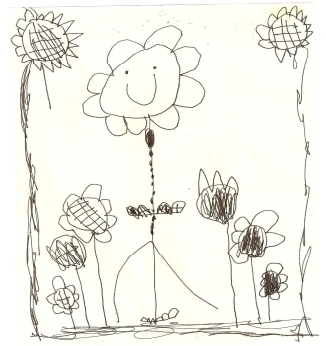




Celebrating our 20th year!

NEWS FOR THE WEEK OF  
**April 5, 2010**

PO Box 122 ❖ Royalston, MA ❖ (978) 249-3505 ❖  
[www.villageschool.to](http://www.villageschool.to)



News and Notes

**What's Happening this Friday?**

- **Don't miss the 4th-6th Publishing Party this Friday April 9, from 8:30 to 9:15, and then.....**
- **9:30 Parent Group Meeting, outside if weather is good, at Camp Caravan if it is cold or wet.**
- **Teddy Bear Picnic at 10:15, weather permitting.** Don't forget to send your child in with his or her Teddy Bear to school. We are looking for volunteers to bake corn muffins for snack that day. If 4 parents make a dozen each, we are all set. (That's Teddy Bear math.) If the weather conditions are not good for sitting on the front lawn, then our rain date is next Monday.

**Auction Update: Raffle Tickets**

As part of the Pancake Breakfast and Silent Auction, the Parent Group has a raffle, which is always a good fundraiser. This year's raffle is for 4 Red Sox tickets. Attached are raffle tickets. Raffle tickets are \$5 each and 5 for \$20. Please sell what you can, and bring in the filled in tickets and money. Any questions? Call Celia!

*The happy flower picture in the upper corner is by Willa, a K-1 student.*

**Student Art Show This Sunday April 11 3-5 pm**

The Gardner Ale House hosts the Village School art show on Sunday, featuring the work of all the children. Parents, relatives, friends and children are invited to this first ever Young Artists Gala Reception. Meet the artists and enjoy complementary drinks and hors d'oeuvres. The art show includes a giant preschool painted quilt featuring warm and cold colors, clay owl sculptures by K-1 students, and paintings and works using various media by the 2nd-6th grade. **Event flyers are on the hallway table for posting all around the area.**

**Conflict Resolution in Action**

Last week, 4<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> conflict resolution volunteer trainees gave a presentation to the 2<sup>nd</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> class. They explained the importance of finding a win-win solution for both parties. They role-played a conflict, sought suggestions from the audience for solving it, and then role-played a solution. Ten minutes later at recess, a teacher was trying to work through a conflict between some of the K-1 and preschool children and two of the volunteers came over and asked if they could help. The children responded to them immediately. They talked through the problems and discussed ideas. A solution was quickly found and everyone was soon playing happily once again. A win-win all around.

**Preschool**

Last Friday Rise visited and told the story of Passover and provided matzo for snack which the class ate heartily. We have our trip to Rise's farm this Wednesday, April 7<sup>th</sup>. We will meet at Rise's house at 9:00 a.m. Please sign and return the attached permission slip by tomorrow. This week we will tell the story of *Little Red Riding Hood*. This is a popular story with the preschoolers and a fun one to act out. Weather permitting, send in Teddy Bears on Friday for our Teddy Bear picnic.

End of the year reports are being written and will go home before April vacation. This is a chance for teachers to reflect on your child's growth during the school year. Spring conferences are optional. If you would like to meet with Kim and Leanne, just let us know and we will set up a time.

Don't miss the Preschool color collage at the art show this Sunday at the Gardner Ale House. The collage is huge, and its outstanding.

April 2010				
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
<b>5</b> 8:45 All School Sing <b>Special Visitors Day</b>	<b>6</b> 8:45 Book Buddies Music Classes	<b>7</b> Spanish <b>K-1 to Sweetwater Farm 9-11:30</b> <b>Preschool to Rise's Farm 9:00-11:15</b>	<b>8</b> 8:40 K-1 theme Share <b>2nd-3rd to Pequot Museum 8:30 - 4 pm</b> <b>4th-6th to MFA depart 8:15 a.m.-</b>	<b>9</b> <b>Teddy Bear Picnic</b> <b>8:30 4th-6th Publishing Party All Welcome</b> <b>9:30 Parent Group Meeting</b> Swimming
<b>12</b> 8:45 All School Sing <b>(Teddy Bear Picnic rain date)</b>	<b>13</b> 8:45 Book Buddies Music Classes <b>2nd-6th to Rise's Farm 8:45 to 11:30 a.m.</b>	<b>14</b> Spanish	<b>15</b> Art classes	<b>16</b> Yoga Last K-6 Swimming

## Kindergarten—1st Grade

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We complete our *Sea Creatures* theme this week with stories including *Crab Finds a New House*, *Dolphins Cave*, *The Clown Fish* and *Ray City*. Our stories this week have been written by the class. We began the stories last week by listing possible characters, settings and plots for sea stories. The class then wrote their own stories, the kindergarteners with support and the 1<sup>st</sup> graders independently. The results are wonderful! We'll be reading them aloud and acting them out.

In art last week, the class made fish windsocks out of paper. The fish were decorated with shiny paper, sharpies and watercolor paints. Renee helped to complete the fish, using pipe cleaners to hold their mouths open and attaching string for hanging.

This Monday is *Special Visitors Day*. We are looking forward to welcoming our guests to All School Sing and then spending time in the classroom with them before they meet with Rise for tea.

We had a great nature hike last Thursday afternoon under blue skies and warm sunshine. The children got to run in the meadow and explore around a pond and a stream. The children found a water snail, wood lice and frog eggs. Walking back across the meadow, we stopped to listen to the loud quacking of wood frogs. Nature is waking up! →

## 2nd - 3rd Grade

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Last week Dick Hyland and Fred Lilienkamp played guitar for the children and taught them a few things about playing. In the morning, Dick played some songs for the children and taught them how to play some chords on the guitar. In the afternoon, we listened to Fred play the electric guitar—it was like a rock concert in the 4<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup>. Thanks to both Dick and Fred for coming in to share their talents with us and teach us more about the guitar.

We had some great discussions about the book *The Girl Who Loved Wild Horses*. The children made predictions about what they think is going to happen to the girl and asked some great questions about the story. They also were adept at finding important details that showed why the girl had a special connection with horses. On Thursday, we had a good discussion about how the author created a peaceful scene. After closing their eyes and letting a peaceful image come to them, the children shared these peaceful images: hawks flying over a field, riding a rip stick (a two-wheeled skateboard) and sleeping. We'll continue reading the story this week.

The children have been busy taking their notes from their note cards and writing their reports. We have been looking at past students' reports to see how they organized information. We will also read some short animal articles to help us think about how to organize our information.

In art, we began making papier mache puppets. The children sculpted faces on paper plates that will be painted. Then, we will create bodies to attach to them, resulting in life-sized puppets.

April is National Poetry Month. To celebrate poetry, as part of their homework, the children will pick a poem that they love, to bring into school to share as a poem of the week. Poems should be brought in by this Friday. This week Preston is sharing the poem, *The Two Wolves* which is quite fitting with our theme.

On Thursday we will go to the Pequot museum. Children should bring a snack, lunch and water. We will leave the school promptly at 8:30 and return by 4:00 p.m.

Weather permitting, we will have the Teddy Bear picnic on Friday. Don't forget to send in Teddy Bears. And our visit to Rise's farm is rescheduled for Tuesday April 13, with drop off at the Farm at 8:45.

This Wednesday we have a field trip to Sweetwater Farm in Peter-sham. We meet at the farm at 9:00 a.m. and pick up is at 11:30. Parents are welcome to join us for the morning.

In math, the kindergarteners made an ocean mural using some of the shapes they have been learning. They used diamonds to make sting rays, ovals to make sharks and trapezoids to make sailboats and ships. 1<sup>st</sup> graders continue to work on patterns. This week we'll investigate number sequences, counting in groups of 2's and 3's and look at odd and even numbers.

**This Thursday we have a *Sea Creatures* theme share in the K-1 classroom from 8:40 to 9:00 am.** We'll be singing songs and sharing work from the last six weeks of this theme. Please arrive promptly so all the children can start together. Don't miss it! Weather permitting, we will have the Teddy Bear picnic on Friday. Don't forget to send in Teddy Bears.

## 4th - 6th Grade

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Last week we began work on the play, starting with a few writing exercises. The first of these involved writing four lines of one word each to create a dialogue between two people. This was extended with four lines of two words each, then four lines of three words. It's surprising how much of a story you can tell in 24 words. The second exercise consisted of a series of exchanges between two characters who were then joined by a third whom they didn't trust.

Between these exercises the class divided into groups to brainstorm ideas for the play itself. This is always a hazardous moment, because at the start none of us has any idea of what the play will be about, beyond the fact that it will involve the theme. The constantly amazing part is that every year the class conjures up coherent ideas that they rapidly convert into a script.

This year the children have come up with the idea of resurrecting some of the heroes from Hades, or the underworld, and sending them on a quest. From that we had the idea that the heroes would have to rescue Persephone from the clutches of the Titan, Cronos, who has kidnapped Persephone in order to stop the change of seasons and thus disrupt time. By the end of the week we had outlined four scenes and we also developed some dialogue ideas through improvisation sessions.

The children have already written their own versions of two scenes as a homework assignment, and this will continue this week, even though we are still developing the rest of the plot and trying to dream up enough characters for everyone to have a part. This week Wendy and George will start putting the individual scripts together to make a single composite text. The performance, incidentally, will be on May 21<sup>st</sup>.

In math, 5<sup>th</sup> graders will be describing and comparing strategies, including the standard algorithm, used to solve multi-digit multiplication problems. 6<sup>th</sup> graders have started work on a second unit on fractions, decimals and percents and last week we worked on the valuable art of calculating tips. It may be tough paying 20% in real life restaurants, but it certainly simplifies the math.

**Please don't forget the 8:15 am departure time** for our visit to the MFA on Thursday.

Weather permitting, we will have the Teddy Bear picnic on Friday. Don't forget to send in Teddy Bears. And swimsuits as usual.

And our visit to Rise's farm is rescheduled for Tuesday April 13, with drop off at the farm at 8:45 a.m. We will ferry the children back to school by noon.