



OUR 22ND YEAR

NEWS FOR THE WEEK OF

October 31, 2011

PO Box 122 ♦ Royalston, MA ♦ (978) 249-3505 ♦
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News and Notes

Come to Parent Group Meeting this Wednesday

We'll prepare for the Lantern Walk, the Open House, the Book Fair and more.

Dress for the Weather

With this record snowfall, make sure all children have snow-pants (2 pair are great), 2 pairs of gloves (a dry pair for each recess) and waterproof boots for playing outside.

About the Lantern Walk This Friday Evening

On this special evening, all families participate in this traditional Village School event and all the children look forward to this.

Important: All children should report to the classrooms by 5:00 p.m. Preschool students go to their class with their parents to pick up their lanterns and then go outside and gather by the fire. K-6th children meet in the classroom (their parents wait outside) and then walk in a singing procession to the playground, holding their lanterns high, to join the preschool children at the fire. Then we enjoy more singing and a seasonal story. After the story, children will walk with parents to the Town Hall for the pot-luck dinner and contra dance. The suggested donation at the door is \$10 per family, or \$5 per adult and \$2 per child. Parents are responsible for their children throughout the whole event.

About the Lantern Walk Pot Luck: All parents need to bring a main dish that serves 12, such as a meat lasagna, vegetarian lasagna, baked ziti, meatballs, or any Italian style dish that is easy to serve and eat. Salad and bread together count as a main dish. If you have time, desserts are welcome additions. **Please leave your pot luck Italian dish at the Town Hall before the Lantern Walk**, with a folded card denoting content (meat, vegetarian, spicy, etc.). **Volunteers are needed to organize the kitchen, set tables, prepare the pot luck, and of course, clean up. A sign up sheet is posted in the hallway.** We will all clean up the kitchen before it is all over.

About the contra dance: The contra dance is a Parent-Child dance. The K-6 children have been practicing the dances. The older students will lead dances, dance with their parents, and dance with Reading Buddies. Younger children join right in the fun, and love to dance with their parents. The dances are called and are easy to learn.

Children who are not dancing are expected to sit with a parent. **Save any carved pumpkins** that are in good shape, for the Lantern Walk, to use as luminaires for the procession. Drop them off on the ramp at the school.



Preschool

Thank you parents, for helping your children create beautiful one-of-a-kind lanterns. The children thoroughly enjoyed making gingerbread cookies last week, and eating them was the best part. The class was relieved when their cookies did not escape the oven and run away as they had in the story. At snack time one child said "I've eaten his eyes and his legs – he's not going anywhere!" On Friday the class tried out the new snow shovels and many helped shovel snow off the ramp.

Our story this week is *Chicken Little*, about a hen who thinks the sky is falling. It turns out that it was just an acorn that hit her on the tail.

Friday is our Lantern Walk. Please pick up your child's lantern at 5:00 p.m. and you and your child can join everyone outside by the fire. We'll sing songs, listen to a story and then we will walk to the Royalston Town Hall for a pot luck dinner and contra dance.

October - November 2010

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
31 HALLOWEEN NO SCHOOL Record October snowfall	1 (s)NO(w)SCHOOL Conferences cancelled, no power.	2 8:45 a.m. Parent Group Meeting 1:30 and after: Parent Conferences	3 Art classes	4 Lantern Walk 5:00 gather in class 6:00 pot luck 6:30 contradance
7 8:45 All School Sing Spanish	8 NO SCHOOL Preschool-6th Parent Teacher Confer- ences snowdate	9 K-1 at Sweetwater Farm 8:45-11:30	10 2nd-6th at Farm School (in Athol) Drop off at Farm at 8:45, pick up at 3:00	11 NO SCHOOL VETERANS DAY

Kindergarten—1st Grade

We begin our new theme of Native Americans this week with the story *The Earth on Turtles Back*. The story is from the Onondaga tribe from the Northeast Woodlands, and is about how the earth was created. In the story, the wife of the chief of Skyland falls through a hole in the sky towards the waters below and is saved by the animals. We'll be retelling and journaling the story.

Last week Science and Nature was all about bees. Katrina read a story about bees, the class acted out life in a beehive and then enjoyed apples with honey and tea with honey. This week we'll begin looking at the part animals play in the Native American stories and discussing what animals live in our local area.

We had a wonderful Theme Share last week to complete our Gardens and Vegetable theme. It was great to see so many parents attending to share in the accomplishments and learning of the class.

In art last week the class continued work on their lanterns for this Friday's Lantern Walk. They completed the painting of the lanterns with wet-on-wet watercolor technique. Next the lanterns will be put

together and we'll go outside to find sticks for handles. Look for the K-1 Fall Landscape artwork on display at the Town Hall this Friday evening. In music we'll practice songs for the Lantern Walk, including *I Go With My Bright Little Lantern* and *Spindle Wood*.

Last Thursday afternoon the class went to the Royalston Community School to watch the MWCC Players perform *The Pied Piper*. We all enjoyed this great musical and dance extravaganza.

The kindergarten math group is playing, *Grab and Count: Compare*. The children count how many cubes they can grab with one hand. They grab a second handful and count to see which handful had more and then record the results. First graders are working on 2D shapes including describing and drawing triangles and polygons. See you at the Lantern Walk this Friday. K-1 children meet in the classroom at 5 p.m. to join in the lantern procession while parents wait at the fire. When the children join the fire, they join their parents. After singing and a story around the fire, we will all walk to the Town Hall for the Pot Luck and contra dance.

Spanish Phrase of the Week: Por favor Please

2nd - 3rd Grade

Last week we started the week on a beautiful sunny day in Plymouth. The children had a blast exploring the Mayflower II. They tucked themselves into the bunk, imagining what it would be like to travel across the Atlantic on such a small ship. They tried to create sparks with flint and steel. Then we headed to Plimoth Plantation, where the children learned about Wampanoag life. At the home-stead they learned about games children and men played- sometimes the men would play a game, similar to American football, to solve a problem, rather than go to war. (We thought this was pretty smart.) They also saw a log being burned out to create a mishoon (canoe). They visited a summer home and a winter home and played with toys. We finished the day by visiting the English village. The children raced from house to house and learned what life was like only 7 years after the English settled in Plymouth. They saw a man splitting wood, a cow grazing in the garden, and were impressed by the palisade and fort. The children were very engaged and had a wonderful experience.

In Science the children built their much anticipated debris huts. The children worked alone or in pairs to create shelters that would keep them safe and dry for a night. It was fascinating to watch the places they chose to build their huts and how they carefully chose sticks and placed them strategically to make a secure shelter. We will visit these from time to time and continue to work on them.

In honor of Halloween and inspired by Georgia O Keeffe, the children created pastel drawings of skulls. The children chose from a selection of real animal skulls, studied them carefully and drew them in detail. They created scenes with skulls placed in cornfields, deserts and gardens.

We will be reading *Buffalo Dreams* as a class, starting the week after Thanksgiving. If anyone owns a copy, and can lend it to us, let Shannon know, by Nov. 11th, so we can round up all the extra copies needed.

On Friday, we have our annual Lantern Walk. Children should meet in the classroom at 5 p.m., while parents wait by the fire. Parents are responsible for children during the Lantern Walk and after. Ask your child to dance with you!

4th - 6th Grade

Our last visit of the season to Sweetwater Farm was a great success. The children were well prepared for the poor weather while we checked the sheep in their pasture, and uprooted old tomato plants. The children then watched Lindsey milk the goats and all who wanted to had a chance to try it for themselves. We then worked hard for over an hour to clear the deep, soiled straw from the goat-pen. The class had the satisfaction of seeing the job through to completion, leaving the goats well set for the winter. Many thanks to Karen, Lindsey and Ellyse for giving us another interesting and enjoyable visit – we look forward to seeing you again in the spring. We began the week by watching the Hollywood version of *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, which all agreed was much more spectacular than the old BBC film. We made a Venn diagram to sort out which features were particular to each film and the book, and which ones they had in common. We discussed the relative virtues of the two films and the newer version won hands down, except that most of the class conceded that the BBC film was much more faithful to the book. The children's unanimous and encouraging conclusion was that it's important to read a book first before seeing its film adaptation.

Our extended poetry unit concluded with all the children writing 'Magic Box' poems, which follow a strict form and in which they imagine a box that will hold such things as 'the coolness of wind', 'the dive of an eagle' or 'the joy of a puppy', rather than the objects themselves. We ended the session with all the children reading their quite personal Magic Box Poems to the rest of the class.

In art the children made drawings of actual animal skulls, inspired by the work of Georgia O'Keeffe, which art teacher Renée had shown the children as an introduction. The children used pastels to color their drawings and the results were very striking. The bone pictures will join the fine fall landscapes on our classroom wall.

Don't forget, children meet in the classroom at 5:00 p.m. Friday for the Lantern Walk, and parents gather by the fire. Parents are responsible for their own children during the Lantern Walk and after. Ask your child to dance with you!

A 2nd grader overheard outside: "When I look up at the snow falling and I walk, I feel like I am climbing towards the sky."