

THE ROYALSTON COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

May 2006



Volume IX, Issue IV

A Publication of the Friends of the Phinehas S. Newton Library, Royalston, Massachusetts

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

May 1 -35 Monday – Wednesday

8:00 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. **Art Show** at the Royalston Community School media center displaying works by the school art teacher, Kelly Fisher.

May 2 Tuesday

Half-day for Monty Tech for inservice training.

May 3 Wednesday

8:45 a.m. **May Day celebration** at the Village School. May pole weaving and singing to welcome the May, wake up the Earth and banish winter. All welcome to attend.

7:00 p.m. **Monty Tech School Committee** meets.

May 4 Thursday

3:30 p.m. **Friends of the Library meeting** at the library. Plan library support, summer programs and upcoming newsletters.

May 5 Friday

7:00 p.m. **Annual Town Meeting** at RCS. Vote on the Town budget and weigh in on Town issues.

May 6 Saturday

9:00 – noon **Celebratory hike on the Tully Trail** from Rt 32 to Rt 68 past Royalston Falls with Bob Durand, former Secretary of Environmental Affairs in Massachusetts, to mark the 20th anniversary of the Mt Grace Land Conservation Trust. Register by calling 978-249-2043.

May 9 Tuesday

Noon **early dismissal** ARRSD elementary schools.

7:30 pm **Zoning task force meeting** at Royalston Town Hall to begin prioritizing previous zoning recommendations. Input sought.

May 10 Wednesday

11:00 a.m. **Royalston Council on Aging** meets in Town Hall.
11:30 a.m. **Royalston Luncheon Club and Blood Pressure Clinic**

May 13 Saturday

2:51 a.m. **Full Flower Moon**

7:30 p.m. **Blues Night** in the Royalston Town Hall. Dance or just enjoy the show. Royalston's Melanie and the Blue Shots opening for the Reprobate Blues Band from Orange. Blues, cash bar (wine and beer), and fabulous munchies. Suggested donation \$7 per person. Advance ticket sale at the Royalston Post Office and from Cultural Council members. For info call Andrea 249-2705

May 14 Sunday Mother's Day

8 :00– 10:00 a.m. **Mother's Day breakfast** at the Town Hall, provided by the Congregational Youth Group.
3:00 p.m. **Young People's Chorus** at 1794 Meetinghouse in New Salem

Friday May 19

700 p.m. Royalston Town Hall. An **original play**, written and performed by the Village School 4th-6th graders, based on the Middle Ages. Everyone welcome.

May 20 Saturday

10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. **Second annual Church Yard Sale** sponsored by the Women's Fellowship from the Second Congregational Church of Royalston in South Royalston.. Call Ginny Moore to reserve a space, \$10: 978-249-4962. Refreshments will be available.

11:00 a.m. **Garden clean up day** at the Phinehas S Newton Library. Bring rakes and shovels to spruce up the grounds and parking areas at the library. Volunteers needed.

May 21 Sunday

10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. Walter Carlson **Fishing Derby** at the Royalston Fish and Game Club for children 14 and under. Members' children are free for fish and cookout lunch. Non-members pay a nominal fee. Cash and prizes will be awarded. At 1:30 p.m., adult fishing derby begins- \$5 entry fee.All welcome.

May 22 Monday

7:00 p.m. **Trustee Meeting** at the Library

May 23 Tuesday

7:30 pm **Zoning task force meeting** at Royalston Town Hall to review discussion drafts of proposed zoning revisions . All welcome.

Thursday May 25

5:00 p.m. **Royalston Community Coop** orders due

May 29 Monday

All Day **Memorial Day** observed
Royalston Fish & Game Memorial Day Trap Shoot
7:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. **Royalston Fish & Game Open Kitchen** for the public to enjoy breakfasts and lunches

2:00 p.m. **Memorial Day exercises** will be held in the South Village. Includes or ations, processions, the ARMS marching band , prayers and children laying wreathes in Hillside and Riverside Cemeteries in tribute to those who have died in military service.

3:00 p.m. **Town Memorial Day Potluck Luncheon.**

May 31 Wednesday

7:30 p.m. **The Ladies' Benevolent Society** of Royalston will meet at the home of Rebecca Krause-Hardie on North Fitzwilliam Rd. Brief business meeting, followed by a program on the Town Zoning Project. Light refreshments. All are invited, call 978-575-1454 for info .

June 6 Tuesday

7:30 pm **Zoning Task Force Meeting** at Royalston Town Hall. Public Meeting to present list of zoning priorities, discussion drafts of proposed zoning revisions, and examples of new bylaws.

June 10 Saturday

9:00 – noon **Plant Sale** at Post Office. Donations needed, so pot up your thinnings and save your extras. Benefits the Friends of the Library. **Book Sale** at the same time at the Library.

June 15 Thursday

Last Day of school for students in the ARRSD



CONTRACTORS WANTED

Helen Divoll, Town Administrator

Athol Community Development Housing Rehab is requesting contact information for Qualified Contractors to bid on housing projects in Athol, Royalston & Phillipston. The town will place 13 projects out to bid, valued at \$25-\$35,000 dollars per project, for the 05 grant. Selectmen, along with neighboring towns, are now applying for over \$1,000,000 for 06 grant funds. This program is funded by Community Development Block Grant Program. Call Warren Welch, Project Manager, at 978-575-0301 for more details.

TOWN CLERK NEWS

Melanie Mangum, Town Clerk

Census, Census, Census: By the time you read this, you should have received your census form in the mail. It is crucial that you look over the information, make any changes, sign and return it to the Town Clerk's Office. Please note that if any members of your household have moved and they are still listed as registered voters of the town, I must receive a signed letter from those members stating they wish to be removed as a voter in Royalston. The information I receive from each household gets entered into a central registry and is essential for maintaining an accurate street list.

Why is this census important? First of all, it's state law, and the state has recently announced to Town Clerks that it will be making sure each community is compliant with maintaining resident and voter information in accordance with federal requirements under the Help America Vote Act. Also, census information is used to determine state aid. It is essential to have an accurate street list for public safety officials. Street lists are often provided to political candidates, residents and organizations. Lastly, registered voters in Town who do not return a census form may have their voter designation changed to "Inactive" and their voter registration can eventually be deleted.

If you have any questions about the census, please call me at 978-249-0493. A very big thank you, once again, to Mary Barclay, Gary Winitzer, and Vickie Paine for help with the census.

2006 TOWN ELECTION RESULTS

SELECTMAN

LINDA ALGER - 155
WERNER BUNDSCHUH - 112

LIBRARY TRUSTEE
BARBARA GUINEY - 201

ASSESSOR

STEPHEN CHASE - 11

BOARD OF HEALTH
GEORGE VACCARI - 38

SEWER COMMISSION 3 YRS

GARY WINITZER - 150

TREE WARDEN
LARRY SIEGEL - 190

SEWER COMMISSION 2 YRS

GARY WINSLOW - 162

MODERATOR
GEORGE NORTHRUP - 65
WAYNE NEWTON - 34

PLANNING BOARD

VYTO ANDRELIUNAS - 152
GARY WINITZER - 103

BOARD OF PUBLIC WELFARE
MARY BARCLAY - 216

TOWN CLERK

MELANIE MANGUM - 216

CONSTABLE
JOHN CHENCHARIK - 220

TOWN MEETING UPDATE

A Special Town Meeting was held on April 21st at the Town Hall to act on three articles. The 19 registered voters attending passed 3 articles. They voted to raise and appropriate \$60,000 to the Stabilization Fund. This will allow the tax levy to be finalized, the tax rate to be set and tax bills to go out. Assessor Jim Richardson said tax bills should be coming out in May. They also voted to take \$4,524.00 from the Stabilization Fund to replace 6 bullet resistant vests for the Police Department. Finally, they agreed to take from the Stabilization account \$320.00 for a bulk mailing permit for the Town.

The Annual Town Meeting will be held on May 5, 2006, at 7 p.m. at the Royalston Community School. At the Annual Meeting, voters will have the opportunity to vote on over 40 articles and approve or disapprove a \$1,383,317 annual Town budget. Articles about money include: funds to pay Town employee' salaries and Royalston's portion of the local public school district budget, including and extra amount that will be needed if the override passes in Athol; \$30,000 to remove asbestos shingles and re-roof the Raymond School building, \$1000 for capital expenditures on the waste water treatment plant; \$31,116 for the second lease payment of a 10-wheel dump truck, 10,658 for the lease payment of a one ton dump truck and \$40,000 for the first payment of a five year lease/purchase of a road grade for the Highway Department; \$20,000 to purchase a used, 4-wheel drive, 3/4-ton pickup for the Fire Department; \$7,000 to purchase the existing streetlight fixtures; \$2,000.00 for roof repairs and another \$2000 to mitigate damage caused by basement floods at the Library; \$88,000 for communications equipment necessary to move Royalston dispatch services to Shelburne Falls; money to paint the Town Hall and repave the unnamed streets next to the Town Hall; \$2000 to make the dog pound energy efficient; and \$7,500 for the purchase/lease of computers for Town offices. Other articles seek to dissolve the Board of Public Welfare and reverse the discontinuation of parts of Toney Rd. The Board of Health and the Town plumbing inspectors wish to set up accounts where their inspection fees could be used to pursue Title V and other violations. *At Town Meeting, all registered voters can have a say in the nuts and bolts issues of running this Town; some would say it's a civic duty to participate .*

ATHOL-ROYALSTON SCHOOL COM. - ATHOL 3 YR
SUSAN GATAUTIS - 103 MATTHEW ALDEN - 65
RANEE LAPOINTE - 69 MARY FORRISTALL - 83

ATHOL-ROYALSTON SCHOOL COM - ATHOL 2 YR
EDWARD THOMPSON - 19

ATHOL-ROYALSTON SCHOOL COM - ROYALSTON 3 YR
BOBBI NEWMAN - 171

TRUSTEES OF J.N. BARTLETT
MARY BARCLAY - 198 BRENDA PUTNEY - 200
BARBARA RICHARDSON - 198 WAYNE NEWTON - 14

CEMETERY COMMISSIONER
JOHN MCCLURE - 194

COYOTE ATTACK

Deb Nunes

Late in the evening of April 17, a 20 year old former town resident, John Melvin, staying in the Royalston Falls shelter, was attacked and bitten by a coyote. It took a fair amount of bear spray to get the coyote to release the arm. The man made his way to Deb and Joe Nunes' house, whose property is adjacent to the Royalston Falls Trustees of Reservations property. They treated his wounds as best they could, and called his family, who took him to the hospital.

ROYALSTON COYOTE ATTACK - FOLLOW-UP REPORT

Police Chief Curtis A. Deveneau

I spoke with Deb Nunes and took a report on the incident. I spoke with the Gardner Hospital(HHH) and the victim did go there at approximately 1:00AM. I was able to get his contact info and I spoke to him. He stated that while cooking some food on an open fire he observed the three coyotes approximately 25 yards away. At that time they continued east down the hill towards the stream. The victim believed the coyotes would cross the stream. The victim then went to get more firewood.

He returned to the fire and observed the coyotes approximately 10 feet from him. He smacked a piece of wood on the ground in an attempt to scare them off. When they did not move, he sprayed them with a bear mace. The closest coyote attacked him, grabbing his left arm and began to shake it. The victim sprayed the coyote in the face and it retreated. He was able to gather some belongings and headed straight out of the woods towards Rt32. He luckily came out behind the Nunes and they helped to treat his wounds.

The shelter site was checked by three Royalston Officers and no signs of the coyotes was present. A message was left with the Trustees of Reservations, which has placed signs at the trailheads. A call was placed to the Environmental Police of Massachusetts. The victim feels that trash and food items are being left around the shelter site and this may be attracting the coyotes to this area for an easy meal. When the victim fled, he lost a GPS unit and a knife. If found, give me a call.

UPCOMING ZONING TASK FORCE MEETINGS

All those interested in this Revision of the Town Zoning By-law project are invited to attend these meetings at the Town Hall at 7:30 p.m., according to the following schedule:

Tuesday, May 9, 2006
Purpose: Begin prioritizing previous zoning recommendations

Tuesday, May 23, 2006
Purpose: Review discussion drafts of proposed zoning revisions

Tuesday, June 6, 2006
Purpose: Public Meeting to present list of zoning priorities, discussion drafts of proposed zoning revisions, and examples of new bylaws

Tuesday, June 13, 2006
Purpose: Review outcome of Public Meeting and respond to

Please visit www.royalston-ma.gov for the Scope of Work for the zoning project and other information. Any questions please call Kim MacPhee at 978-249-0946 or Vyto Andreliunas at 978-249-7341.

COYOTES

Jeff Mangum

Usually nature is the object of our affection, but sometimes it can be scary. Unfortunately, last month a young man drawn to the beautiful forests of Royalston was attacked by a coyote while camping at the Royalston Falls shelter along the Tully Trail. Coyote attacks on humans are rare compared to domestic dogs who bite over 4 million people per year according to www.cdc.gov.

The eastern coyote (*Canis latrans*), believed to be a cross-breed of the smaller western coyote and the gray wolf, has inhabited Massachusetts since the 1950's. Its thriving population despite increased human development is a testament to the adaptability of this wily predator. The coyote's diet is broad, ranging from mice to deer to amphibians, reptiles, birds, fruit, farm animals, pets, pet food and human trash.

I find coyotes to be beautiful animals, and I've been excited each time I've seen one. Their long fur can vary in color from blonde to gray to tan to reddish brown and are classified as a "furbearer" by MassWildlife with a designated harvest season to help manage the population. However, it seems their population has only continued to grow. We hear of more coyote-human conflicts. For example, a Cape Cod man was also bitten last month.

Unlike domestic dogs, coyotes usually mate for life and the male helps to feed and rear the young. Breeding usually occurs in February and 4-6 pups are born in a den in April. The young will be able to hunt on their own by about July but do not mate until their second year. By the fall of their first year, the young leave the family to find their own territory, usually within 10 miles of their birthplace. A coyote's territory is roughly 30 acres, but depends on habitat quality. Coyotes are active year-round and around the clock, but are mostly nocturnal and avoid humans.

It is unclear why the coyote behaved aggressively. Reportedly, trash and food had been left near the shelter where the hiker was bitten, which may have acclimated the coyotes to the area. Rabies, a virus that attacks the central nervous system of mammals, can cause a coyote to act abnormally, from being stupid to aggressive. There were only 2 confirmed rabid coyotes in Massachusetts in 2005. Coyotes acting strangely, such as showing no fear of humans or being aggressive, should be avoided and reported immediately to the Royalston Animal Control Officer, the Royalston Police and the Environmental Police of Massachusetts. For more information about living with coyotes, visit www.masswildlife.org.

OPEN SPACE COMMITTEE SEEKS NEW MEMBERS

The Royalston Open Space Committee has several vacancies for 3-year terms beginning July 1, 2006. The Open Space Committee is appointed by the Board of Selectmen to implement the town's Open Space Plan, and meets once a month (2nd Thursday of the month at 7:30pm). If you are interested in serving on the Open Space Committee, please contact the Selectmen or the Chair of the Open Space Committee (Aaron Ellison). See our web-site: <http://www.royalstonopenspace.org/> to learn more about what the committee does and how it works. If you don't have web access, you can read the Open Space Plan at the Library, or call any of the current committee members to learn more about the committee.

Phinehas S. Newton Library News

Kathy Morris, Library Director

Trustees: Polly Longworth, Lisa Freden, Barbara Guiney

Mondays: 10:00am - 8:30pm. Thursdays 1:00pm - 5:00pm and 6:30 - 8:30pm

Saturdays: 9:00am - 12:noon

979-249-3572 www.royalstonlibrary.org

Thank You's:

Ben West and **Dante Divoll** for volunteer work

Ferron Dooley Fairchild for help even when she's busy

Janet Bettley and **Lisa Freden** for book donations

Beth Gospodarek and **Polly Longworth** for help with the Modern Middle East Program

Beth Gospodarek and **Maureen Blasco** for an incredible kite flying program (the wind socks are way cool)

Cindy Savoy for the charming and delicious kite cake



KITE POEMS WIN POETRY CONTEST

To celebrate National Poetry Month, Bruce Browser recently held a poetry contest for kids writing haiku, rhyming and free form poems. The winners received generous gift certificates to Bruce sponsored by Diane Lincoln and an anonymous donor. Poems were judged by Norah Dooley and Sharon Harmon. Kids who came to the library kite flying day were encouraged to write an entry about kites. Several of these kite poems were among the contest grand prize winners. **Emma Divoll** and **Tobey Rose Chase** won in the rhyming category and **Molly Divoll** and **Isabelle O'Connor** won in the free form category. Here is a prize winning entry:

Kites are beautiful

They go up in the clouds.

Dancing and flying in the clouds

Then they fall down

Molly Divoll, age 5, Royalston, MA

ELECTRONIC CHANGES COMING TO THE LIBRARY

We've done it. On Friday, April 21st, library staff participated in a training session on using the new automation system to enter the library's collection into the MassCat online cataloging network. The first books have been entered onto the MassCat catalog and staff will continue to add all the new and existing books in the library until it has a complete online catalog. MassCat is supported and subsidized by the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners and the Central Massachusetts Regional Library System. It is primarily for smaller collections and does not tell the status of an item (whether it's checked out or not), but it allows users to browse our collection from home or in the library. I wish we could say we listed some relevant reference books relating to Royalston as our first entries but in fact, the staff just grabbed some young adult biographies. Consequently, the first two books entered were *Abigail Adams* and *Get a Horse Sam Adams*. Monitor our progress in entering items by clicking on the link on the library's web site: www.royalstonlibrary.org or by going to: www.MassCat.org

WWW.ROYALSTONLIBRARY.ORG

Did you know the the library website had over 650 hits in the month of March, 2006? That's more hits than houses in Town. Could the attraction be the access to academic data bases, the library news and photos, the newsletter on-line, the links to other town boards, or the electronic messageboard? Probably, it's a combination of most of the above. All this traffic can't be an accident. It's hard to imagine "Phinehas" popping up by mistake on a Google search. Thanks to Jeff Mangum for his dedication to maintaining this interesting site. Jeff has also begun working on a Town of Royalston web-site. Watch for more details.

BRUSH UP YOUR SHAKESPEARE

"To be or not to be" is no longer a question vexing the directors of the Royalston Shakespeare Company. The RCS is indeed returning for its 06 summer season with a workshop performance of Hamlet. In these whirlwind workshops, sponsored by the Friends of the Library, local kids and teens first learn about Shakespeare's plot, characters and language and then go on to practice their parts, play theater games, build sets, organize the lighting, costumes and sound effects, and actually put on a heck of a show - all in less than 2 weeks. The workshops are free but participants must be committed to attending each rehearsal. The program runs from June 20-29, with rehearsals from 9a.m.-noon each week day. Watch for info in backpacks; sign up at the library or call Beth Gospodarek 978-249-0358. Adults who would like to help out are also welcome!

THE CIRCUS IS COMING!

On Friday June 16th at the Royalston Town Hall, Rick and Jackie Davis, of the Silver Lining Circus, will be giving a workshop for children and adults on what it takes to run a circus. Participants will learn circus tricks and how to make and use performance items such as devil sticks or stilts. To culminate, there will be a fantastic performance for all. Both Rick and Jackie have worked for Ringling Brothers Circus and have advised Circus Smirkus. Jackie has performed at Carnegie Hall as a mime. (She studied with Marcel Marceau, one of the most famous mimes.)

All of this is in preparation for the summer reading program, which will be weekly workshops on circus acts and which will end in a circus performance by participants in the program. Watch for more information in school backpacks, fliers and next month's

CHRIS LYONS FEATURED ARTIST AT LIBRARY

Since last summer, the library has been featuring local artists in mini-art shows hung in the children's room. This May, Noah Siegel's lovely nature photography is coming down and Chris Lyons intricate pen and ink scientific illustrations are being installed. In July, look for Laurie Truehart's rich pastels and carvings. If you know of a local artist who should be featured at the library, please let us know.

GARDEN CLEAN UP, PLANT SALE AND GARDEN TOUR

Even though the group is called the Friends of the Library, it does seem to get excited about gardens as well. It was the Friends who planted Town land with the daffodils that have been looking so cheery lately. This season's first project is to **spruce up the library garden** and parking area. With a little raking and weeding and perhaps a comfy chair, this could be a nice spot to hook up a lap top to the library wi-fi for fast internet service, read to a child, or just slap the blackflies. Help is needed. Show up at the library after 11 am on Saturday May 20th (with some handy tools if possible) to volunteer. Next, the **library plant sale** and **book sale** will be Saturday, June 10th this year. This is one of the biggest fundraisers of the year for the Friends and its success has all been due to the lovely plants donated by residents, so pot up your extras and bring them to the library a few days before or to the sale on the morning of the sale. Finally, the Friends are toying with the idea of holding a Town wide **garden tour** in July. Possibly, it would benefit our "adopted" library in Alabama that was completely destroyed by Hurricane Katrina. Would you like your garden to be featured? Call Maureen Blasco at 249-5138.



NEW BOOKS

ADULT AND YOUNG ADULT FICTION

Abrams, Nita *The Spy's Reward*
 Berg, Elizabeth *We Are All Welcome Here*
 Berry, Steve *The Templar Legacy: A Novel*
 Brett, Simon *The Penultimate Chance Saloon*
 Cabot, Meg *Party Princess*
 Chase, Loretta *Lord Perfect*
 Cherryh, C. J. *Pretender*
 Clark, Mary Higgins *Two Little Girls in Blue*
 Evanovich, Janet *Full Scoop*
 Green, John *Looking for Alaska*
 Hale, Shannon *Princess Academy*
 Hellenga, Robert *Philosophy Made Simple*
 Hiaasen, Carl *Flush*
 Hills, Kathleen *Witch Cradle*
 Kellerman, Jonathan *Gone*
 McCall Smith, Alexander *Blue Shoes and Happiness*
 Meyer, Stephanie *Twilight*
 Michaels, Fern Hey, *Good Looking*
 Mitchard, Jacquelyn *Cage of Stars*
 Nunez, Sigrid *The Last of Her Kind*
 Pierce Tamora *Emperor Mage*
 Pierce Tamora *Wild Magic*
 Pierce, Tamora *The Realms of the Gods*
 Pierce, Tamora *Wolf-Speaker*
 Riccio, Dolores *The Divine Circle of Ladies*
 Scottoline, Lisa *Dirty Blonde*
 Woods, Stuart *Dark Harbor*

ADULT NONFICTION

Schlosser, Eric *Chew on This: Everything You Don't Want to Know About Fast Food*
 Mitchell, Alan *Trees of North America Complete Birds of North America*
 Chu, Miyoko *Songbird Journeys: Four Seasons in the Lives of Migratory Birds*
 Child, Julia *My Life in France*
 Gilbert, Elizabeth *Eat Pray Love: One Woman's Search for Everything Across Italy, India, and Indonesia*

LARGE PRINT BOOKS (PURCHASED WITH A GRANT FROM THE COUNCIL-ON-AGING)

Beverly, Jo *Forbidden*
 Gardner, Lisa *The Survivors Club*
 King, Laurie *The Game*
 Rogers, Fred *The World According to Mister Rogers*
 Philbrick, Nathaniel *Sea of Glory: America's Voyage of Discovery*
 Alexander, Caroline *The Bounty: The True Story of the Mutiny on the Bounty*

BOOKS-ON-CD AND TAPE

Faulkner, William *The Sound and the Fury* (tape)
 Paterson, James *The 5th Horseman* (CD)
 Smiley, Jane *Horse Heaven* (tape)
 Cohen, Patricia Cline *The Murder of Helen Jewett* (tape)
 Shakespeare, William *Romeo & Juliet* (CD)



CONGRATULATIONS AND GOOD NEWS

Got something to crow about? Send the news along to the RCN at chasegos@gis.net. Graduating soon? Let us know.

Royalston's **Taj Jenkins Musco** and his roommate Daniel Tak were honored by the California Attorney General in a ceremony to acknowledge public valor in San Francisco on March 30, 2006. The program mainly recognized police. Taj and his friends were the only civilians. The Commendation reads in part:



"Taj Musco, his girlfriend and his roommate Daniel Tak...heard a woman screaming for help. Mr. Musco and Mr. Tak looked out of the window to see a man assaulting a woman. Mr. Tak..and Mr. Musco went out to investigate. Arriving outside of the apartment building, they found a woman on the ground who had been punched several times. Mr. Tak tried to confront the suspect while Mr. Musco went to provide aid to the injured woman. ...the suspect decided to flee. Mr. Tak and Mr. Musco followed without knowing if the suspect was armed and dangerous. The suspect stopped several times challenging the men to fight. When that did not work, the suspect smashed through a glass window in the hope of evading his pursuers. Mr. Tak and Mr. Musco did not relent, and still followed the suspect until police were able to arrive at the scene. Because of their intervention and thoughtfulness, they were able to remove a violent suspect from the streets and protect the woman who was robbed, from further violence. The suspect is currently in custody for assault with a deadly weapon, second degree robbery, and assault with a deadly weapon against a peace officer."

The Student Conservation Association (SCA) has selected **Joshua Morris-Siegel** as a crew leader for their SCA High School Crews Program. He and co-leader Kate Jennings of New York will be leading a group of 6 students in the Morristown National Historic Park in New Jersey. The crew will be doing trail maintenance within the park. SCA has been in existence since 1957. It is the nation's leading provider of conservation service opportunities for youth and provides more than 1.2 million hours of volunteer service each year and counts more than 35,000 alumni. As a teen, Joshua served on two SCA crews: one in Great Sand Dunes National Park in Colorado and the other in North Cascades National Park in Washington.

Break out the mortar boards: This May, **Elizabeth Newton Phelps** is graduating with a BA in Nursing from Fitchburg State college and her brother **Rob Newton** is receiving his Associates Degree in Architectural drafting from the New England Institute of Technology in Rhode Island.

Congratulations to **Amber McCassie**, a Monty Tech sophomore who took a bronze medal in Commercial Baking at the Skills USA/VICA district-wide competition. She and 85 other medal winners from 22 Monty Tech trades and professions will compete in the state-wide competition April 27-29 at Keefe Voc-Tech and Assabet Valley Voc-Tech schools

3RD QUARTER ACADEMIC HONOR ROLLS:

Athol-Royalston Middle School: straight As- **Tasey Chartier** and **Mackenzie Bennett**; All As and Bs- **Cady Boucher, Asher Chase, Ashley Guyer, Dylan Hall, Jared Harvey, Nicholas Krasowski, Joseph Riddel, Ashley Sawyer, Derek Wheeler, Alyssa Bergquist, Michael Demboske, Brianna James, Rebecca Paine, Brittani Sanderson, Patrick Scribner, and Hillary Whitcomb**; all As and Bs with one C- **Kourtney Frazier, Samantha Hutchins, Marquita Day, and Kyle McCorquodale.**

Royalston Community School: straight As- **Alexis Geyster** and **Michele Thompson**. As and Bs- **John Divoll, Shelby Bronnes, Caleb Chase, Garrett Hall, Joshua Roberts, Michael Person, Allison Bergquist, Michael Brousseau, Megan Degnan, Kelly Frazier, and Andrea Hubbard.**



Reduce, reuse, recycle: **John Knight**, right, with the new Royalston postmaster **Pamela Caranfa**, is working toward his **Cub Scout World Conservation Award** and **Cub Scouting's Leave No Trace Awareness Award**. He is part of pack 18 sponsored by **Our Lady of Immaculate Church**. The project recycles unwanted bulk mail to the transfer station in Royalston every Saturday morning.

Live, in concert: On Sunday, July 2nd at 3:00, Royalston's Frank Stearnes will give an organ recital at First Congregational Church. Mark the calendar and watch the newsletter for details.

Wedding Bells: Congratulations to **Carla and Steve Hartwell**, married on March 11 in a happy celebration that included lots of **Jarvenpaas** and their girls, **Tiffany and Kayla Lusco**.

Births

Paul and Patricia Cormier, residents of Deland Rd in Royalston for the past 18 and 1/2 years, would like to announce the birth of their first grandchild. **Tyson Thomas Trimel Jr** was born at St Vincent's Hospital in Worcester MA on February 11th at 3:59 am weighing 6 lbs 7 oz, and measuring 19 inches. He is the first born of Jennifer Cormier, who is a 1998 graduate of Monty Tech, and is employed as preschool teacher at Children's World Learning Center in Acton MA, and Tyson Ivery Trimel of Fitchburg MA.



Ty Trimmel Jr , 3 and 1/2 weeks old

Memorials

Condolences are extended Marc Poulin of South Royalston, on the death of his father, former Gardner resident Joseph Clement Marcel "Clem" Poulin, 86, in Alhambra, California. Mr. Poulin and late wife, Isabelle (Allain) were owners and proprietors of Boutelle's Gift Shop in Worcester. The decorated, WWII veteran also worked as a provider of rental housing, continuing until his retirement at age 85.

Correction: Cynthia Rexroad, daughter of Sylvia McClure, was mistakenly omitted from a memorial in last month's newsletter. This is particularly unfortunate because Sylvia had lived with her daughter from Troy, NH before being admitted to the nursing home last year.

RECIPE OF THE MONTH

Marie Claire Humblet is a relatively new resident. Originally from Belgium, for more than a year, she and her husband Pierre have been quietly fixing up the home known as "The Lightning Rods", behind the hedge of blooming lilacs on the Common. Already she has begun to pitch in with the work of keeping Royalston humming. She is a tireless cleaner of roadsides during the Town clean up and she has recently taken over as the chair of the Royalston Cultural Council. The victuals she provided for Open Mic, particularly the gooey chocolate torte, flew off the table and solidified her reputation here as an excellent cook. Marie Claire will be supervising the fabulous munchies for the upcoming Blues Night on May 13 at Town Hall, so come for the food as well as the bopping music, chance to dance and neighborly company.

Mango Chicken Salad

Marie-Claire invented this recipe while trying to imitate a dish bought in a Cambridge gourmet store years ago. The first tries were rather a complicated ordeal, but at this point it has been simplified to a quick and delicious light summer meal. Proportions do not matter much.

Have on hand, cooked chicken, ready and cut into cubes.

Prepare the sauce by mixing together:

4T mayo (or mayo+yoghurt)

2T curry powder

1t honey

3T freshly squeezed lemon juice

1 inch piece of fresh ginger, grated

Taste and correct the proportions to taste.

Add the chicken to the sauce. Stir in fresh fruit. Marie-Claire always uses a cubed fresh mango and white grapes but apples, peaches, yellow raisins, oranges all will do as well. Pecans or pistachios add crunch.

Mix it all together and serve with a green salad with or without dressing. (She skips salad dressing if there is enough sauce left-over from the chicken.)

As far as cooking philosophy, Marie-Claire cites *Babette's Feast*, a beautiful movie about how carefully prepared food can make a group of people happy. Her other reference is a Parisian lady, mother of a best friend, who was both very well read and a fabulous cook. This woman used to say, "everything you need to do in a household is boring and can be done by a 5 year old. The exception is cooking, the only task to involve creativity."

WILDLIFE SIGHTINGS

Peepers were first heard for the year on April 1st on Laurel Lake Rd.

"**Big Night**", the night of annual salamander and woodfrog migrations to vernal pools in order to mate and spawn, occurred with the rains and 50 degree temps of April 7. The adult salamanders quickly returned to the leaf litter for another solitary year. By May, eggs are hatching into nymphs and tadpoles; over the next couple of months, it's a race to see which happens first: the nymphs mature into terrestrial adults or the pools dry up. Like the farmers, amphibians need reliable rains.

VILLAGE SCHOOL EVENTS FOR THE COMMUNITY

An old fashioned *May Day* celebration will be held on Wednesday, May 3, at 9:00 a.m. at the Village School. Children can join in May Pole weaving and dancing. There will be singing of traditional songs, and rounds. Rumor has it that the aging Millers River Morris Men will appear, unable to contain themselves, and leap and pound the earth to drive out winter and awaken the earth, and bring fertility to the crops, the fields, the animals and the people! Young and old will join in the uplifting "Shepherds' Hay" to complete the event. The public is invited. This event will last about an hour, just enough time to greet the spring and evade the black flies.

After school classes; Call the school at 249-3505 to enroll:
American Sign Language with Kirsten Spencer: Grades 1-6
Thursdays 3:15-4:30 April 27, May 4, 11 and 18 Cost: \$30

Connecting Nature and Art with Kerry Stone : Grades 3-6
Mondays 3:30 to 4:30 p.m. May 1, 8, 15
Cost: \$30 which includes all materials, glazing and firing

Original Play Presented on Friday May 19 at 7 p.m. at the Royalston Town Hall. Written and performed by the Village School 4th-6th graders, based on the Middle Ages. Everyone is welcome.

MONTY TECH UPDATE

Despite rises in fuel costs, the complete revamping of Monty Tech's energy management system, completed over the past two years with a \$67,000 contribution from UNITIL, volunteer supervision by MT staff and faculty members, and nearly \$20,000 in labor provided by the last two years' graduating electrical students, has made it so savings in energy usage have effectively compensated for the rise in energy costs for the building. Thanks to all involved for the "above and beyond the call of duty" component that made this possible. In addition to holding down expenses, the actual reduction in energy consumption is something to cheer about.

As of March 31, 11 Royalston eighth graders are among the 613 applicants to Mont Tech for the class of 2010. Our guaranteed quota of three has been filled, and those students notified. The remaining eight students are now on a list prioritized by score, and on June 1, seats from towns not fulfilling their quotas will be filled with the highest scoring applicants on that list. The class of 2010 is accepting 340 new students.

SOUTH ROYALSTON SCHOOL REUNION COMMITTEE NEWS: WEB-SITE COMING TOGETHER

The Friends of the Phinehas S. Newton Library have graciously agreed to post a hot-link from their website to the SRS Reunion Association's forthcoming web site. Keep an eye on www.royalstonlibrary.org for that exciting addition. If you have some expertise in webnology, or photos or information for the new web site, contact President Luann (LaRoche) Simula at 978-249-8746

RCS News: MCAS and A Lot More

Mitchell Grosky, Principal

Although we continue to diligently prepare for and look forward to the math, science, and social studies portions of MCAS that will arrive in the middle of May, there is a great deal more to our spring program than just Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System.

We have just held a school-wide River Rat Reading Race in which students were involved since early April. Coordinated by Title I teacher Constance Sonn, the children moved their three-dimensional cardboard canoes up the "River of Knowledge" as they read more books and/or more hours at home. Students in Mr. Hains' third grade class got some extra reading practice when they participated in their teacher's Iditarod Reading Race, modeled after the "Last Great Race" held in Alaska each year.

On Wednesday, April 26, the entire school took a field trip to see Disney's Aladdin at Mount Wachusett Community College. The trip was funded partially through the Royalston Cultural Council and the PTG. RCS alumnus, Asher Chase, was in the cast.

Peer Mediation Training continues in grade 4 where the Quabbin Mediation Group is coming to RCS. The program is coordinated by ARRSD guidance counselor Rachel Schwab and is funded by a Dewing Grant secured by Quabbin Mediation. Four students from RCS will join students from other ARRSD elementaries being trained in this annual three day program. The RCS program is supervised by Lead Teacher and Mediation Advisor, Janice Lefebvre.

The Sixth Graders are looking forward to our Nature's Classroom trip at Ocean Beach in Maine from June 5 to June 9. All thirteen sixth graders plan to participate.

As we began this article with a reference to MCAS, let us conclude in the same way. As teachers continue to stress MCAS preparation in their classes, our gratitude also goes out to parent and PTG secretary Becky Divoll, who has been teaching an eight-week after school Math MCAS review class for students in grades 3, 4, 5, and 6. Students have been working hard on challenging MCAS-type math problems on Fridays after school. On the final Friday, Principal Grosky will be sponsoring a friendly, competitive MCAS Math Marathon Team Challenge. All participants in the eight-week program will be treated to an Ice Cream Sundae Extravaganza at the end of the Team Competition that afternoon.

FIRE DEPARTMENT CALENDAR

The Fire Department is looking for any photographs, past or present, which contain fire department related themes to be considered for use in a calendar. All photos will be returned. In addition, business card sized ads in the calendar are available for \$35. Call Joshua at 978-249-4260 to submit photos or place an ad.

BLUES NIGHT

Get the Blues Saturday, May 13 at 7:30 pm in the Royalston Town Hall. Dance or just enjoy the show. Royalston's Melanie and the Blue Shots opening for the Reprobate Blues Band. Blues, cash bar (wine and beer), and fabulous munchies. It's a fund raiser for the Royalston Cultural Council to finance the Summer Music Fest next July 16. Suggested donation \$7 per person. Advance ticket sale at the Royalston post office and with Council Members. For info call Andrea 978-249-2705

MEMORIAL DAY EVENTS

Memorial Day exercises will be held Monday, May 29, beginning at 2 p.m. in the South Village. Following the dedication of wreaths at cemeteries, the Miller's River and the South Village flag pole, all are invited to join a pot luck luncheon for the veterans. Prior to the day, hundreds of new flags will be placed on veterans' graves; the more volunteers, the easier this activity is. If your family, community service, social or church group would like to help, it would be greatly appreciated. Contact Brenda Putney at 978-249-7787 or bputney@crystal-mtn.com.



Pete Krustapentas and Brenda Putney get ready for the Memorial Day events at 2 pm in the south village on May 29.

ROYALSTON LUNCHEON CLUB

All seniors (present and future!) are welcome to attend the weekly Royalston Luncheon Club gatherings at 11:30 a.m. each Wednesday in the Town Hall. Cost is just \$2 for seniors and \$2.50 for future seniors. Seats should be reserved the Monday prior by calling Betty Woodbury at 978-249-9656. Chinese auctions are held the first Wednesdays of each month, blood pressure and other health clinics are held the second Wednesday of each month, and brown bag commodities from the Western Massachusetts Food Bank are distributed on the fourth Wednesday of each month. Occasional bus trips and outings are planned throughout the year.

ROYALSTON FISH & GAME ANNUAL KIDS' FISHING DERBY

It's that time of year again – FISHING! The Royalston F&G's annual Walter E. Carlson Kids' Fishing Derby takes place from 10 a.m. – 1 p.m. on Sunday May 21st; fishing is limited to children 14 and under during those hours. Members' children are admitted free of charge and may enjoy a cookout lunch and can keep two fish. Additional fish are \$1 each. Non-member children are assessed a nominal fee for the cookout – hamburgers, hot dogs, chips and beverage – and \$1 for each fish. Cash and prizes will be awarded to young anglers in many categories. At 1:30 p.m., those 14 and older, for \$5, may enter the Royalston F&G Adult Fishing Derby. Depending upon the number of entrants, prizes will be awarded in various categories. Successful anglers can take their catch for supper!

Just a heads-up: The F&G has tentative plans for a June 10 BBQ chicken supper. If you're interested in tickets, be sure to call the club and let them know how many tickets you'd like. Call the club at 978-249-3004.

UPCOMING LBS EVENTS

The Ladies' Benevolent Society of Royalston will meet at the home of Rebecca Krause-Hardie on May 31 at 7:30 p.m. for a brief business meeting, followed by a program on the Town Zoning Project. All interested parties – men, too – are invited for the program and light refreshments following. Call Mrs. Kraus-Hardie at 978-575-1454 for info.

The Ladies' B. is also making plans for their eleventh annual Royalston Blood Donor Day. Originally held as a remembrance of the Oklahoma City bombing, this event has brought in anywhere from 30-50 units of blood each year, right at a time of high need, the week before the long, Independence Day weekend. Multiplied times five, the number of people a single unit of blood can help, it's obvious this is an important undertaking by the Society. Watch for more details, and if you are eligible to donate blood, please consider doing so at the LBS's Blood Donor Day.

SPRING CLEANING SALE

The Women's Fellowship from the Second Congregational Church of Royalston is holding their second annual church yard sale on Saturday, May 20 from 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. Hot dogs and hamburgers will be on sale, along with beverages and perhaps a few other goodies. Ginny Moore is accepting reservations for spaces, which are \$10. Call her at 978-249-4962.

NOTICE

The Board of Health, in conjunction with the Building Department, will be visiting properties which are in violation of town bylaws and building codes. Property owners will be cited for issues such as the storage of junk and trash, unsecured buildings, unregistered motor vehicles and other health and safety violations. Warnings will be issued, and if violations are not corrected, the perpetrators will be summoned to court. Contact the Building Inspector and/or Health Inspector for more information.

IN YOUR OWN BACKYARD:

THE ENDANGERED SAND VIOLET IN ROYALSTON

Matt Hickler

It all started on an Athol Bird and Nature Club fieldtrip to the famous Royalston Beryl Mine.. While digging through the tailings, impatient for the first VERY LARGE perfect gem-stone of the day, I noticed a violet growing bravely on the dry, rocky rubble. Now, violets come in two forms: those with flowers on leafy stems, and those whose flower stalks emerge, naked, directly from the middle of a rosette of basal leaves. This violet was stemmed, and it had a blue flower, making it (as far as I knew then) an easy call: *Viola conspersa*, the American dog-violet. But it just didn't look right; besides, no self-respecting dog-violet would grow in such an inhospitable habitat. Luckily there were a few botanists at hand, and the necessary field guides, so we quickly had it pegged as *Viola adunca* (sand-violet).

Sand violet is a northern species, and prior to this time had been found only four times in Massachusetts. Most were ancient records, and only one population had been seen in the past 25 years. The species is listed as Endangered in Massachusetts (the most extreme category of rarity short of extinct).

Noah Siegel figured, "if there is one, maybe there are more," so the search was on. It wasn't long before we came to the realization that sand-violet was growing all over Royalston - on power lines, in cemeteries, logging skid roads, the RCS playground, and front lawns! The two things that tie these kinds of sites together are: plenty of sunlight and a history of soil disturbance. Recently used logging roads are the most reliable place to find sand-violet, where it grows in the main road bed and on the most heavily disturbed skid trails (dry, sterile soil preferred). You can walk in to any recently finished logging operation in town and have a high probability of finding the species. The biggest population (probably thousands of plants) is on the lawn of a recently developed building site. One interesting observation we made is that although it spills into Orange around Tully Mountain, this violet appears to be virtually absent from neighboring towns.

So how does sand-violet get around? Violets are well-know for their ant-dispersed seeds. Their seeds have a special appendage, called an elaisome, made of tasty fatty tissue, which is irresistible to ants. Worker-ants pick up the seeds and carry them to the nest for food. Once the ants have finished with the good part, the trash (a perfectly viable seed) is brought out to the middens pile and planted - a great example of plant/insect coevolution, but not good enough to get violet seeds to a newly opened habitat, far from the parent, so quickly. If the sand-violet had been widespread here in a former time, we might suspect a long dormant soil seed bank, but this seems unlikely given the historic record. My own favorite scenario is that seeds are traveling around on logging and excavation equipment. There's nothing like a big lugged tire or caterpillar tread for picking up mud at one place and leaving it at another.

The state is considering down-grading sand violet's endangered status to a less severe category as a result of the healthy population found here in Royalston. It is always heartening to see a rare species that is becoming more secure rather than less.

GARDEN NOTES

Larry Siegel

Wasn't it just February when I was writing about the swollen ponds, the overflowing streams, the saturated ground? Now (April 18), I've moved around some strawberry plants and was obliged to water them, for gosh sakes. I'm supposed to be tracking mud into the house now, not watering plants. The problems are compounded by the incessant winds; I swear I saw dust flying up from the chicken yard today. I do tend to focus on matters of weather, particularly the presence or absence of rain. The success of the garden depends upon it. I can enrich the soil, keep the weeds away, pick off the bugs, chase the varmints, but I cannot make it rain. In the absence of irrigation, it is, literally, the heavens that will determine the fate of my plants.

Spring is advanced. That should come as no surprise to even the non-gardeners among you. Things that pop out of the ground are popping out about ten days sooner. Rhubarb appeared in late March, unheard of in these parts. I walk the asparagus patch daily in order to spot the first emerging stalk. They do not typically appear until the beginning of May. The black flies, too, are ten days early. Fortunately, the wind keeps them at bay, some small consolation for its persistence.

With no compelling reason not to, I planted peas and spinach on March 29. They are up, but so are the plantings of April 11. Germination is spotty, probably because of the dryness. My third, and final, planting of peas will occur in a few days. The wintered-over garlic, shallots, and scallions are a month taller than a month ago, as green as the grasses they are related to and ready for picking. I harvest a modest handful of lettuce leaves from time to time, more for its psychic pleasure than the sustenance it provides. Additional lettuce, parsnips, and shallots have also been planted. Shallots perform much like garlic: set one out and it will multiply to a cluster of four to six. Unlike garlic it is planted in the spring and set out so that half the bulb is above ground. Parsnips may take weeks to germinate. Mark the rows well and be patient. Early May is not too late to plant these and the aforementioned peas and spinach. The middle of May is.

In the world of gardening, at least as practiced in this wee corner of Royalston, May represents the busiest month. Planting, transplanting, digging, and potting. Returns may be months away, though I suggest there are rewards for simply undertaking the tasks.

At its core, gardening is a humbling experience. Much can go wrong. Much is beyond the capacity of the gardener to control. Society does not hold the gardener/farmer in high esteem. Dirt work. Stoop labor. Society got it all wrong. It tends to forget the fact that it is the farmer who feeds society and not the other way around.


Addendum: Seven-tenths inch of rain fell on the 23rd, far less than the three (and more inches recorded just to the west but far, far more than we had received the entire month of April. And, yes, one precocious plant has set up five shoots.





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 527 South Main Street • Orange, MA 01364
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CLASSIFIEDS

Help wanted: High School (over 16) or College student, or someone with available afternoon hours, to assist in After School Program at the Village School for the next school year, starting in September. You need to be great with kids, patient, kind, AND dependable. From 3:00 to 5:30 daily. Call Risa at the school at 249-3505.

Help Needed: Contractor needs summer helpers. Call Stephen Chase 249-0358.

Services Offered:

PC Repair at reasonable rates. Call 249-9834.

House Cleaning-- 4 Hours for \$60. 978-895-0817 - ask for Fran.

Got Yard work and odd jobs? Call 10 year old John Divoll (He needs money to buy a 4 wheeler.) Call 249- 3158.

Will pay reasonable rates for wild blueberries all summer- Call John Jeffery 978-249-3705.

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RCN reserves the right to edit and restrict all submissions. This Newsletter is provided free of charge to all residents of Royalston as a publis service provided by the Friends of the Phinehas S. Newton Library with support from the Royalston Cultural Council and the entire community.

Out of Town Subscriptions

are available fo \$10/calendar year (10 issues)by mailing a check to: Friends of the Phinehas S. Newton Library, PO Box 133, Royalston MA 01368

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