



# NEWS FOR THE WEEK OF September 28, 2009

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

### Come to Curriculum Night This Wednesday!

This is a once a year event. We highly recommend that parents of young children visit the kindergarten and 2nd-6th classrooms. Present parents: this is when you hear about what is new and exciting in your child's classroom. It's inspiring, and will help you feel totally connected to and involved in your child's experience. Each presentation will start promptly on time, so we can get through the evening without staying too late. Since this is an evening event, it's best for children to stay at home with a babysitter. Friends and parents of potential students are also welcome to attend. It all begins at 5:45 p.m.

### Parking in the driveway at drop off and other times

The Royalston Fire Department recommends only 1 line of cars in the driveway, so that a fire truck can get through when needed. Also, parking works efficiently if everyone parks diagonally, into the front lawn, instead of parallel parking. Please do not park 100 feet past the No Parking Sign in front of the building. That helps with visibility for children leaving the playground. Thank you for going s-l-o-w in the driveway too. We do this to ensure the safety of our children.

### Don't forget to check the Lost and Found

in the hallway, it's already filling up with lost clothing!

### Don't Miss the Garlic and Arts Festival!

#### This Upcoming Saturday and Sunday 10-5

Parents, please sign up this week for the Village School tent, a woodworking project for children. It's a great way to get the word out and talk to potential parents. Bring your kids, the whole event is lots of fun. VS graduates are very welcome to pitch in. The sign up sheet is posted in the hallway.

### Royalston residents: Royalston Energy Committee

Heating the Village School costs the equivalent of one full time tuition (!) because the school's old heating system is very inefficient. The town of Royalston is convening an energy committee to initiate the process toward making the building more efficient and take advantage of current incentives for upgrading. Parents who live in Royalston can join this committee and help the school in a very significant way. Please call Selectman Andy West at 978-249-5993 to volunteer.

**Thank you,** Peter and Kristin Stanley, for donating hand sanitizer dispensers for all the classrooms. We hope these will help reduce the spread of germs in the building.

## Preschool

Our story this week is *The Turnip*. In this story an old man can't pull a huge turnip out of his garden. An old woman, a girl, a dog, a cat and a mouse all come in turn to help. So if you hear your child saying "Fe, fi, fo, fout, this turnip won't come out!" you will know why.

Tomorrow (Tuesday) is Harvest Day. All the classes will work in the garden in the morning harvesting potatoes and pulling up weeds. Preschoolers should wear old clothes and boots on Tuesday.

Last Thursday the class went on a nature walk in the woods. They happily collected acorns and leaves and we saw an orange newt.

Last Friday we acted out *The Three Little Pigs* outside and then had our class picture taken with everyone present.

Next Monday, October 5, will be our first visit to the Royalston Library for the year.

Attached is a Preschool Welcome letter about the classroom.

Please come to Curriculum Night this Wednesday to get a great taste of how children are served by the Village School education after preschool. It's a worthwhile experience.

## September - October 2009

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
<b>28</b> All School Sing Yom Kippur  <b>Potato Poetry Week</b>	<b>29</b> 8:45 Book Buddies Music  <b>Harvest Morning</b> (dress to get dirty)	<b>30</b> K-1 Sweetwater visit <b>Curriculum Night</b> 5:45 K-1 6:45 2nd-3rd 7:45 4th-6th	<b>1</b> Art Classes	<b>2</b> Yoga K-1 Hiking <b>Village School tent at the Garlic and Arts Fest October 3 &amp; 4</b>
<b>5</b> 8:45 All School Sing	<b>6</b> 8:45 Book Buddies Music Classes  <b>K-1 Maggies Farm</b>	<b>7</b> Spanish <b>2nd-6th at Sweetwater Farm</b>  <b>K-1 Red Apple Farm</b>	<b>8</b> Art Classes	<b>9</b> Yoga Coffee orders due <b>1:00 K-6th</b> <b>Jacobs Hill Hike</b> <b>Parents welcome</b>

## Kindergarten—1st Grade

Our *Gardens and Vegetables* theme continues this week with the story *Jack and the Beanstalk*. The story captured the imagination of the class and this week we will retell and journal the story and act it out. We'll be out in the garden Tuesday morning for all school harvest and it's also Potato Poetry week! Each child in the school will pick one potato from the garden, which they'll draw and write about. We'll all get together to share our work on Friday morning.

We had two wonderful field trips last week. The first was to Larry Siegel and Kathy Morris's garden in Royalston. We visited Kathy's flower and herb garden and the class enjoyed tasting fresh herbs from the garden. We then visited Larry's vegetable garden and dug for potatoes, and saw tomatoes, spinach, sprouts, peppers, beans and more! The class had apples from the orchard, saw the chickens and pumped water. We finished the morning with a hike. Many thanks to Kathy and Larry for a wonderful morning.

On Thursday we went to Renee's garden and art studio in Hubbardston. The class kneaded and shaped portions of bread dough which

were then baked in the oven for snack time. We then visited the garden to dig for potatoes and carrots, then went into the art studio and printed with paint and vegetable pieces. We had a mini production line with everyone printing covers for journals, napkins and cloth for pillow making. Thanks Renee!

In math the kindergarten group has been using the counting jar to count a set of blocks or bears and then to make an equivalent set using pennies or other counters. Please see the attached math letter. 1<sup>st</sup> graders are working on comparing and combining numbers and solving story problems. This Wednesday we'll visit Sweetwater Farm in Petersham. We'll work in the garden and visit the animals. Drop off at the farm is at 8:45am and pick up is at 11:45. Parents are welcome to stay for the morning. *Next week*, we have 2 field trips, on Tues. Oct. 6 to Maggie's Farm in Orange, and on Wed. Oct. 7 to Red Apple Farm. Permission slip attached.

Reminder: Don't miss Curriculum Night this Wednesday, starting promptly at 5:45 p.m. in the K-1 classroom. It's a great opportunity to become an informed (and thus supportive) parent.

## 2nd - 3rd Grade

Last week we had a wonderful visit to the Farm School. On a beautiful day we completed a number of chores including: removing over 100 tomato stakes, feeding chickens, working a saw mill to make pine boards, and removing rocks from a field. We even had time for some fun games. We also had our first Spanish lesson with the 4<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> grade. The children were busy moving to different parts of the room, identifying different objects and going into groups according to the colors they were wearing. Don't be surprised if you hear your children calling their clothes azul or rojo.

This week is Potato Poetry week. It begins with Harvest Morning on Tuesday when the whole school will go into the garden and harvest all the vegetables they planted in the spring. The children will then keep a potato that they harvested and spend time examining, touching and thinking about it. They will then craft a poem about their potato. On Friday, we will celebrate with a poetry reading and eating the delicious potatoes.

Last week in Theme, we heard the story *How Kisbelemukong Made People and the Seasons*. We played the hand game (or the bead game as the children prefer to call it). Ask your children how Grandmother South and Grandfather North play the game to keep the seasons balanced (or sometimes not so balanced). In music, we practiced *The Corn Song*, which the children are learning on recorder as well, and did some drumming. We also learned a couple of potato songs, which fit in nicely with our Potato Poetry week.

In math, the 3<sup>rd</sup> graders continue to work on the equivalence of 100 to ten 10's and of one 10 to ten 1's. They will also play the game *Close to 100* and think about the different combinations they can use to make 100. 2<sup>nd</sup> graders will learn the games *Make 10* and *Tens Go Fish*; when playing the games, they will think about different combinations to make 10.

Thank you to everyone for the cornhusks; they are drying in our room right now and we look forward to using them to make cornhusk dolls.

Don't miss Curriculum night this Wednesday at 6:45 p.m. to learn in depth about the classroom structure and content this year.

With the good weather, we will go to Sweetwater Farm again next week, on Wednesday, Oct. 7.



## 4th - 6th Grade

Don't miss Curriculum Night this Wednesday. 7:45 p.m. for our class. You will get the scoop on what is happening this year, and more!

Last Wednesday we had our first full Spanish lesson with Jocelyn Langer. As well as the main half-hour lesson, she is leading two short review lessons at the beginning and end of each week, which are already proving effective in helping the children retain what they learn in the main lesson. Since Jocelyn is also teaching music she can bring elements of song into Spanish and Spanish into music. The class will learn songs in other languages during the year and Jocelyn is teaching us songs about potatoes in honor of this week's Potato Poetry project.

The children read more poems last week. They took poetry books home and practiced reading a chosen poem so they could confidently read it to the whole class. It was very satisfying to hear poems read with good understanding of the subject and with due attention to the significance of varying line lengths. This week all grades from Kindergarten to 6<sup>th</sup> are working on potato poems and next week the 4<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> class will write poetry on other subjects.

Art gave way to a last-minute visit to the Farm School last Thursday. The Indian summer weather could not have been more perfect and the children worked at a variety of projects from clearing a field of rocks to operating the new portable saw mill in the forest. The children were excited to see a round tree-trunk transformed into uniform boards for use in one of the Farm School's current building projects.

In the classroom last week, we studied a painting by Camille Corot, the influential nineteenth-century French painter who taught several pioneer Impressionists, including Camille Pissarro. We will follow the line forward through Pissarro, Monet and Cezanne in the coming weeks.

The 6<sup>th</sup> grade math group is learning about factors and multiples. Last week we worked with common multiples, and the children used their understanding of 2 as a factor to answer a number of problems involving odd and even numbers combined by addition and multiplication. Starting by representing the sum of two odd numbers using square tiles, they ended by showing the number combination as  $(2n+1) + (2m+1)$ , to produce a general statement of their findings.

Taking advantage of good weather, we will go to Sweetwater Farm again next week, on Wednesday, Oct. 7.