

THE ROYALSTON COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

May 2007



Volume X, Issue IV

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

May 1 Tuesday **May Day**

9 a.m. Celebrate May Day. Live music, Maypole for children, singing and dancing, including Morris Dancers, at Village School. Public welcome. Fabulous photo ops.

May 2 Wednesday **Full Flower Moon**

6 p.m. **Baccalaureate Planning Pizza Party** at The Parsonage

May 3 Thursday

National Day of Prayer Observances:

8 a.m. Meet at flagpole in South Village

8:30 a.m. Meet at flagpole in Center

TBA **Jim Henson Show** at RCS featuring big, student-made puppets as well as songs and jokes from the Muppet Show. Funded by A-REF. Community invited. 249-2900

May 5 Saturday

10 a.m. - 5 p.m. **Congregational Youth Group Community Service** - Tully Campground Clean-up

May 11 Friday

noon **early dismissal at RCS**, half day of school

7 pm The Annual Town Meeting at RCS

May 12 Saturday

Last day to contribute nonperishable items to the **Post Office Annual Food Drive**. Bring to PO or leave at mailbox for carrier to collect.

May 13 Sunday **Mothers' Day**

May 15 Tuesday

7 ish pm **Crowning of the Royalston Poet Laureate** at the Town Hall

May 16 Wednesday

noon **Singer Patty Carpenter to perform** at the Royalston Town Hall, hosted by the Royalston Senior Luncheon Club. No reservation necessary for those attending the concert only, but to enjoy the luncheon, call Betty Woodbury by Monday, May 14 at the latest at 978-249-9656. Small donation suggested for the luncheon; the concert is free.

3:27 p.m. **New Milk Moon**

May 18 Friday

10 a.m. and 7 p.m. **The Village School students perform a play** they wrote themselves, based on Ancient Greece, at the Royalston Town Hall. Enjoy the fun watching the capricious gods on Mt. Olympus interfere with mortal affairs. Everyone is welcome. A small donation is encouraged to offset production costs.

May 20 Sunday

10 a.m. - 1 p.m. **Annual Walter Carlson Fishing Derby** at the Royalston Fish & Game Club for children 14 and under. Members' children fish and lunch for free; non-members are asked for a nominal fee. Prizes. Adult fishing derby begins at 1:30 p.m.

May 28 Monday **Memorial Day Observed**

All schools, post office and library closed

2 p.m. Memorial Day Exercises on The Common

3 p.m. Memorial Day Post Parade Luncheon on The Common

May 30 Wednesday

7:30 p.m. **LBS meets. Program: "Zoning Task Force"** with Kim MacPhee and Vyto Andreliunas, hosted by Rebecca Krause-Hardie. Refreshments served. All members of the community welcome. Pls call 978-575-1454 for more info.

May 31 Thursday **Full Milk Moon**

Saturday June 9 **Saturday Morning on the Common**

Pancakes and silent auction at Town Hall, entertainment on the Common, goodies and plants for sale at the post office, and good deals on used books at the library. Events benefit the Village School, the Village Improvement and Historical Society and the Phineas Newton Library.

Enjoying the cheery daffodils on public lands around town? Did you know that was a Friends of the Library project organized by Maureen Blasco from years back?



DAFFODILS

*Yellow fairies behind the trees
Smoothly swaying in the breeze
Bees come to the sippy cup and
Drink the clean pollen up*

by RCS Poetry Club, group 1: Alyana LaJoie, Ryan Ganley, Hannah Bartkus, Olivia Oliveira, Isabelle O'Connor, Carissa and Krista Boudreau, Sarah Arsenault, Cassandra Frazier and Haylie Baker

Royalston Luncheon Club/COA

The Council on Aging and Luncheon Club are showing signs of emerging from their winter hibernation. On Saturday, May 5, the COA is sending a delegation to the International Exchange Student Supper in North Orange. The free meal begins at 6 p.m. and features dishes from the homelands of the exchange students, who will mingle with guests and answer questions about the native countries and their experiences in America.

No stranger to Royalston, Entertainer Patty Carpenter will be the featured performer during the Luncheon Club's weekly meal on Wednesday, May 16. The program is subsidized by the Royalston Cultural Council, and is free and open to the public. Lunches are just \$2 for seniors and \$2.50 for not yet seniors. Reserve a seat on any Monday for the following Wednesday's luncheon by calling Betty Woodbury at 978-249-9656.

Police Department Says, "Get Lost"

Do you like getting "lost" in the woods? Do you enjoy rumpusing around with dogs? If so, your services are needed as an occasional volunteer "victim." Royalston Police Sergeant Roland G. Hamel and Officer Sherry A. Miner work with air-scenting K-9s Reba and Shawkin, and Sergeant Hamel is also training Edison, a tracker. A variety of "victims" are needed for practice, primarily so the dogs do not become bored with finding the same people. Adults and teens are welcome to participate, either on an occasional or regular basis. If this is something you think you'd like to try, leave a message on the non-emergency number for the Royalston Police, 978-249-5838, and Sergeant Hamel or Officer Miner will get back to you.

Lots of Post Office News

Pam Caranfa, postmistress

Please consider contributing to the Annual Food Drive. On Saturday, May 12th the Post Office will be collecting can/non perishable food. You can leave food in a bag on/or near your rural mailbox and the carrier will pick them up or you can bring you items to the Royalston Community Post Office any time between now and then.

As you may know there is a rate increase in postage, beginning on Monday, May 14th. The price of the first class stamp will be 41 cents, (a 2 cent increase) and has gone down for the second ounce to 17 cents. The new "Forever" stamp is on sale now, along with the new non-demonical flag stamp, (which looks a little antique.)

Postal jobs: The Highway Contract Route HCR 080, will be going out to bid in June. This is the route that services the majority of Royalston. Also, there is a great need for a Causal Clerk in the Athol Post Office. If interested in either of these positions please call the Postmaster in Athol 978-249-8535. I would like offer my assistance and insight to both of these positions, along with help to fill out the paperwork if you would like, as I have experience in both of these jobs. Just call me. 978-249-4242 or 249-9126

Board of Health News

Phil Leger

Long time transfer station attendant, Charlie Divoll, is out on medical leave. We all hope that he get well soon. In the interim, Board of Health members, Chet Hall, George Vaccari, and Phil Leger have been filling in. Any questions concerning operations, see the men in the fluorescent yellow BOH vest.

Effective April 13th, the demolition rate became \$150 per ton; shingles are \$15 per square and 10 squares equals a ton, New price sheets are available from attendant. This new price better reflects the cost of doing business. The construction, demolition, and bulky waste box is provided as a service. We are asking for funding for a scale in order to take the guess work out of assessing bulk loads. Please be patient throughout this process.

Department of Public Works Update

Spring grading has begun. Use caution and drive slowly near men and equipment in roads. The public is asked to understand that high sub-surface water levels are preventing completion of some work. Grading schedule will be varied to accomodate sub-surface soil saturation levels.

Summer Job: The DPW is looking to hire someone 18 years or older to fill a non-skilled seasonal position. Apply as soon as possible. Applications are available at the DPW. Call 978-249-4223 for more information.

There is some progress on the Rt 32 project. The Selectboard is in the process of deciding among the three finalist road building firms. The next step is to negotiate a time frame, fee schedule and scope of work with the contractor and coordinate a funding cycle with the Montachusett Regional Planning Council.

Assessors' Notes

Tax bills have been mailed out and are due May 14. Abatement applications are also due at this time. Refer to the back of the bill for more information. If you own property in town and did not receive a bill, contact the assessors or the tax collector immediately as taxes must be paid regardless.

Most bills will show an increase in the value of land. New state mandates require revaluations on a yearly basis instead of, and in addition to, the three year schedule of the past. This is in response to the rapid real estate price escalation of the last few years. This has placed an undue burden on small towns which do not have full-time assessors offices and has contributed to late tax bills.

The next tax bill will reflect the usual three year revaluation in which all classes of real estate will be adjusted. Roy Bishop Associates have been contracted to assist the assessors in this task. The assessors, Stephen Chase, Mike Lajoie and Jim Richardson, will be out during May for site visits to all properties which are undergoing changes as indicated by building permits. Some interior inspections will be required and your cooperation will be much appreciated.

Learning from the Past – Planning for the Future

Jon Hardie, Selectman (filling in for Andy West, who has the flu)

The Selectboard is wrapping up budgeting with the FinCom & Capital Planning for the Annual Town Meeting coming up very soon, Friday May 11th at 7 pm. These budget presentations often don't have the same format, amount of backup information, comparable goals or measures of performance, making objective evaluations more difficult.

As a result, the select board is implementing a uniform departmental goal setting, performance review & budget process. We'll be setting up quarterly meetings with the FinCom & Capital Planning, to build a shared, rolling, 18 month strategic planning, and budget & review timetable. We can all get on - and stay on - the same page; operating with the same set of financial & performance data, so that we can each make the best decisions, against the same shared and measurable objectives each year, to present to Town Meeting.

Some of the most important work we do on the select board, FinCom and Capital Planning is to make good informed decisions. Good decisions are based on good information, as reflected in monthly department reports that are timely, accurate, relevant, accessible, and complete.

Learning from the Past: We can all learn a lot from accurate historical reporting over the past several years. With each department using Excel (or even a piece of graph paper), we will be able to go back and track monthly department line items on the budget, and measurable services delivered. Going forward with each department, we will then be able to predict - pretty accurately - where each line item in the budget, and where actual services delivered are heading, long before a funding crisis, and early enough to take prompt & less costly corrective action. (For the curious - it's called trend analysis.)

Each town department, committee, the select board, and you will benefit greatly from this process. It will take a little effort to get the goal setting, performance review & budgeting ball rolling together - the first time, over the next 8 months. The new computer network at Whitney Hall will connect 7 departments. It should be in place for the budgetary process & town meeting, in 2008. We're exploring onsite excel training.

Rotating Select Board Meetings – Beginning in June, after the ATM, we will rotate select board meetings between Town Hall and Whitney Hall. The first meeting of each month will always be at Town Hall, the second meeting will be at Whitney Hall. Note: both May Meetings of the Select Board will still be at Town Hall, on May 8th and May 15 at 7pm

We'll keep you informed as we work together on these items, so we can all really be on the same page together.

2007 Town Election Results

Melanie Mangum, Town Clerk

Out of 911 registered voters, 356 voted in the recent town election. That's 101 more than voted in 2006's Annual Town Election. The following are the candidates elected to town office and their vote count. Full results were posted around town.

Selectman - Jon Hardie - 191

Planning Board - Kate Collins - 222

Athol-Royalston School Committee *Royalston - (write-in) Chet Hall - 129

Assessor - Michael Lajoie - 276

Sewer Commission - (write-in) Curtis Deveneau - 30

Library Trustee - Mary Lisa Freden - 283

Board of Health - Chet Hall - 250

Cemetery Commission - Stephanie McClure - 268

Constable - (write-in) John Divoll - 41

Board of Public Welfare - Roland Hamel - 263

Town Clerk - Melanie Mangum - 305

Trustees of J.N. Bartlett - Mary Barclay, Donna Caisse, Roland Hamel, and (write-in) Jennifer Basso

Athol-Royalston School Committee 3 Athol seats - Joseph Maga - 156, Lee Chauvette - 130, Jacqueline Doherty - 114. (note: These were the totals in Royalston, but the combined results from Athol and Royalston decided the actual winners, Joseph Maga, Lee Chauvette, and Kala Fisher)

Many thanks go out to our dedicated election workers. Many count long into the night after working a full day staffing the polls. The town (and I!) couldn't do it without you!

Town Meeting News

On Friday, May 11, the town will have its Annual Town Meeting, as well as a Special Town Meeting. As of this writing, warrants for both are being prepared. The last day to register to vote for the Special Town Meeting was April 21. The last day to register to vote for the Annual Town Meeting is Tuesday, May 1, from 2-4 p.m. and 7-8 p.m. at the Town Clerk's Office. The warrants will be posted on the Town web-site www.royalston-ma.gov as soon as approved.

Royalston Democrats Meet

The Royalston Town Democratic Committee reorganized recently at a meeting in the town hall conducted by Senator Steve Brewer of Barre, a member of the state Democratic Committee. State Rep. Robert Rice of Gardner, whose district includes Royalston, also attended. Both legislators spoke of the importance of grass roots involvement in the political process. They congratulated the Royalston Democrats for reorganizing the committee, which had been dormant for a few years. The following officers were elected: Allen Young, chair; Phil Rabinowitz, vice chair; Christine Long, secretary; and Werner Bundschuh, treasurer. Committee members Ruth Suyenaga and Vyto Andreliunas also attended the meeting. The town committee has the right to choose delegates to attend state conventions and otherwise participate in the Democratic Party. Other Royalston Democrats wishing to join the committee, which expects to meet once or twice a year, can contact any of the officers.



Phinehas S. Newton Library News

Kathy Morris, Library Director

Trustees: Polly Longsworth, 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 yous

Lelah Brousseau for a movie

Werner Bundschuh, Liane Brandon, and Boyd Estus for their revealing, engaging, and dynamic programs

Barbara Willhite, Sharon Harmon, Maureen Blasco, Cindy Savoy, Patience Bundschuh, and Beth Gospodarek for refreshments for the documentary filmmakers' series

Emma O'Connor Cadence Brinkley for book donations

Recent Donations to the Friends

The following recently joined or renewed their memberships to the Friends of the Library, a local nonprofit group which works to support our gem of a public library (in part, by publishing this newsletter 10 times a year.)

Susan Williams

Werner and Patience Bundschuh

Sarah and Louis Poirier

Ralph and Joy Cutter

Aaron Ellison and Elizabeth Farnsworth

Diane Lincoln

Leonard Hoffmann

The Boucher Family

Mary Ann and Lee Lizotte

The Village School

Allen Young

Maj/Gen Robert Davenport

Deane Marchbein

Phil and Carla Rabinowitz

Pat Andreliunas

Virginia Gringras

Geoffrey and Diana Newton

Nanji Davison

Ken and Andrea Lively

Pre-School Story Time at Library

Preschoolers and their caregivers are welcome to the library each Monday from 10 - 11:30 am. Each week, after listening to library staff read from a picture book, kids create a related craft. Books can be checked out and healthy snacks are served. Free. Pre-registration not required. Call the library for more information. Royalston's geographic spread and black flies can be isolating, but pre-school story group can be a warm, close knit place to connect with other toddlers and parents in our small town. Story time continues through June.

Looking Towards Summer

The theme for the Summer Reading Program this year is Catch the Beat at your Library. We're looking for people interested in presenting a program. Each program lasts about 1 1/2 hours and should be appropriate for children from ages 3 to 13. We pay for supplies and a small stipend. If you are interested in presenting, please contact Kathy at the library. We'll also be offering the five week Kindermusik® music and movement program for preschoolers thanks to a grant from the Royalston Academy and the Judith Jenkins Musco Scholarship Fund.

The Bard is Back in Town

The Royalston Shakespeare Company is pleased to announce its return this June for a 4th season of workshop theater for kids. Details are being finalized, but plan on a two week program soon after school lets out; (it's such a good feeling to have July 4th roll around and a play already under one's belt.) Several plays are under consideration. There are rumblings that the performance may be a History this season, but could the RSC really pull off the winter of our discontent in the glorious summer on Royalston Common? Why not? It's probably easier than finding a local teen brave and tall enough to play Romeo. Whichever play is chosen, Norah Dooley, Maureen Blasco and Beth Gospodarek will once again be co-directing and the Friends of the Library will be funding the program. Details will be available at the library as soon as practical as well as published in the June newsletter.

Plant Sale: Donations Needed

Friends of the Library Plant Sale Coming on Saturday June 9. Donations of plants needed, so pot up your thinnings and save your seedlings. (However, please do not leave empty flower pots at the library.) Save space in the garden for all the botanical wonders at reasonable prices that this sale offers.

Reasonably reliable advice comes with each purchase at the plant sale. Here is an example. If you bought a butterfly bush at last year's sale and it hasn't sprouted leaves even though everything else around it in the flower garden has, don't give up. It just looks dead. Butterfly bushes leaf out quite a bit later than other common shrubs.



Poet Laureate to be Crowned

What a cool town we have. An impressive percentage of the population are poets. Over a dozen poems were submitted to the 2007 Poet Laureate contest. These included: *Rt. 32- a Rough Ode*, *Moon on the Millers River*, *The Tio of Royalston Falls*, *The Windy Roads of Royalston*, *Nature's Gratitude*, *My Shangrila*, *Gratitude*, *Oh Timeless Wonder*, *Mother's Love*, *Beauty of a Child*, and *Coyote at Dusk*. Judge for yourself. The full text of the entries is currently posted anonymously at the library web-site www.royalstonlibrary.org. A winner will be crowned at the Selectmens' meeting Tuesday, May 15 at 7 pm.

Some of the New Books at the Library

New Adult Fiction

Alexie, Sherman *Flight: A Novel*
 Balough, Mary *Simply Magic*
 Berstein, Harry *The Invisible Wall*
 Bretton, Barbara *Just Like Heaven*
 Brown, Rita Mae *Puss 'n Cahoots*
 Carey, Janet Lee *Dragon's Keep*
 Cherryh, C.J. *Deliverer*
 Clark, Mary Higgins *I Heard That Song Before*
 Cunningham, Elizabeth *Magdalen Rising*
 Dean, Zoey *Heart of Glass*
 Dodd, Christina *Tongue in Chic*
 Dokey, Cameron *How Not To Spend Your Senior Year*
 Drabble, Margaret *The Sea Lady*
 Fielding, Joy *Heartstopper: A Novel*
 Graham, Heather *The Dead Room*
 Graves, Ashna *Death Pans Out*
 Gruber, Michael *The Book of Air and Shadows*
 Hamilton, Masha *The Camel Bookmobile*
 Harrison, Lisi *It's Not Easy Being Mean*
 Hoag, Tami *The Alibi Man*
 Horowitz, Anthony *Stormbeaker*
 Horowitz, Anthony *More Horowitz Horror*
 Kellerman, Jonathan *Obsession*
 Knox, Elizabeth *Dreamquake*
 Kostick, Conor *Epic*
 Malcolm, Jahna *Love Letters-Perfect Strangers*
 Mayor, Archer *Open Season*
 Nelson, Blake *The New Rules of High School*
 Peters, Julie Anne *Define "Normal"*
 Rankin, Ian *The Naming of the Dead*
 Robards, Karen *Obsession*
 Sage, Angie *Flyte*
 Scottoline, Lisa *Daddy's Girl*
 Tolkien, J.R.R. *The Children of Huron*
 Warner, Sally *This Isn't About The Money*
 Wolfson, Jill *What I Call Life*



The annual kite flying day was a happy success. Featuring the first sun of the rainy week and plenty of wind, several dozen kids sailed bits of plastic and string through the skies behind the library. Many thanks to the Bundshuh's for the use of their puddle filled fields and to Cindy Savoy for the exceptionally delicious and representational kite cake.

New Adult Non-Fiction

Beah, Ishmael *A Long Way Gone: Memoirs of a Boy Soldier*
 Carter, Susan *Perennials: The Gardener's Reference*
 Chopra, Deepak *The Book of Secrets: Unlocking The Hidden Dimensions of Your Life*
 Damrosch, David *The Buried Book: The Loss and Rediscovery of the Epic of Gilgamesh*
 Doty, Mark *Dog Years*
 Ehrenreich, Barbara *Dancing in the Streets: A History of Collective Joy*
 Frampton, Otis *Oddly Normal Volume 1*
 Houghton Mifflin *Good Birders Don't Wear White*
 Key, Joshua *The Deserter's Tale: The Story of an Ordinary Soldier Who Walked Away From War in Iraq*
 Lutes & Bertozzi, Jason & Nick *Houdini: The Handcuff King*
 McKibben, Bill *Deep Economy: The Wealth of Communities and the Durable Future*
 Neimark, Anne E. *Up Close: Johnny Cash*
 Pagels, Elaine *Reading Judas: The Gospel of Judas and the Shaping of Christianity*
 Stafford, Jennifer *Domiknitrix*
 Trillin, Calvin *About Alice*
 Watsuki, Nobuhiro *Buso Renkin*
 Woodruff, Bob & Lee *In An Instant*



How to Tame the Monsters in the Back Seat: Audio Books

Now that the weather is warmer, planning any road trips? Books on CD and cassette are an effective way to keep your kids from squabbling or worse in the back seat. The library has just gotten a great audio book for kids 8 and up. *Framed* by Frank Boyce Cotrell will definitely make you and your kids laugh. Although its set in Wales, there are a lot of similarities to our fair town. Reading experts all assert that audio books instill a love of books and build vocabulary. This one will all do that plus engage your child's curiosity about fine art, Ninja Turtles, Mini-Coopers and pulling off the perfect crime.

Patty Carpenter to Appear at the Royalston Town Hall

On Wednesday, May 16 at noon the Senior Luncheon Club of Royalston and the Royalston Cultural Council will host Patty Carpenter. Patty will perform a concert featuring pieces from her repertoire called "Music for Seniors." Since 1987, Carpenter has performed over 2000 concerts especially for this age group throughout Massachusetts. Tunes include standards from the 1920's to the 1950's, including such favorites as *Stormy Weather*, *Ain't Misbehaving*, *Small Fry*, *All of me*, *Body and Soul*, *Are You Lonesome Tonight*, *Good Night Irene* and many others.

Carpenter has been performing professionally for 25 years. She got her training at the University of Massachusetts where she studied with Archie Shepp, Max Roach and Billy Taylor. She currently performs with a number of bands and has appeared in Boston and New York. She is also often seen at locals clubs and colleges. Carpenter has just released *Under My Hat*, an album with her adult daughter Melissa Shetler, also a vocalist. The CD is an eclectic mix of jazz, blues, R&B, and Latin tunes.

The concert will take place on the first floor of the Royalston Town Hall. Seniors from Orange and Athol are scheduled to share the experience with the Royalston Luncheon Club in what is hoped to be a series of neighborly town collaborations. Anyone interested, senior or not, is invited to attend. The event is free thanks to grants from the Orange Council on Aging, the Royalston Council on Aging and the Royalston Cultural Council.

Betty Woodbury, who chairs both the Senior Luncheon Club and the Royalston Council on Aging, needs to know on Monday, May 14 or sooner who wishes to participate in the luncheon so she can order an adequate number of lunches. Those interested in the performance only do not need to make reservations.

For information call Betty Woodbury at 978-249-9656 or Marie Humblet 978-575-0654.

Ladies' Benevolent Society

LBS President Kim MacPhee and Vyto Andreliunas, both members of the Royalston Zoning Task Force, will present an update on that project at the May 30 meeting of the Society. The program will begin following a brief business meeting that begins at 7:30 p.m. Non-member men and women are invited to attend the program, which is free of charge. Light refreshments will follow. Hosting the program is Rebecca Krause-Hardie of North Fitzwilliam Road. Call 575-1454 for information.

Royalston Historical Society

A sleigh, carriage and gobbler's bench with his tools are items that are housed in a building at the South end of the Common. Many come to get their mail but may not realize that the History of Royalston is also located there. Do you know who a gobbler was?

Try to make a visit to your Historical Society and see what was in use over the last two hundred years. Since we only have hours during the summer, a visit may be arranged with the Curator, John McClure. You may call him at 249-8675. He will be happy to aid you.

Congregational Churches News

The Kids' Bible Club is coming to a conclusion, and will venture to the Barre Cross on Wednesday, May 30 for their final day. The Club meets Wednesdays during the school year at the Royalston Community School, from 3 – 4 p.m. All are welcome. Contact The Parsonage at 978-249-9155 for additional information.

The Congregational Churches' Youth Group is in the process of preparing for the 20 mile Project Bread Walk for Hunger in Boston on Sunday, May 6. All are invited to participate as walkers or sponsors. Adult chaperones willing to wait at checkpoints with those unable to complete the walk are also needed. Donations earned by this endeavor return to food banks in Athol and Orange.

Graduating seniors are invited to a Baccalaureate Planning Party complete with pizza on Wednesday, May 2 at 6 p.m. in The Parsonage. The actual Baccalaureate service will be held on Sunday, June 3 at 9 a.m. in the Second Congregational Church. Please RSVP with the Rev. Ginger Asel at 978-249-9155.



Royalston Fish & Game Club News

The F&G's biggest draw of the year, the annual Walter E. Carlson Memorial Fishing Derby, takes place Sunday, May 20, from 10 a.m. – 1 p.m. at their club, located on Route 68 on the Royalston/Phillipston line. Members' kids through age 14 fish and eat lunch for free; non-members up through age 14 pay a nominal fee for a full three hours of fishing, food and fun! Members' kids may keep two fish for free. Additional fish and fish caught by non-member children may be kept for \$1 a fish. Fishing derby participants will be awarded prizes in many categories. At 1:30 p.m., those 15 and older may enter the Royalston F&G adult fishing derby for a nominal fee. Depending upon the number of entrants, prizes will be awarded in various categories – not to mention lucky anglers can keep and eat their catch! Contact the Club at 978-249-3004 for more details.

June 9: Pancakes, Plants, Silent Auction, Entertainment and Baked Goods on the Common

Saturday June 9 on the Common Come one, Come all. There will be a Pancake Breakfast (\$3 children, \$6 adults) featuring organic pancakes and local maple syrup at Town Hall to benefit the Village School new building project. The library will hold a plant and book sale at the PO. Also, a Silent Auction takes place upstairs in Town Hall; last bids in at 11 a.m. sharp. Paintings, antiques, items for children, hand knit items, services (oil changes, etc.) and Red Sox tickets are just a few of the items up for bid. Outside, a yard sale begins at 8 p.m. Mudpie Productions will be presenting and selling popular musical instruments. Entertainment and activities for children and adults: Tom Ricardi will present live Birds of Prey. The Millers River Morris Men will appear and raise spirits with their leaping to lilting music. 'Alotta Hoopla' will get everyone dancing with hoola hoops and great music.



CONGRATULATIONS AND GOOD NEWS

Got something to crow about? Send it along to the RCN. Zap to chasegos@gis.net or drop at library.

Among the winners for the Skills USA district competition was Royalston's own **Amber McCassie**, who took a silver medal in the commercial baking division. Congratulations.

Don't miss *Fiddler on The Roof* performed by the Athol-Royalston Middle School Drama Club and featuring Royalstons own **Allison Bergquist** as Golde, the stalwart family matriarch and

RCS Talent Show Winners

After several date changes due to whims and weather, the RCS talent show was a hit last April 24. Thank you to Athol High School for the use of its spotlight, the Royalston Cultural Council for the loan of the sound equipment and the Athol YMCA for providing gymnastics mats. Special thanks to Noah Siegel for patiently running the sound equipment as well as all the teachers, staff and parents who helped get this show on the road.



Drum Roll Please... ..

Kindergarten singing and signing "Proud to be an American": *Most Patriotic*

John Knight "Sound of Music" on piano: *Most Confident*

Emma Finnochio singing "That's Amore": *Most Enchanting*

Katie Robinson, Tiffany Lusco, Elizabeth West and Tobey Chase dancing and gymnastics: *Wicked Wicked Entertaining Award*

Olivia Oliviera playing violin *Most Charming*

Amber Simmington and Kayla Lusco clowning, singing, performing comedy: *Hidden Volcano of Talent Award*

Lainey Wright and Chelsea Sanderson, hip hop: *goofiest act*

Improv comedy group: **Brandon Choquette, Isabelle O'Conner, Emma Finocchio, Amber Simmington, Kayla Lusco, Kadaisia and Alyana LaJoie, Schuyler Fortwengler, and Ryan Ganley:**

Most Spontaneous

American Starz Band: **Gabe Jarvenpaa, Devin Bates and Brandon and Nate Tisdale:** *Roll Over Beethoven Award*

Graduates! Let the RCN celebrate with you. List your accomplishments and a brief mention of future plans. Why not a photo too?



Lydia Musco's MFA Thesis Sculpture Show on April 13, 2007 at Boston University. From left to right are: Emily Bundschuh, Lydia Musco, Taj Musco, Maile Shoul. Behind them is one of Lydia's sculptures. Lydia will graduate in May with an MFA in sculpture.

Pawel Lapinski, a business major, was recently named to the Dean's List at the American International College in Springfield.

Miranda Monahan has begun her studies at Mt Holyoke, the oldest institution of higher education for women in the United States. She is the daughter of Richard and Phillipa Monahan and a graduate of Gardner High School, where she played tennis and soccer and was a member of the French Club.

Chalia Euvard and Kelsey Bushee, dancers: *Most Vivacious*

Kadasia and Alyana LaJoie and Nick Powell jump rope act: *Most Energetic*

Kiley LaBlanc and Allisyn Mowrey, Hannah Montana singers: *Show Must Go on Award*

Poetry Club: **Rhiannon Fletcher, Alyana LaJoie, Kassandra Frazier, Ryan Ganley, Haylie Baker, Hannah Bartkus, Isabelle O'Conner, Sarah Arsenault, Autumn Tourigny, Colleen Spear,**

Derek Bates, Olivia Oliviera, Amber Bushee and Katie Robinson: *Most Verse-atile Award*

Dahlia Wright singing: *Most Adorable*

Caleb Chase and Dan Vaccari Band: *Hunkiest Surfer Dudes Award*

Gold Stars Jump Rope Team: **Amber Bushee, Shyla Curtis, Chalia Euvard, Andrea Linnus, Ruth and Mary White, McKenzie Spear, Colleen Demboske, Rebecca Perrault and Kelsey Bushee:** *Best Team Work*

Andrew Demboske, storytelling: *Most original*

Stomp Percussion Group: **Colleen and Andrew Demboske, Josh Roberts, Katie Robinson, Caleb and Tobey Chase, Kadaisia LaJoie, Michele Thompson, Andrea Linnus, Lainey Wright, Shyla Curtis, Chalia Euvard, McKenzie Spear, Amber Bushee, Devin Bates, Felicia Tourigny, John Graham, Tristan Melanson and Cody Nolette:** *Perfect Precision Award*

Mr Grosky: *Best Lyrics Award*

RCS Poetry Club

The RCS Poetry Club enjoyed a lecture on April 5th by Polly Longsworth on Emily Dickinson. Not only did we learn about the poet but also got to see Emily, her doll, dressed as Emily Dickinson would have dressed. After the visit we wrote poems in the style of Emily Dickinson, modelling "Welcome, March" into a "Welcome, April" poem. Polly is a library trustee.

May Day Celebration at the Village School

On Tuesday, May 1, at 9:00 a.m., the Village School in Royalston will host an old fashioned May Day celebration. Children can join in May Pole weaving and dancing. There will be singing of traditional rounds and local musicians. 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 under an hour, just enough time to greet the spring and evade the black flies. The Village School is located in the old brick Raymond School building on Royalston Common. For more information, call 978 249-3505.

Monty Tech News

Interested in a career in Law Enforcement? The Monty Tech guidance office has information on the American Legion's Massachusetts Student Trooper Program which is held in cooperation with the Massachusetts State Police. The program is open to male and female students ages 15 – 17, who are in good academic standing at Monty Tech. The program provides first hand experience as a police officer/trooper. Student troopers will be expected to perform as a police recruit – living and training in the one-week residential training program held at the MSP Academy. Interested students should stop in the guidance office for an application.

Several students are participating in Monty Tech's Relay for Life Team which will walk June 8 and 9 at Mount Wachusett Community College. Residents are encouraged to support these walkers with sponsorships and donations, which will go to the American Cancer Society for services to patients and research.

MWCC: It's not so Hard Being Green

Congratulations to Mount Wachusett Community College; it has received fourth place in the National Wildlife Federation's prestigious "Chill Out" program, which awards agencies for their reductions in greenhouse gas emissions. "The College's conversion of its all-electric campus to bio-mass fuel-based energy has reduced its projected electricity usage nearly in half and has saved on the order of \$2,000,000! Those savings directly benefit future generations in terms of college costs AND health.

Plant beans in late May and make this salad in July

Recipe of the Month

Born in Orange, Darlene Willhite has lived in Royalston with her husband Mark for the last 21 years. She is a former library director at the Phinehas Newton Library and now works at the New Salem Library. Her 4 children keep her very busy and she enjoys running and gardening.



Darlene says, "Being a librarian, I can't go without promoting the book where this recipe originated, *Heart of the Home, Notes from a Vineyard Kitchen* by Susan Branch. Her books are joyful reading and the recipes are great."

Green Bean Salad (Serves four)

- 1 lb fresh green beans
- 3 tbsp olive oil
- 3 tbs fresh lemon juice
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 shallot, minced
- 2 tbsp red pepper, minced
- 1 tbsp fresh dill, minced
- 1/8 tsp dry mustard
- 1/4 tsp salt (optional) Darlene eschews the salt
- 1/8 tsp freshly ground pepper

Wash and trim ends of green beans, but leave them whole. Cook the beans in boiling water about 5 min. (They should still be crisp.) Refresh immediately in cold water; set aside. Combine all remaining ingredients and mix well. Pour over beans and refrigerate 1 hour before serving. Serve cool, but not cold.

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Dam Good Thing

The deluge of mid-April threw a wet blanket of many a kids' school vacation week, but other than the flooded basements ubiquitous to Royalston, no major damage in town resulted. Compare that to the photo below of the Millers River in South Royalston Bridge during the floods that followed the hurricane of March 1936. The difference is the Birch Hill and Tully Dam Projects.

These photos were posted on the web by a distant library patron, John Taylor, who was doing geneology research about his great great grandparents from the 1830s. As the library was able to provide him with a copy of a map that listed the family farm, he reciprocated the favor by providing some information he thought residents might enjoy. Other photos of SoRo and Waterville in flood can be seen at his web-site <http://taylor1142001.net/calcjat/Pix/1936 Flood/RoyalstonFlood19360001.jpeg>



Wildlife Sightings

The Boucher family on Jolly Rd. had a visit from a **cow moose** over the April 14-15 weekend. She came early Saturday morning for breakfast (eating the apple tree branches) and lingered for about an hour. She came back later in the day, laid down in the yard for a nap, and stayed for supper. She was so close to the house she was looking in the bay window into the kitchen. On Sunday morning, she was back. When she left, she was walking down Dickley Road. This moose is being monitored as she has a white collar and a box under her neck.



Ted Neale had a **cow moose** amble through his garden around 9 a.m. on April 24.

Melanie Mangum spotted a **coyote** crossing the road on Rt. 68 right before the Harrington Farm at 4:30 in the afternoon, so she got a good look at it before it sauntered off into the woods.

On South Royalston Rd, Millie Poor heard noise on her porch late one evening and upon turning on the light and looking out, saw a **bobcat** scampering off the porch and into the night.

John and Stephanie McClure had a **bear** visit in the wee hours of April 22 on NE Fitzwilliam Rd near the Common. It bashed down 2 sections of picket fence and helped itself to the contents of the bird feeders.

Rabies and skunks: Many residents have noticed skunks denning in or around their homes. According to MassWildlife, skunks should be avoided because of the risk of rabies. The state Department of Public Health reports that 135 raccoons, 40 skunks, 34 bats, 12 cats, 1 coyote, and 1 otter tested positive for rabies in 2006. Officials emphasize that keeping vaccinations current on dogs and cats, including indoor cats, is crucial to rabies prevention and that no part of the state is free from the risk of rabies. It recommends critter proofing homes by repairing screens, vents, capping chimneys and other areas where wildlife may gain access. By eliminating both artificial food sources and shelter, the chances of encountering raccoons and skunks around the home and yard will be greatly reduced. If an animal inflicts a bite or scratch, wash the wound thoroughly with soap and water for 15 minutes and call a physician. If possible, capture the suspected animal with care and/or call your local Board of Health (978-249-3617) and Animal Control Officer, Robin Mowrey (249-7694.) Use caution with a pet you suspect may have been in a fight with a wild animal. Handle the pet with gloves and contact a veterinarian. If you find a bat in the house and suspect you or a family member may have been bitten or scratched, capture the animal in a large coffee can and call your doctor and local public health officials. For more information on rabies, visit the DPH website at www.mass.gov/dph/cdc/epii/rabies/rabies.htm

Garden Notes

Larry Siegel

March 27, 58 degrees, and my Spring Training had begun. (This was well after the Red Sox, but I wasn't training in Florida.) I spent an hour or so each of the next six days performing one task or another. I tidied up a couple of perennial flower beds, cut back the canes of the fall bearing raspberries, and sort-of pruned some fruit trees. There was no urgency to any of these other than my desire to get going and limber up a bit.

As the snow receded, I uncovered some vegetables. Some, but not all of the spinach survived. None of the parsley was alive. Frustratingly, I was unable to dig any parsnips from the still frozen ground. Not so Shirley Putney, who was able to extract at least the top half of enough parsnips to provide a meal and bestow upon the Putneys the R.F.P. Award. (Royalston's First Parsnip.) The snowless ground also revealed a yard littered with twigs, in spite of the fact that I've been picking them up at every opportunity. Either I've become more fastidious in my lawn care, or the last couple of winters have shown a significant increase in ice and wind damage.

What followed was a horrific stretch of weather, eighteen consecutive days when the thermometer failed to reach 50 degrees. (Fifty? It would be ten days before we experienced 40 degrees.) The extra blanket returned to the bed. Winter coats were retrieved from the closets. With the hoses frozen under ice and snow, water once again reached the cows via buckets. Goodbye rakes; hello snow shovels. To add insult to injury (injury to insult?), I lost my two warmest pairs of gloves, an in-my-face reminder of all that was wrong with my world at that time.

If March 27th was the start of Spring Training, April 20th was the season opener. I spent the better part of the day with either a rake, hoe, shovel or pruner in hand. Strawberries were uncovered and general maintenance performed throughout. My body, one year older than last year's model, reacted accordingly, but having taken advantage of the balmy days of November and December to complete many April tasks, I was not unduly burdened by the delayed start. By the last week of April, peas, shallots and parsnips will be planted. This is the latest I've ever gotten my first peas in the ground.

After thirty years in Royalston, a pattern has become established in my garden activities. The timing varies from year to year, but the sequence does not. By the 1st of May, I'm searching for asparagus. Soon thereafter, I will set out potatoes, followed by leek and onion seedlings. Before the month closes, parsley, celery, annual flowers, and tomatoes will be transplanted and the first beans seeded. There is still indoor planting: I start the fall brassicas (cabbages, broccoli and cauliflower) at the beginning of the month; corn, pumpkins and gourds maybe ten days later to give them a couple of weeks jump on the season. Most everything else awaits June.

Post Script: At least somebody is paying attention. Buddy Dyer, reading of my celerylessness in last month's column, graciously provided three dozen or so seedlings.

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First Cutting Hay available for \$5/bale. Limited quantities. Delivery can be arranged. Contact Jim Putney at 978-249-7787.

Community Coop

The next orders are due by 5 p.m. Thursday, May 17, and the delivery will arrive the afternoon of Thursday, May 24. Be sure to submit orders to both mbarclay@juno.com and brenput@yahoo.com. The Coop is investigating the financial savings on Woodstove Pellets purchased in quantity (North American; low ash content; one ton pallet loads of 50 x 40 lb bags) which would be purchased through the Coop at no extra cost and delivered to Royalston. If you would be interested, contact Mary Barclay by May 31 with the number of pallets you would consider taking. We will negotiate for a discount based on the estimated tonnage wanted, then take the actual orders from customers once we have a price established.

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