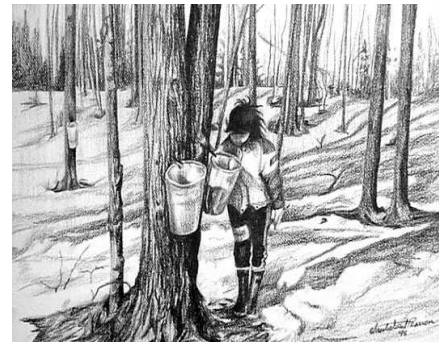




NEWS FOR THE WEEK OF
March 1, 2010

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News and Notes

Come to Parent Group Meeting This Week

This Wednesday, March 3, we meet at 8:45 a.m. and roll up our sleeves to work on this year's auction. Bring your enthusiasm, energy and ideas. Auction letters will go out this week, to inform you, to connect you with the auction, and to ask for your donation of an item for the auction.

Parking in the Driveway in the Morning

With all the snow and rain, the parking area has been congested in the morning. The Royalston Fire Department has requested that we park on just one side of the driveway, not on both sides. That way emergency vehicles can get through.

No School Wednesday March 17

On our annual Teacher Inservice Math Day, the teachers work with Polly Wagner, the Village School Math Coach, looking at children's work to understand how math thinking develops in children, and how teachers address that in the classroom.

Monday March 8 Antigone Workshop for 4th-6th graders

Norah Dooley will give a Greek theater workshop for older students of the Village School, the Royalston Community School, and homeschoolers at the Town Hall from 1-3 p.m.

K-6th Starts Swimming this Friday

Swimming for the K-6th starts this Friday, March 5, at the Athol YMCA, and will end before April vacation. At 1:25, we board the bus for the YMCA. At 2:00, children have lessons, and at 2:30, they have a free swim period. Parents are asked to pick up at the YMCA at 3:10. Over the years, we have seen children's skills improve from week to week with this program. Just like cross country skiing, swimming is a challenging and rewarding group activity.



Preschool

This week our story is *Caps for Sale*. In this story, a peddler, who carries his wares stacked on his head, is having trouble selling caps. He sits down against a tree to take a nap and when he wakes up, his caps are gone. Ask your child who took the caps and how the peddler get them back. This will be a great story to act out on Friday. We will have pasta caps for snack this week and the children will be drawing their own peddlers with lots of caps stacked on his or her head.

Last week the preschoolers enjoyed finger painting on acrylic boards, and when they were done, we laid a piece of paper on top to make a

mono print. The preschoolers were totally immersed in the carefree joy of painting. After finger painting, many of the children went directly over to the easels, to paint even more. Needless to say, there was a lot of paint all over the classroom and on the happy children! The children also enjoyed washing up with water and soap to get the paint off their arms. This week the preschoolers will get a chance to try marble painting. Thank you, parents, for dressing your children in durable washable clothes, so the children can get messy and dirty when needed.

March 2010				
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
1 8:45 All School Sing	2 8:45 Book Buddies Music Classes 2nd-6th knitting	3 8:45 am Parent Group meeting Spanish	4 Art classes	5 Yoga K-6 Swimming Pickup at YMCA at 3:10 Coffee orders due
8 8:45 All School Sing 1:00 4th-6th Antigone Workshop Town Hall with Norah Dooley	9 8:45 Book Buddies Music Classes knitting	10 Spanish	11 Art classes	12 Yoga K-6 Swimming Pickup at YMCA at 3:10

Kindergarten—1st Grade

We continue our *Sea Creatures* theme this week with the story, *The Earth on Turtle's Back*, a Native American tale of how the first land was brought up from beneath the waters to rest on the turtle's back. We'll be reading, journaling and acting out the story. With great enthusiasm for the new theme, the children have brought in theme share items including shells, dolphins, whales, sea pictures and books.

In music we are learning the songs *Octopuses Garden*, *Baby Beluga* and *Wichitai Tai*, a Native American chant about water.

Last week in art the children created some wonderful sea creature pictures using pen and water color. Look for the display in the corridor. Last week in science we heard the story *Swimmy* by Lois Ehlert, looked at pictures of sea creatures and then the class made models of their favorite sea creatures from play dough.

Maple sugaring season has begun. The class went outside with Rise last Monday to put a tap into the big old maple by the school driveway. The children were happy to join in, first using a hand drill to make a hole, then tapping in the tap with a hammer. The sap started flowing right away, giving the children a chance for a taste of spring, in delicious little sips. It'll be a job for K-1 to go out daily to empty

the sap bucket. They're already looking forward to a visit to Rise's farm later in the month to see the sugar house in action and enjoy some fresh syrup on pancakes.

In math the kindergarteners are playing a game where the number 1 is either added to, or subtracted from a number. So they begin to see equations such as: $5 + 1 = 6$, or $9 - 1 = 8$.

1st graders are continuing their work on measurement. This week we'll measure distances in the classroom using kid steps, baseball player steps and craft sticks. We will investigate how using different measuring units gives different answers.

Reminder: This week the class begins Friday afternoon swimming classes at the YMCA in Athol. We will leave the school on the bus at 1:25. Pick up is at 3:10 at the YMCA. On Fridays, each child should bring his or her swimsuit and towel to school in a plastic bag. Teachers are in each locker room to help the children. You are always welcome to come early and help your child get dressed in the locker room at 3:00, but you can only go in the locker room of your gender.

2nd - 3rd Grade

Everyone had a fantastic time skiing at Crotched Mountain on Friday. They hit the slopes with confidence and had a blast skiing their way down the different trails. The beginners started with a lesson and then practiced on the bunny hill. The ski trip was a great way to end our Friday skiing sessions.

Last week, during a class brainstorming session about our research project, the children came up with different types of information that we could research including: what the animals eat, where they live, how they hunt and how they take care of their babies. We'll keep adding to our list as new ideas surface. This week we'll read the story *Owen and Mzee*, about a baby hippopotamus who befriends a 130-year old tortoise, and the two form an amazing friendship. We will look for elements of nonfiction and the types of information presented to help us think about what kind of information we'll research and how we'll write our reports. When we visit the library today, the children will look for books about their animals and bring them back to school to use for their research.

We had an interesting recorder lesson last week. The children played their recorders in different parts of the classroom and then in different parts of the school. They discovered that, for some reason, the recorders sounded best in one of the closets! It was a fun experiment.

2nd graders have been having a lot of fun with the sticker story problems. They have been doing a great job sharing their strategies, which include counting up from one number and adding by place (adding 10's and adding 1's). We will continue to work on story problems this week. 3rd graders have been busy thinking about things that come in groups. We've discovered that there are many things that come in 2's, and that it is difficult to find things that come in 7's or 11's. This week we'll work on story problems that involve multiplication.

K-1 and 2nd-6th Swimming Begins This Friday

We begin swimming this Friday at the YMCA. We leave the school at 1:25. Children should bring their towels and swim suits with them in the morning, in a plastic bag that can be used later for wet towels and suits. We will ride the bus to the YMCA and pick up is at the YMCA at 3:10. If your child needs a ride back to the school, please make arrangements with other parents.

4th - 6th Grade

Last week ended with a day of downhill skiing at Crotched Mountain, New Hampshire. Most of the class (plus the 2nd-3rd grade) took to the slopes and everyone had fun, from the expert skiers in the 6th grade to the younger children who were newcomers to skiing. For the latter, the day included an introductory lesson and plenty of practice on the 'bunny' slope. It was encouraging to see how much the occasional skiers remembered from our visit to Crotched last year. Expect your children to nag you for more downhill skiing, if they haven't started already.

The 6th grade math group has been having great fun with the 2D geometry segment we have just completed. Last week the children investigated the relationship between the diameter (d) of a circle, and its circumference (C). By careful measurement of various circles and circular objects they discovered that for all circles, $C = 3$ and a bit $\times d$, which gave them an approximate value for π . They were excited to learn that the Babylonians had used exactly the same method 4000 years ago to work out a similar value for π . We then carried out experiments to discover the relationship between the area of a circle and the square of its radius.

For children, the exciting aspect of this investigative approach is that they discover for themselves a value for the ratio between C and d, and between the area (A) and the radius squared. This is so much more engaging than simply being told the formulas $C = \pi \times d$, and $A = \pi r^2$, with no understanding of how the value of π was initially established. This week we will be starting a unit on probability, and the probability that we will have fun with it is close to 1. The 5th grade math group is finding the perimeter and area of a series of related squares and considering how a change in the dimensions of a square changes the perimeter and area.

In Art, the children drew a musical instrument, chosen from an array of instruments displayed in the classroom. They then developed their drawings with watercolor, acrylic and collage. The results are beautiful and varied, and it was interesting to notice how some children's work was influenced by the expressionist painter Franz Marc, whose painting, *Yellow Cow*, was our painting of the week. Please come and look at the paintings in the classroom.

Next Monday, the class will participate in a Greek theater workshop at the Town Hall, from 1-3 p.m. with Norah Dooley, who will work with the children on *Antigone*, by Sophocles.