



Celebrating our 20th year!

NEWS FOR THE WEEK OF
May 10, 2010

PO Box 122 ♦ Royalston, MA ♦ (978) 249-3505 ♦
www.villageschool.to

News and Notes



Thank You

So many people volunteer to make the school the great place that it is; we want to recognize our unsung heroes. Thank you to: Christina Conry for the incredible job she does maintaining the web site many hours a week. Renee Malowitz for creating the wonderful Art Show. Katrina, Michele and M.J. for hanging the art show. Joanie Cohen-Mitchell for help with publicity. Barbara Stowell for her time and magnificent work on flyers and the information cards. Lynn N. and Kristen for cleaning a mess, Ken Savage and Travis Miller for maintenance. And to all of you, unmentioned, who pitch in, seen and unseen: thank you - it really takes a village to make a school!

Thank you to Ken Levine of Frames/Ink in Athol for framing art work for the auction. If you need any framing, do take your business to him - he does beautiful work.

Come to The Play Friday May 21 10:30 a.m. and 7 p.m.

Don't miss this year's original play, *Persephone and the (not-so-hot) Heroes*, written and performed by the 4th-6th class. It's a humorous mix of gods, dead heroes and humans, with the common folk saving the day. Let Rise know if you can lend a digital video camera to record the play.

The Sign on the Front Lawn

It arrived just in time for May Day, after being painstakingly painted by Martin. Thank you so much to Mark McCurn of Nine Points Woodworking in Worcester for helping design, fashion, and carve the sign.

1st-6th Recorder

Recorder students are preparing for end-of-the-year performances (theme celebrations in younger grades, the Play in the 4th-6th), so students need to keep up a regular practicing routine in the coming weeks. 5 minutes a day really makes a difference. The practice works well when students practice a mix of easy or familiar tunes and new and challenging ones.

Auction Update

Over the years, the Auction and Pancake Breakfast has been an outstanding community event. All due to the generosity of merchants, and to parent effort and hard work. So, continue to ask friends and businesses for donations, and volunteer for auction preparation, and of course, pitch in on the day of the auction and breakfast. Keep selling those raffle tickets. Lots more raffle tickets are available in the office. Posters are out! Please post them everywhere.

Preschool

The preschool class received a hands on education about phonographs and 45's last week with Kim's childhood record collection. *Kung Fu Fighting* was a favorite and was played many times along with the Beatles and the Beach Boys. The teachers and parents enjoyed the music even more than the kids. In our story this week, *The Frog Prince*, a frog helps a princess, and in return, she promises to be the frog's friend. When the princess tries to ignore her promise, her father, the King, insists that she must keep her promise, as the right thing to do. We are planning on walking to a nearby pond tomorrow

(Tuesday) with science teacher, Cathy Szal, to see what lives in the pond during May. Please send your child in with boots, long sleeves and long pants, a warm jacket and a hat sprayed for bugs. We will leave for our walk at 9:00 a.m. so the bugs might not be a problem at that early hour. On Wednesday May 19, we have our final trip to Sweetwater Farm. We will meet at the farm at 9:00 a.m. Let us know if your child needs a ride back to the Village School for the Lunch Program.

May 2010				
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
10 8:45 All School Sing Signs of Spring: We welcome back the Phoebe, nesting over the front door.	11 8:45 Book Buddies Music Classes 9 a.m. Preschool Pond Visit	12 K-1 to Sweetwater Farm 9:00 drop off, 11:30 pickup 9:15 Auction cutting & folding party at Peter-sham country store	13 Art	14 Yoga Gardening
17 8:45 All School Sing	18 8:45 Book Buddies Music Classes	19 Preschool at Sweetwater Farm 9:00 to 11:15 12-3 4th-6th set building at Town Hall	20 Play dress rehearsal Art classes Student Art Show continues at the Ale House throughout May	21 THE PLAY Performances at 10:30 and 7:00 Yoga Gardening

Kindergarten—1st Grade

Our *Spring* theme continues this week with the story *The Ox-Cart Man* by Donald Hall about a man who takes his family's produce into town to sell it at the end of the season. Last week Willa brought in a luna moth chrysalis for her theme share. On Tuesday we could hear the moth moving inside the chrysalis and on Thursday we were lucky to see it just as it emerged to spread and dry its wings. It was a wonderful sight and some of the class pulled out their journals to draw and write about it. Later that day we released it into the school garden to continue on its journey.

We had a wonderful May Day celebration last week which began with parents and children outside at the picnic tables making May crowns with the amazing variety of flowers that were in bloom for this early spring. This year we had lilacs and apple blossoms on top of the Maypole instead of forsythia. We then gathered around the May Pole, singing, watching Morris Dancing, weaving the May Pole and dancing. The weather was perfect – a better event could not have been hoped for.

Last week in art, the class made Mothers Day butterfly gifts and cards. They also wrote a Spanish sentence in their cards starting with

2nd - 3rd Grade

Last week we enjoyed the beautiful weather. On Wednesday, we created our May crowns, adorning them with lilacs, daffodils and other various beautiful flowers—it was uplifting to see all the students, parents, teachers and friends join together outside to make the crowns. At the Maypole, we had fun singing, watching the Morris Men, and weaving the ribbons, which looked spectacular. What a wonderful community event.

Come take a peek at what's growing in our classroom. We are incubating chicks and growing calendula seeds; we also have some experiments going on with a carrot and a potato. This week in science, we will candle the eggs, which means we will take the eggs into a dark room and use a candle or flashlight to see if the chicks are developing. This is always a fascinating experience for the children (and adults!).

On Friday, we visited Camp Caravan for a spring ceremony. We created animals out of pine boughs and inserted a beeswax heart. We gave good wishes to the animal mothers and their babies, in hopes that they will have success this spring. Then, we sang a chant and left our creations in a special place in the woods. Thanks to Jim Farnham, Michael Young and Pat Worth for guiding the morning.

The children had a great time playing *Elefun* on Friday. We caught colored butterflies and then figured out what fraction of each color we had. We will wrap up our unit on fractions this week.

We finished the story *The Boy Who Lived With Seals*. The children were keen to pick up important story elements and held thoughtful, deep discussions about the story. We will finish up our written work about the story this week and then return to some independent reading. The children's spirit animal stories are in full swing. The authors' ideas are flowing and so are their pencils. We can't wait to see what happens with the stories this week.

Here's a list of some important upcoming dates: The Play is on Friday, May 21, our field trip to Lake Dennison is on Wednesday, May 26, we visit Sweetwater Farm on Wednesday, June 2, and don't miss our Theme Celebration, at 8:45 a.m. on Thursday, June 3.

the words 'Quiero a mi mama porque...' (I love my mother because...) and completing it with a reason such as 'ella es grande y fuerte' (because she is big and strong).

This Wednesday we visit Sweetwater Farm for more hands-on activities. Drop-off is at the farm at 9:00 a.m. and pickup is at 11:30. In science this week we'll be taking a closer look at blossoms, pollen and honey.

The kindergarten math group is revisiting their favorite game: *Roll and Record*. In this version a child rolls 2 dice, adds the two numbers together and records the total. 1st graders are starting a new *Investigations* unit, *Blocks and Boxes*, about 3D geometry. This week we will describe and compare 3D shapes and try to identify shapes blindfolded, by feel and touch.

4th - 6th Grade

In science we are continuing our study of the human body, and last week we studied the cardio-vascular system. The children colored in diagrams of the system of veins and arteries and identified various parts of the heart and lungs on schematic drawings. During the lesson the children checked their own pulses at rest and then tore up and down the stairs three times before checking them again to see how exercise affects the heart rate. In math, while continuing to practice division strategies, 5th graders are representing situations of constant change using tables, graphs, and arithmetic expressions.

The play is careening towards the performances on Friday May 21st (at 10:30 am and 7:00 pm). Most of the students have learned the bulk of their lines and we rehearse daily in the classroom. We have decided on a title – *Persephone and the (no-so-hot) Heroes* – which we can't possibly explain without you seeing the play itself. The commemorative T-shirt should be ready by early next week.

This year's story line is not based on an existing tale, but is entirely a product of the class's imagination, and although the characters are well known from Greek myths, the situations we have put them in are not. As always, it's exciting to see how the characters we've dreamed up together in the class come alive once they're assigned to an actor. Often, as the actors start to inhabit their roles, they discover ways to improve their lines and we are still making amendments to the script.

Next week we will spend most of our time rehearsing in the town hall, and on the afternoon of Wednesday 19th, the class (and any volunteers ...) are invited to help paint the set and prepare the hall. Attached is a permission slip for the afternoon of set work. Anyone have a digital video camera for recording the play? Here is a heads-up: at the Friday evening play performance, we sell refreshments at intermission to help defray the costs of the play. Parents are asked to bake a batch of cookies or brownies, or goodies that can easily be served in a single serving, that will be sold for \$1 each. Parents are also welcome to help sell and serve refreshments.

The week following the play we will be visiting Washington D.C. for three nights, from Tuesday to Friday. We will be traveling by train, which will be a first for most of the class, as will be the visit to the city itself.

In response to a request for 'more abstract paintings,' this week's painting of the week is a poster of a huge Mark Rothko painting entitled *Blue, Green and Brown*. The effect of the 9 ft-tall painting is rather lost, even with our large poster, but we are hoping to see the original at the National Gallery of Art during our visit to D.C.

2nd-6th Graders Can Bring Water Bottles: The school water that comes out of the tap is approved official drinking water and is chlorinated. If you don't want your child drinking school water, please send in your child with a filled water bottle from home ***with your child's name on it.*** Thank you.