annual sticker due July 1st, see Tony.

Flu, Covid, and RSV vaccines are available at most pharmacies. Be safe get vaxed.

Whitney Hall Marketing Feasibility Study
Public Meeting, November 2 - Presentation and Discussion of Preliminary Findings and Recommendations

Keen Independent Research, a national market and economic research firm, has been conducting a marketing feasibility study of Whitney Hall. The study team has gathered and analyzed public input about community needs and wishes, engaged Trahan Architects to assess the condition of the historic 1905 building, and evaluated the financial feasibility of transforming this iconic, but underutilized, South Royalston village site into a fully functioning, vibrant community asset.

Join Keen Independent and Royalston’s Whitney Hall Project Team to hear and discuss preliminary findings and recommendations at an upcoming public meeting.

Location: Upstairs at the Town Hall, 13 On the Common, Royalston
Date: Thursday, November 2, 2023
Time: 6:30 to 8:00 pm.

Royalston Department of Public Works
DPW Superintendent Jaret R. Thiem 978-249-4223 or dpwadmin@royalston-ma.gov

The Royalston DPW continues to work on roadways throughout the Town. Most recently, work was done on Gulf Road and Elm Avenue, both of which were in poor condition, with potholes and broken up chunks of old pavement. Crumbling asphalt was removed, and replaced with asphalt millings. The millings were hauled in and the grader was used to lay out the new material and compact it into new road surface. Expenses to the Town were limited to labor and fuel, as the millings were FREE, having been revived from other road projects!

DPW Superintendent Thiem also reports he and his crew are also working with the Board of Health to finish removing wood waste at RRATS (Royalston Recycling And Transfer Station) in order to be in compliance with the EPA (Environmental Protection Agency).

Courtesy of an engineering hiccup, the Brown Road culvert installation was delayed, but it is hoped the installation will be completed before snow flies.

As always, Superintendent Thiem invites questions and concerns (and compliments are always welcomed!) but requests that all comments are e-mailed to dpw@royalston-ma.gov so he can properly track them. As always, call the DPW during business hours for any urgent needs, and in an EMERGENCY: DIAL 9-1-1.

Town Clerk News
Town Clerk Barbara Richardson 978-249-0493
Hours: Wednesdays 10 a.m.-2 p.m.; by appt.

If you have not voted in the past three years and have not submitted a census form, you may have been dropped from the active voter list. If you have any question about your status as a voter, or if you wish to register to vote to cast ballots in any upcoming town, state, or federal elections, contact the Town Clerk to verify your voter status or to register.

Fall into 01368!

As we approach holiday season, please remember that your purchases of postage at the Royalston Post Office help us keep 01368 as our zip code! “Postmistress Janice” offers many options for stamps, and will soon be receiving holiday specials. Our Post Office is open Monday through Saturday, 7:45-11:45 a.m. Our Post Office is financially supported through sales of stamps and services.
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

Donations to the Friends
Donald Jarvenpaa
Jessica and Christopher Willhite Family
Theodore Neale
Michael and Querida Masters
Charles and Polly Longsworth
Nancy and Matthew Hickler
Heidi Warren

Art Exhibit
During December and January John Burk will have a selection of his nature photographs on display at the Library. He is the author of several local guidebooks and his photos have been in magazines and other publications.

Would you like to display your artwork? If you have artwork, paintings, drawings, wall hangings suitable for hanging in the children’s room, we would love to have your work on display. Displays are usually for two months and can be from a few pieces to many depending on their size and what you would like to exhibit.

Library Book Group
The Library Book Group meets at the Library the third Thursday of the month each month except December. New members are welcome. On November 16 the book will be *Leaving Time* by Jodi Picoult, a story that follows Jenna Metcalf as she searches for her mother, an elephant researcher, who disappeared 10 years before. It’s a story about love, loss, and memory and the bond between humans and elephants. Copies of the book are available at the Library.

Yoga with Jess
As fall settles in and the temperatures drop, warm up, stretch, and breath with Jess Schanz on Tuesdays at 6:00 p.m. upstairs in the Town Hall. Improve your core strength, balance, and flexibility in these one hour sessions sponsored by the Friends of the Library. Bring your own mat. Free, with free-will donations going directly to the instructor.

Library Spice Club- Travel the World with Spices
New spices monthly November- March
Come travel the world with us as we share a new spice and recipes each month with our new Spice Club! Kits will be available for pick up at the library at the beginning of each month. No registration required. Kits will be available while supplies last. Free. Sponsored by the Friends of the Library.

Fall Craft Project
Join Gina Verrelli on Sunday, November 5 at 2:00 p.m. at the Town Hall for a fun afternoon painting and creating a decorative sign for the fall season and Thanksgiving. There is still space to sign up for this free class. Call the Library to register.

Make a Cinnamon Ornament Garland
On Sunday, December 3 at 2:00 p.m. Barb Richardson and Beth Gospodarek will help participants create a cozy garland to dress up a doorway or mantle for the holidays. Use dried fruit, wooden beads, ribbons, and holly, balsam, pine, and spruce sprigs to enhance the cinnamon ornaments and cinnamon sticks. Class size is limited so sign up for a spot by calling or emailing the Library.

Silent Film *Metropolis*
with live music accompaniment at Town Hall on Sat. No. 18 at 7 p.m.
Last year, the audience loved our silent film with live music presentation, so the Library is excited to offer a new film in 2023: Fritz Lang’s Expressionist classic *Metropolis*. Caleb Chase, Kelly Chen and other musicians from Boston and Worcester will play live music underscoring the plot and theme. Free. Tasty refreshments. Spontaneous and special.

Veterans’ Day in Books
Each year as we remember Veterans Day, I feature the five volumes of Alan Bowers series, *On Duty*, recounting the lives and service of men and women from North Central Massachusetts. Alan is a veteran of the Vietnam War and knows the experience of war personally. I read his memorable books years ago and I think about the experiences of the people involved as hooks to hang past and current local and national news upon.

If any of you have read the Pulitzer Prize winning book, *The Good War: An Oral History of World War II*, by Studs Terkel, Alan’s interviews with people from around the region capably capture intimate and memorable life experiences of ordinary people doing extraordinary things. I recommend all of Alan Bower’s books as well as Stud Terkel’s for an important look at history.

Preschool Story Time
Brooke Coleman leads an inviting easy play time for preschool children with simple crafts, stories, and snacks on non-holiday Mondays at 2:00 p.m. No registration is necessary. Just show up and enjoy the chance to talk with other adults and share play time with your children.
### Some of the new materials at your library

#### Adult Fiction
- Adegoke, Yomi: The List
- Allison, Zoe: The Ex-Mass Holidays
- Aswany, Alaa: The Yacoubian Building
- Chua, Amy: The Golden Gate
- Davis, Lydia: Our Strangers
- DeMille, Nelson: Blood Lines
- DuBois, Jennifer: The Last Language
- Enright, Anne: The Wren, the Wren
- Follet, Ken: Devil Makes Three
- Fountain, Ben: The Running Grave
- Galbraith, Robert: The Book of (More) Delights
- Gay, Ross: The Exchange
- Grisham, John: Starling House
- Harrow, Alix: Three Holidays and a Wedding
- Jance, J.A.: Blessings of the Lost Girls
- Kinsella, Sophie: The Burnout
- Knoll, Jessica: Bright Young Women
- Labatut, Benjamin: The Maniac
- Lahiri, Jhumpa: Roman Stories
- Lethem, Jonathan: Brooklyn Crime Novel
- Liese, Chloe: Better Hate Than Never
- Maher, Kerri: Il You Have to Do is Call
- Mason, Daniel: North Woods
- McGhee, Molly: Jonathan Abernathy You are Kind
- Murphy, Julie: A Holly Jolly Ever After
- Nesbo, Jo: The Night House
- Patterson, James: 12 Months to Live
- Osman, Richard: The Last Devil to Die
- Reid, Kiley: Such a Fun Age
- Sandford, John: Judgment Prey
- Scalzi, John: Starter Villain
- Schwab, Victoria: The Fragile Threads of Power
- Steel, Danielle: Second Act
- Tan, Twan Eng: The House of Doors
- Taranto, Julius: How I Won a Nobel Prize
- Umrigar, Thirty: The Museum of Failures
- Wiggs, Susan: Obsession
- Woods, Stewart: Mr. Texas
- Wright, Lawrence: Land of Milk and Honey

#### Children’s Fiction
- Bingham, Winsome: The Walk
- Blackall, Sophie: If I was a Horse
- Boynton, Sandra: Snow, Snow, Snow!
- Brown, Peter: The Wild Robot Protects
- Button, Lana: Stay My Baby
- Colfer, Eoin: Three Tasks for a Dragon
- Colon-Bagley, Sheila: La Nocha Before Three Kings Day
- DiCamillo, Kate: The Puppets of Spellhorst
- Doyle, Peter: Kidnapped in Rome
- Ehler, Lois: Red & Green
- Endo, Tatsuya: Spy X Family
- Fang, X: Dim Sum Palace
- Gibbs, Stuart: Spy School Goes North
- Gorman, Amanda: Something, Someday
- Grimes, Nikki: A Walk in the Hollow
- Higgins, Ryan: Out Cold
- Hillenbrand, Will: The Voice in the Hollow
- Ho, Joanna: Say My Name
- Jones, Amanda: Decorate the Tree
- Kahn, Melany: Mason Goes Mushrooming
- Lin, Grace: Our Favorite Apples
- Martin, Ann: Stacey’s Mistake
- Mills, Julia: I Am Stuck
- Reynolds, Jason: There was a Party for Langston
- Reynolds, Peter: All We Need is Love and a Really Soft Pillow
- Rinker, Sherri: Construction Site
- Rogers, Kim: A Letter for Bob
- Shah, Sonali: The Best Diwali Ever
- Singh, Rina: Once, a Bird
- Sparkes, Amy: The Christmas Doll
- Watkins, Rowboat: Go-Go Guys
- Watt, Melanie: Scaredy’s Nutty Adventures 3
- Yoshitake, Shinsuke: I Can Open it For You

#### Young Adult
- Green, John: Looking for Alaska
- Hakim, Joy: Biology’s Beginnings
- Haasen, Carl: Wrecker
- Higuera, Donna: Alebrijes
- McAnulty, Stacy: Where are the Aliens?
- Riordan, Rick: Percy Jackson and the Olympians: The Chalice of the Gods
- Russell, Rachel: Tales from a Not-So-Posh Paris Adventure
- Shepard, Ray: A Long Time Coming
- Sutherland, Tui: A Guide to the Dragon World
- Woodson, Jacqueline: Remember Us

#### Adult Non-fiction
- Baron, Martin: Collision of Power
- Chester, Mark: The Bay State
- Coffey, Michael: Michael Coffey
- Gay, Roxane: Opinions
- Goldfarb, Ben: Crossings
- Lewis, Michael: Going Infinite
- Montgomery, Sy: Of Time and Turtles
- O’Reilly, Bill: Killing the Witches
- Pepin, Jacques: Jacques Pepin Cooking My Way
- Petras, David: Conflict
- Rusch, Elizabeth: The 21
- Safina, Carl: Alfie & Me
- Schama, Simon: Foreign Bodies
- Schlilling, Dan: Alone at Dawn

#### Audiobooks
- Jiles, Paulette: Chenneville
- Krueger, William: The River We Remember

#### DVDs
- Air, Blackberry, Book Club: Next Chapter, City on a Hill Season 2
- Fast X, Hotel Transylvania: Transformania, Kandahar, and Spider-Man: Across the Spider-Verse (DVD & Bluray)
Historical Society News

The Society recently has adopted a new acquisitions and de-acquisitions policy. A crew of volunteers has worked throughout the warm months sorting, archiving and appropriately storing photos and documents. A small group is getting a lot done.

Women’s Lives Exhibit: The RHS is excited to reopen its museum in the spring of 2024 with a “new” space for temporary exhibits, which we anticipate will change annually. The first will be “Women’s Lives in Royalston” and will coincide with the 200th Anniversary of the Ladies’ Benevolent Society. High Hopes Farm, palm leaf braiding, textile creation, “notable” women, as well as the role of the LBS in benefitting our community and creating the Library will be featured. Expect several special events in the spring and summer presented in conjunction with the Library and the LBS.

As you may know, an antique sign was stolen from the Common (near the Bastille) sometime in the last 6 years, but apparently no one noticed until recently. A citizen has offered a $500 reward for information leading to the return of the sign.

Thanks to all who attended and helped with the recent candlelit cemetery tours in Riverside Cemetery. It took a village of researchers, writers, re-enactors, and logisticians to pull it off. Special thanks to Kathy Chencharik, Kristi Schelie, Marie Humblet, Lorraine Cassingham, Norah Dooley and others for writing the scripts; to Maureen Blasco for organizing costumes, and Don Shambroom, Bea and Jean Batiste Valliere, Asher, Chely, and Stephen Chase, Norah Dooley, Robert Fairchild, Mason Mello and many Athol High School students for bringing to life the stories behind the headstones.

There is something in my house
That makes me get up early.
Dog barking before dawn.
Alert, alert!
Must mean movement
Inside, outside.

The house lies quiet
Except my thoughts,
My cold feet keep
Me from falling back asleep.

Outside
The yard lies dark
Under a scimitar moon.
Is there a threat
I cannot see?

“Get up, get up!”
The dog insists.
Something wants me alert
Early.

There is something in the world,
Missiles or tanks or troop transports
That make dogs bark,
The dogs of war.

Movements in the dark
Wake me with a start,
Awake,
Get up early.

This is no time for troubled sleep.
Time to be awake.

Michael Young, Royalston Poet Laureate

I would like to become a member of the
Royalston Historical Society Inc.

Enclosed are 2024 dues of $25.00
I would also like to contribute to the Special Exhibits and Archiving Materials Fund with a tax deductible donation of ____________

Name:
Address:
Email:

Checks payable to the Royalston Historical Society may be mailed to PO Box 23, Royalston MA 01368 or deposited in donation box at School House #1
Royalston Fire and EMS News

RF&EMS Fundraising chairperson Amy M. Putney, FF/FR

The annual Turkey Raffle is Friday, Nov. 10th, with the first spin at 7 p.m. sharp in the center fire station. Twenty-four rounds with one small turkey, one large turkey, and an array of fall foods and beverages, are each $2. Basket raffle tickets, also $2, are available for a basket of everything needed for a complete Thanksgiving meal (and lots of leftovers). Basket tickets are now available from any Fire & EMS member, at the Royalston Post Office, as well as during the Turkey Raffle.

Remember, your attendance at this event supports Departmental equipment and training needs, and is a whole lot more fun than the taxes you’d otherwise need to pay!

Fish and Game Club News

Royalston F&G wishes to thank Dana Prentiss for envisioning, proposing, organizing fundraising, and installing a new flag post and flag along the entryway to the Club. In addition, he also cleaned the monument, which stands next to the new flagpole. Roast Beef Dinners Nov. 4th and Dec. 9th are planned. These family-style meals feature tossed salad, bread with real butter, perfectly cooked roast beef, mashed potatoes and gravy, green beans, and a strawberry or chocolate Hoodsie cup for dessert. Take-out dinners are available. Doors open at 5:30 p.m. and supper is served about 6 p.m. Call or stop by the Clubhouse at 978-249-3004. Tickets are $15/person; NO tickets will be available at the door!

The Royalston F&G will serve as an official Deer Check Station this season, opening the Monday following Thanksgiving, Nov. 27th from 8 a.m. – 6 p.m. The Club will also be offering coffee and breakfast for hunters during those hours, for the first week.

Interested in Town History?

The Royalston Historical Society has printed copies of the Town map of 1831 showing all of the roads, homeowner names and place names. Available for purchase at the Post Office and suitable for framing, this map makes a great gift. $10.

South Royalston School Reunion

Rose Lawrence

Ladies’ Benevolent Society

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

Drive-by-Pies time is here! This major LBS fundraiser is slated for Saturday, November 18 at the Raymond Building roadside, 9 a.m. to noon (or sellout, which usually occurs by 11 a.m.). Several varieties of fresh and frozen (ready-to-bake for Thanksgiving) pies will be available. Call ahead to reserve your pie(s), or stop by to check out the many delicious options. For additional information, or to pre-order your pie(s), contact Maureen Blasco and leave a message at 978-249-5138, including your name, your order, and a call-back number.

Members of the Ladies’ Benevolent Society met in September. Following reports during the business meeting, the group began discussion on some projects for the 200th anniversary year, which begins this December. A project to restore and preserve LBS posters, in collaboration with the Historical Society was discussed, with possible exhibits in the Society Museum, Library, and Town Hall. Other potential celebration activities include a women’s history display and several special events, including a presentation on the importance of the local palm leaf hat industry to women’s lives; an afternoon tea; a new LBS cookbook; a community supper featuring “foods our mothers made”; and designing a 200th anniversary LBS logo.

Thank you to these consistent supporters of the newsletter:
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
ARRSD Updates
submitted by Superintendent Ehrenworth

We are excited to let you know that the 3rd Annual Hunger Bowl will be Nov. 13 - 17. This is a school-wide Food Drive Competition. The school that brings in the most non-perishable food items and/or hygiene items will be declared the winner. The food drive will benefit the Community Pantry at Athol High School. Each donation item matters. The food pantry supports our community. Last month, we helped 571 individuals with food. Contact Erika Bueno at (978) 249-2435 Ext. 314 for information.

Cruise Into Literacy is an exciting event for ARRSD Families. It will be held November 7th at the Athol High School from 5-7 p.m. There will be a presentation, a performer, raffle prizes, book bingo, as well as games, story walks, pictures, crafts, dinner, and more. This is free for ARRSD Families. We are excited to have the support of many community partners. We look forward to seeing you there! Contact us at the ARRSD Family & Community Center (978) 249-2436 for more info.

Special Education Administrators attended a full-day IEP training session by the Department of Secondary and Elementary Education (DESE) on the implementation of a new IEP Improvement Project, being rolled out in 2024. Having the District’s special education administrators trained in this new project, documents, and related forms, we are able to begin the lengthy process of training special educators, related service providers, and building administrators in order to implement the new IEP. The special education administrators will be presenting information at a future SEPAC meeting. We are actively searching for two qualified Speech Language Pathologists. As was mentioned in the letter sent to families of students impacted by these vacancies, liaisons are documenting all missed speech sessions and will work individually with teams and families to develop and assess the impact of missed services and develop a Compensatory Services Plan for each student. If you have any questions about your child’s speech services, please contact Christie Fontaine, Director of Pupil Services, at cfontaine@arrsd.org or 978-249-2403.

Athol High School seniors and juniors participated in a series of college and career readiness activities in support of their ongoing preparation for their world after high school. A highlight was an alumni panel, where the students heard how AHS prepares them for their next step in life. These alumni panels will occur throughout the year, as it is a strong means for students to positively see themselves in some of our most recent successful alumni. Additionally, college bound juniors/seniors began their college application essays.

Athol-Royalston Middle School held a well-attended fall open house, with the Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO) holding a successful membership drive. The School Council also has openings for volunteers – two from the greater community to join teachers Mr. MacPhee, Ms. Piscitello, and Superintendent Ehrenworth on the Council to discuss matters involving our school’s climate and culture, guided by our School Improvement Plan. Please email Mr. Webster at jwebster@arrsd.org if you are interested!

An Instructional Leadership Team, guided by the District’s collaborative efforts with Focused Schools has been formed at ARMS, and we’ve held our first two meetings of the school year. The teams are excited about evaluating and recognizing all that we are doing to educate our students and working together to identify any aspect of the school which we can hone-in on to improve student learning. Stay tuned for more information as things progress!

After school clubs and activities are off to a great start at ARMS, such as clubs for Chess, Art, and Guitar; sports, including Football, Soccer, and Volleyball, are well underway. Please remember that our late bus runs each week on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays, picking students up at 2:55 PM to help with transportation home, so talk with your child’s coach or activity advisor to plan their rides accordingly so that our students are supervised and safe after school!

South Royalston School Reunion

YES, IT’S A BIG DEAL.

The 119th South Royalston Reunion was held on Oct. 1st at the Royalston Fish and Game Club. Thanks to the club for allowing us to use this great facility. All former students who attended school in Royalston were invited. This year’s event was attended by 22 individuals. The reunion started with a Harvest Turkey Dinner along with all the fixings which were provided by classmates. The turkey was tender juicy, flavorful and was prepared by Ray Simula.

The meal was followed with a meeting led by President, Arthur Alger. All officers were present which include, Vice-President Jan St. Jean-Woodbury, Treasurer Dorothy Lawrence-Yablonski, and Secretary Rose Lawrence. After dessert Arthur engaged all in attendance to speak of past school experiences. This brought a lot of laughter and treasured memories of years spent at school in Royalston.

The reunion ended with a Basket Raffle provided by the reunion members. As each went their way a resounding – “let’s do this again” was heard. Hopefully in the very near future the Reunion will be held at Whitney Hall which is looking grand again after outside repairs and a fresh coat of paint.

Royalston Community School

Royalston Community School students will attempt to earn first place, for the third year in a row, in the ARRSD’s third annual Hunger Bowl Food Drive. All of the non-perishables collected will help stock the Athol High School Food Pantry, which serves all ARRSD student families. Last year, RCS collected nearly 1,300 units of food. Anyone in the community who wishes to help them top that number may drop food off the week of November 13-17.

The Royalston Community School Fall Open House saw 64% of the students represented by parents/guardians! Two lucky attendees won the Principal’s drawings for $30 Red Apple Farm gift cards. The evening featured a Scholastic Book fair, and information tables staffed by numerous community partners, including Shirley Mitchell, Director of the Family & Community Center, who shared details on available family supports. Other groups on hand were Valuing our Children, Peer Ambassadors, Launch Space, YMCA, Boy Scouts of America, Seven Hills Foundation, Athol Public Library, Big Brother/Big Sister, and our own Royalston Community School Parent Teacher Group.
What is Happening at the Village School?

The K-6th classes recently joined in the hour-long beautiful Friday afternoon hike on the east portion of the Camp Caravan property, down old cart paths, crossing rivers, through the woods, over gigantic erratic boulders, through the field and back to the school again, making a full circle. Children discovered porcupines, caves, snakes, salamanders and more.

The traditional Lantern Walk takes place Friday Nov. 3, with children swinging their glowing lanterns as they form a procession in the dark, followed by a pot luck dinner and family contradance.

Saturday November 18 Open House 10 a.m. to noon. Come meet the teachers, talk with parents, meet alumni, tour the building, find out about the unique curriculum and get your questions answered! Bring your children, they will enjoy art and science activities in the classrooms just for them. Preschool starts filling up for next year.

For continual updates on events, go to https://www.villageschoolma.org/events/

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

Royalston Community School PTG
PTGroyalstoncommunityschool@gmail.com

The Royalston Community School Parent-Teacher Group is up and running for the 2023-2024 School Year! President Joslyn May and officers Nadine Hopkins, Vice President; Gina Maroni, Treasurer; Dayna Mallet, Secretary and Sarah Deblois, Volunteer Coordinator have already hosted school opening events, and are working on plans for fun and fundraising activities for the coming year. Meetings are via Zoom, the first Tuesday of each month at 6 p.m. The link will be included in the principal’s letter, as well as an email from the PTG to families who have requested information regarding attendance at meetings. The Royalston Community School PTG maintains a Facebook page under that name.

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

Recognizing the need to expand access to vocational education to high school students who do not attend vocational schools, Monty Tech has been working toward establishing just such a program. The state Chapter 74 Partnership Program, known as “After Dark,” allows schools to receive aid to expand access to vocational education by offering technical training to students in the district who attend traditional high schools. Students study their core academic requirements at their local high school and receive 900+ total hours of Chapter 74 instruction at a technical school. For more information, see https://www.doe.mass.edu/ccte/cvte/afterdark/default.html.

In September, the site plan for Monty Tech’s program, which will be located at 270 Westminster Street in Fitchburg, was unanimously approved by the Fitchburg Planning Board. Developed in partnership with the Fitchburg, Gardner, and Narragansett school districts, Monty Tech’s MVP (Montachusett Vocational Partnership) program will offer training in Electrical and Plumbing instruction as early as the fall of 2024, with House Carpentry to follow. The next step is for the Fitchburg Building Department to review plans to renovate the interior of the building. In the meantime, Monty Tech and its partners will be preparing policies, handbooks, guides, and procedures for the MVP.

New Dual Enrollment Partnership. For students currently attending Monty Tech, in addition to the current dual enrollment partnership with Fitchburg State University, last summer Monty Tech began a new partnership with Worcester State University, as 15 students attended an Introduction to Digital Photography course. Now three after-school classes are being offered—Health and Nutrition, Introduction to American Sign Language, and Personal Financial Planning—with a combined 63 students earning both high school and college credit simultaneously.

A Recognized Climate Leader. Monty Tech was selected as one of fourteen 2023 MassSave Climate Leaders. This celebrates the school’s savings of 1,000 lifetime MWh through improved lighting, HVAC, air systems, VSD motors and controls, and site-specific automated control strategies. Another major factor was the school’s commitment to instilling the principles of energy conservation in its students.

Community Support. The school continues to be strongly supported by the community, with recent donations by Tractor Supply ($1,500 in assorted supplies) and Royalston’s own Robert Fairchild ($2,000 to benefit the electrical program). And in return, it is committed to doing what it can to reciprocate the community’s generosity. Along with retail partners CVS and The Paper Store, Monty Tech is establishing a campus “pantry” to provide necessities such as food, personal hygiene products, school supplies, and more to both day and evening students who are in need.

COVID recovery. Lastly, Monty Tech continues to recover from COVID-19 pandemic:

MCAS scores, although still below their 2019 pre-pandemic levels, are recovering. A full 98% of students passed the tests in 2023.

Continuing Education. Enrollment in the Adult Continuing Education program is approaching 2019 levels as well.

Cooperative Education. The most encouraging news concerns the students’ engagement in cooperative learning. It’s shaping up to be a record year for student co-op participation. As of the School Committee meeting on October 4, there were more than 130 students involved, compared to 92 at the same time last year.
Garden Notes

October 24, 2023

Impending first frost has always triggered a flurry of activity. The frost-sensitive plants are stripped of their remaining vegetables. Blankets are hauled out and the plants covered. Sometimes it works out and sometimes it does not. There will be no flurry of activity this year. The tomatoes went the way of the cucumbers and melons and beans. Frost preparation will be limited to picking the handful of peppers which finally appeared and pulling up the basil. The blankets will take the year off.

This is not to suggest that frost will occur anytime soon. Last night was the first reading below forty degrees. I didn’t hear the frost word over the course of the seven-day forecast. Seven days from now approach November, perhaps our latest for first frost. (My records exist, but in a state of disarray. We’ll have to rely on my [somewhat challenged] memory.) Also delayed this year was peak foliage. It was not an in-your-face season. (Many of the maples dropped their leaves before turning color.) Nonetheless, it reminds us that we live in New England.

I crow about this every year, but there is something rewarding about going out to the garden and harvesting the evening’s grub. In November. In northcentral Massachusetts. There are root crops galore: carrots, beets, rutabaga, daikon radish; as well as a bevy of above-ground greeneries: kale, leeks, cabbage, celery, lettuce. Broccoli, even. (After the head of broccoli is harvested, the plant will send out side shoots. We’ve been harvesting them for months.) And Brussels sprouts.

Brussels sprouts are the very last plants to mature a crop. We had our first meal last night. Assuming the deer can be deterred, we can reasonably expect to harvest through December. The sprouts are a love ‘em or leave ‘em proposition. Clearly, we love ‘em. I suspect most leave ‘em because they are obliged to consume sprouts that have been boiled beyond recognition. I halve them and steam until fork-tender (ten minutes, perhaps).

Usually, at this time, I report that I’m well into garden bed preparations for next year. I confess to not being into garden bed preparation at all. It is a physical challenge: hauling away spent plants, turning and enriching the soil. There is a certain advantage to completing the task now: unforeseen events could occur next spring. At eighty-one, I can imagine any number of unforeseen events. It’s still on my to-do list (perhaps first on my to-do list), but that is no guarantee I will, in fact, do it. Stay tuned. The garlic, at least, is in the ground. It is a start.

Spider Craft

I have a spider living on my cellar door. Or, perhaps, successive generations of spiders, for there has been a spider and web at this exact spot for many years. The spider is long and thin, the color of dust. Her web is a seemingly random crosshatch of silk that spans from door jamb to dead bolt. As I approach, I see the spider standing guard near the center of its creation. The slightest draft shivers the web and I watch the spider brace herself. Alas, no matter how careful I am, when I reach for the lock, I demolish the web, and the spider scurries away.

This troubles me. I feel a kinship with this tiny creature who has taken up residence in my home. I have no wish to cause it such distress. Yet over time I’ve come to see that my intrusion does not deter the rebuilding of her web. Whenever I approach the door, the spider is back on a newly constructed web, and we begin the ritual once more: the demolished web, the hasty retreat.

My long relationship with the cellar spider has changed me. I have become an intrepid web hunter, and I notice them everywhere!

One summer afternoon I found an enormous web strung across an outside corner of our house. It took me a while to spy the architect hiding at the shadowed edge, waiting for the arrival of its next meal. Another time I happened upon a web under construction and was mesmerized by the slow, methodical attaching of silk to silk by a spider far more patient than I. Abandoned spider webs, invisible until draped with the dust of our home, become the cobwebs that cling in high corners. These spans of silk and fluff were once the hunting ground of spiders who’d lived with us unnoticed. Now I pause in admiration before dispatching the cobwebs with a broom.

On a recent morning I walked the road to Birch Hill Dam. The night before had been cool, and the morning brought a thick fog that hung low on all sides. Tree tops were hidden, the dam’s brick building was barely visible, and the sun struggled to break through. As I walked the causeway my eye was caught by sparks of light on either side. I looked closer. All along the metal fence dozens of spider webs – perfect orbs – clung to the cold railings. They had caught the fog and held it fast in tiny drops of water that outlined each silken strand. There were no spiders clinging in the corners. The webs had been transformed into works of art made visible by fog.

Surrounded by all of this, I thought of my cellar door spider, and felt a sting of disloyalty. Her crosshatched webbing would not inspire such awe. Her dusty surroundings have no access to color and light. And yet, in the gloom of my basement her plucky existence, her unceasing drive to create her home anew, seemed the essence of spider craft.

Deb D’Amico
A Daily Dose Of Wonder

A few years ago, I noticed a tree near the Confidence Course at NEECA equestrian park in Athol. It stood with other winter trees, bone white in the sun. With a spreading crown of branches, and several small trunks, it was different enough that I walked over to look closer. Who are you, I thought? Where did you come from? The bark was veined like cantaloupe skin, and the twigs were stout, their buds hardly visible. They looked lifeless rather than winter dormant. A ghost tree.

I visited that tree often, and there was one clue I could rely on. The leaf scar left by the previous year’s leaf stem was in the shape of a smile – or to me, a grimace. That feature indicated the tree had compound leaves: each leaf consisted of several leaflets arranged on the stem.

In early May I could see the new compound leaves emerge, reminding me of Staghorn Sumac. In early June clusters of small green flower buds were visible and the compound leaves were enormous. I was eager to see the flowers, but when I visited again, they were spindly like yellow spiders. At June’s end the flowers were gone, and I wondered at the lack of fruit. In October the tree turned yellow, adding to the glow of nearby aspens and birches.

Despite consulting my books, and poring over photos with my husband, we could not identify the tree or guess how it arrived at NEECA. And then Ernie suggested the Ailanthus, and I thought, “Of course! I bet that’s it!” My heart sank. I was so absorbed by my questions about the tree and imagining it was some wonderful specimen brought here by unusual means, I found this outcome hard. The “Tree of Heaven” is native to China, its history as old as the written language of that country. But here it is an invasive weed – “stinking sumac” - introduced in the 1700s as a shade tree, now tarnished for the rank odor of its leaves and ability to crowd out native species. Not seeing how the tree got there was probably a short in my imagination. The seed, shaped like the propeller of a prop plane, can travel by wind and water. In fact, an Ailanthus was discovered years ago growing on an island in the Quabbin Reservoir.

An article by Elizabeth Bernstein appeared in the Wall Street Journal (June 12, 2021) about the power of trees to evoke emotional responses in us that help reduce stress and anxiety. A little awe every day in the presence of a tree lends some perspective on how to be resilient and thrive in the world. A tree’s generosity with its gifts can make one feel more supported. And as I discovered about the Ailanthus, the tree absorbing your attention need not be wonderful. It need only make you wonder.

Postscript: My husband and I walked out to “my tree” last year. He stood at a distance looking at the tree with his binoculars as I lagged in the field. “I don’t think this is an Ailanthus! I think it’s an Ash!” We saw this time the opposite arrangement of the compound leaves on the twig – a characteristic of maples, ashes, and dogwoods. And the tree we had wondered about for so many months surprised us once more.

Linda LeBlanc

Recipe of the Month

This month the Library is beginning a “Spice Club”. Stop by and pick up a free international spice and some accompanying recipes (curated by amazing cook Gina Verrelli) each month this winter.

Curried Chicken Pot Pie

1 sheet frozen puff pastry (or use phyllo dough), thawed
1/4 c flour
3 tbs butter
1/2 yellow onion, diced
2 carrots, diced
1 sweet potato, diced
3 c chicken broth
1 tbs curry powder
1 lb boneless skinless chicken thighs, cut into 1-inch pieces
1 c frozen peas
1 tbs milk

Preheat oven to 400° F. Unfold puff pastry onto a lightly floured baking sheet and roll out into an 11-by-12 inch rectangle. Chill the dough until firm while you make the filling. If using phyllo dough, thaw according to package instructions.

In a large sauté pan or skillet, melt the butter over medium-high heat. Add the onion and carrots, cook, stirring frequently until slightly soft, 3-5 minutes. Add the flour and cook 1-2 minutes or until golden brown. Whisking constantly, stir in broth, sweet potato, and curry powder. Bring to a boil; then reduce heat and simmer until the potato is tender. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Stir in the chicken and peas and remove from heat.

Transfer the filling to an oven safe rectangular dish and top with the chilled dough trimmed to fit. If using puff pastry, brush the top with milk and cut an ‘X’ in the center to vent steam. If using phyllo dough, layer the sheets of dough on the top of the filling alternating the direction of the dough and brush melted butter between each layer of dough and on top.

Bake the pot pie for 15 minutes, if the edges are browning too much, tent them with aluminum foil. Continue baking until the crust is golden brown and the filling is bubbling, about 30 minutes. Let cool a few minutes before serving (this will help the filling to thicken).

Makes a good gift...

For just $25, you can give a year of the Royalston Community Newsletter to a former resident, a family member, or a friend who would like to see what’s going on in this busy little community! One size fits all, it lasts the entire year, and it doesn’t need to be wrapped! Contact the Library with subscription requests at royalstonlibrary@gmail.com or 978-249-3572.
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Preschool Storytime
at the Library
2 p.m. each Monday
Stories, socializing, songs, snacks and crafts
Free
Call the Library for more information

Puzzlemaster Wanted: The Newsletter is looking for a “puzzlemaster”. If you would like to submit a monthly (or bimonthly or from-time-to-time) puzzle, please let us know by contacting the Library or chasegos2@gmail.com. Puzzles would be used as space allows.