

THE ROYALSTON COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

October 2008



Volume XI, Issue VIII

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

Calendar of Events

October 2 Thursday

3:45 pm **Friends of the Library Meeting**

October 4 Saturday

TBA **105th Annual South Royalston School Reunion**

3 pm - taps **Camp Collier Reunion** - info@campcollier.org

7 - 10 pm **Oktoberfest:** Seasonal samplings from local breweries, satisfying German appetizers and desserts, and happy, feet-moving music from Melanie and the Blue Shots all included in each \$20 ticket. Held at Ellinwood Country Club. Benefits the Athol-Royalston Education Foundation, which funds enrichment projects outside the budget in our local public schools. Call Beth Gospodarek (249-0358) or Melanie Mangum (248- 2094) for tix.

Eid al Fitr Celebration of the end of Ramadan begins at sunset

October 8 Wednesday

noon **Early dismissal** in the ARRSD elementary schools

sunset **Yom Kippur** begins



October 13 Monday **Columbus Day** observed

October 14 Tuesday

4:04 p.m. **Full Harvest Moon**

October 15 Friday

Deadline to register to vote in the November presidential election.

See details in town clerk article p. 3.

Cultural Council Grant Applications Due. (see p. 7) Contact Elizabeth Farnsworth 249- 6771 for more info.

7 pm **Telecommunications meeting** at RCS with representatives of Verizon as well as state and town government. A good chance to voice citizens' concerns regarding local phone lines and internet availability.

October 17 Friday

7 - 9 pm 3rd annual **Halloween Dance** at the Royalston Community School with DJ Dante Divoll. Kids and adults wear costumes and cut some rug. RCS alumni encouraged to attend. \$3/person. Max \$10/family. Benefits PTG and Nature's Classroom funds.

October 19 Sunday

2 pm **Trip to the Royalston Beryl Mine.** (Meet at the library on the common at 1:45 and carpool to arrive near the mine at 2 pm.) Come prepared for a walk in the woods and bring rock hammers, safety glasses and collecting containers if possible. Call the library 978-249-3572 for more info. No rain date.

October 20 Monday

6:30 - 9 pm **Career Awareness Night**, the annual Monty Tech open house which includes an ice cream social, a car show, and the opportunity to speak with administrators, faculty and students

7 p.m. **Trustee Meeting** at the library.

October 21 Tuesday

Predawn **Orionid Meteor Shower** with a fair number (about 25/ hour) of shooting stars from the tail of Halley's Comet. Look to the southern skies between now and tomorrow.

October 22 Wednesday

7 pm **Community Preservation Act Information Meeting** hosted by the Open Space Committee in Whitney Hall , South Royalston

8 pm **Ladies Benevolent Society Annual Memorial Piano Concert** at the Maples, home of Patience and Werner Bundshuh on the Common. All ages and genders welcome. Refreshments ala la the LBS following; LBS business meeting precedes at 7:30.

October 23 Thursday

7 pm **Route 32 public hearing** at the Royalston Community School hosted by MassHighway to gather input for the project. Chappell Engineering will present the plans. Public encouraged to attend to show support and communicate urgency to MassHighway. Information : (www.mhd.state.ma.us – click on Public Hearings).

October 24 Friday

9:30 am **Performance of Alexander is Not, Not, Not, Not Going to Move by the Theater at the Mount** at the Royalston Community School. Pre-schoolers and other members of the community welcome to join the fun. Funded by the Royalston Academy.

7 pm **Community Preservation Act Information Meeting** hosted by the Open Space Committee at Town Hall on Royalston Common.

October 25 Saturday

5 - 7 pm **Children's Halloween Party** sponsored by the Royalston Police Dept. at the Town Hall.

October 28 Tuesday

7:14 p.m. **New Beaver Moon**



October 31 Friday

5- 8 pm Town trick or treating hours

Halloween

November 4 Tuesday

Presidential Election Day

Board of Selectmen's Corner

Andy West, Selectman

Route 32 Update: The Route 32 public hearing will be Thursday, October 23, 2008 at 7:00 P.M. at the Royalston Community School. The hearing was rescheduled from the previously published date due to conflicts. This public hearing will be hosted by MassHighway to gather input for the project. Our design firm Chappell Engineering will be on hand to present the plans. This is an important meeting to show public support for the project and to communicate urgency to MassHighway. Information about the hearing can be found at its website (www.mhd.state.ma.us – click on Public Hearings).

Fire Dept Policies: The Board of Selectmen has been working with the Fire Department on departmental policies. Chief Keith Newton and his officers have developed a new set of comprehensive policies documenting standards for department response and performance. We would like to compliment the officers on creating a thorough, complete, and professional set of policies.

Police Dept Policies : The Board will be working with Police Chief Curtis Deveneau to review his departmental policies. Over twenty policies have been in place for many years. These deal with standards of officer performance and departmental operations.

Financial Workshop: On Wednesday, October 1, the Board of Selectmen, Assessors, Treasurer, Accountant, and other town departments will participate in a course on Town government finances given by the Mass. Department of Revenue (DOR). The workshop is open to the public and will be at the Town Hall. It will be a primer on municipal finances. This course is a precursor to a full financial review, in cooperation with DOR, to be held in the spring. Note: This is a course with a defined curriculum, not a hearing.

Accessibility Planning: The Board of Selectmen is reviewing the Royalston Accessibility Plan in anticipation of possible legislative funding. The plan details changes needed to municipal buildings to remove barriers for people with disabilities. The Town has been unable to enact many of the aspects of the plan previously due to lack of funding. Selectmen were notified earlier this month by legislators of up to \$300,000 earmarked for Royalston. The Board and other departments are reviewing the plan to prioritize what items can be funded with the money.

Royalston Phone Service: The Board will be hosting a public meeting to gather input about the condition of phone service in town. Selectmen have received numerous complaints about phone service. The meeting will be held Wednesday, October 15, 2008 at 7:00 pm at the Royalston Community School. Information and complaint petitions/forms are available at the Country Store, Post Office, Town Hall, library and selectmen's web-site. We will bring these public comments to Verizon for resolution. Now is your chance to be heard.

Town Hall WiFi: The Town Hall now has Wireless Internet capability. The dining area and upstairs hall are available for telecommuters and surfers Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday 8am-1pm, and Wednesday 8am-12pm. Please be aware that the Senior Lunch Program uses the dining area on Wednesday mornings. The WiFi also works outside the building. (There is also continued public access to WiFi in and around the Phinehas Newton Library on the Common.)

Three Practical Regional Workshops

All will be held at Athol Town Hall (584 Main St) and are intended for all interested residents of Royalston, Athol, Petersham, and Phillipston. Call 888-978-6261, the Central Mass. Home Ownership Center, for more info on any of these workshops. Flyers for each of the workshops are available on the aselectmen's web-site. A certificate-based **first time homebuyers class** will be held on Mon., October 20 or Thurs., October 30 from 6:30 - 8:30 pm. and continue Nov. 3,5 and 6 from 6 - 9 pm. This course is required by many financial institutions and answers questions like: How does this home buying process work? Am I financially prepared? and Where do I start? The \$45 fee covers all books and handouts; scholarships available.

A one-part free workshop on reducing energy/heating costs that explains energy audits, energy assistance programs and weatherization will be on Tuesday, October 21 from 5:30 - 8:30 pm.

Lastly, a free 4-part **personal budgeting class** for those challenged by high credit card debt, having trouble paying bills and homeowners worried about delinquency or foreclosure will be held from 5:30-7:30 pm on Nov.10, 17 and 24 as well as Dec. 1. Light dinner and free childcare will be provided.

Royalston Community Post Office Grand Opening

The Royalston Community Post Office (RCPO) recently held a Grand Opening and ribbon cutting ceremony to mark the recent change to Town management of the Postal contract. Present for the ceremony were (L-R) Andrew West, Selectman, Janice Draper, Post Office Manager, Jon Hardie, Selectman, Pamela Caranfa, former contract owner. Holding the ribbon are Samantha and Benjamin West. Selectmen also presented Ms. Caranfa an appreciation award for her service to the community and help during the transition. The RCPO is operated by a contract between the Town of Royalston and the United States Postal Service. The Community Post Office offers postage, overnight and standard mail services, PO boxes, and money orders. It is open mornings, six days a week, Monday through Saturday.



L-R: Samantha West, Andy West, Janice Draper, Jon Hardie, Pam Caranfa and Ben West.

November 4 - Get Out and Vote

Check Your Registrartion or Register to Vote Now

Melanie Mangum, town clerk

978-249-0493

The last day to register to vote for the Presidential Election in November is Wednesday, October 15. Voter registration hours will be held at Whitney Hall in the Clerk's Office from 2-4 p.m, and 7-8 p.m. Alternatively, register to vote during the Clerk's office hours before October 15. Mail-in voter registration cards will also be available at Town Hall, the Post Office, and the Royalston Country Store. Mail-in registrations MUST be postmarked by October 15.

Now is the time to verify that you are registered to vote. If you regularly vote in town/state elections or town meetings, you won't need to check your registration. However, the following are a few situations that could indicate that your voter registration is in question:

*Have you moved into town since you last voted in a Presidential election? Your voter registration DOES NOT automatically transfer with your move. You must register to vote whenever you move into a new community. If you can't remember if you have ever registered to vote in Royalston, please check before October 15!

*Did you register to vote at the Registry of Motor Vehicles but DID NOT receive a confirmation notice from the Town Clerk's Office? Please check that you are registered if you did not receive confirmation from the Clerk.

*Did you return your annual census form this year, or maybe you can't remember whether you filled it out or not? If you are a voter, and did not respond to census mailings, you will have been designated an "inactive voter". This means that, on election day, you will be able to vote, but you will have to check in with the election warden first, fill out a form, and show proof of residence. This is a requirement of state election law. After not voting for a period of two federal elections, your voter registration will be deleted if you have also never returned a census form. Again, this is a requirement of state law.

If you've never registered to vote or never received a census form – please call/visit the Town Clerk so the database can be updated and you can be registered – before October 15! Don't be shy to leave a message if I'm not in the office – I will be happy to return calls, send out voter registration applications - whatever it takes to get out the vote!

Remember – October 15 is the deadline to register to vote. After October 15, new registrants will not be able to vote in the Presidential Election.

Conservation Commission Has Seat to Fill

The Royalston Conservation Commission is still looking for an individual to fill a vacancy on its board. The meetings are the 2nd Tuesdays of the month at Town Hall. Please call George Northrop for more information, 978-249-4407.

Town Halloween Party on Sat. 10/25;

5 - 7 pm

For a long long time, the town has been sponsoring an annual Halloween party. For a generation, that party has been facilitated by the police department; in particular, the hard work and patience of sisters Laurie Deveneau and Nancy Melbourne. Costumed kids of all ages are welcome for games, prizes and a spook walk at this free event.

(Donations at the door of bags of individual sized wrapped candy help defray costs.) Adult and teen help is always needed. Please call the Deveneaus to volunteer: 978 - 249-5807.



Board of Health News

PAINT COLLECTION:

This is a reminder that we will stop collecting paint for the year on October 11th. We will resume collection in May. Please adjust accordingly.

REUSABLE AREA:

Effective immediately, we will no longer accept electrical appliances of any kind in the reusable area. This includes TV's, monitors, computers, vacuum cleaners, radios etc. We can accept these items for a fee. The reason for this is people are leaving items that do not work or need a part. We are not a repair shop and we cannot confirm an item works. As a result, we, you, the town ends up footing the bill for these supposed working items. Please, only items that are not broken, don't need to be plugged in, and actually are reusable, should go in the reuse area. If you have any questions see Tony, transfer station manager for confirmation.

NEW SIGNS:

We will have some new signage soon indicating when a roll off container should not be used. The signs say: "DO NOT DUMP INTO THIS CONTAINER" When you see this sign in front of a roll off, please do not dump into that container. This is because either it is full or we do not want to use it at this time. If you are unsure what container is for what, please ask one of the attendants.

Free Legal Advice for Veterans

On Thursday, October 16th from 5:30-7:30 p.m. ONLY at 617-338-0619, the Massachusetts Bar Association will offer free legal advice for veterans who have legal questions involving access to benefits, family issues, employment concerns, landlord/tenant matters, and other legal issues through the Dial-A-Lawyer service.

Phinehas S. Newton Library News

Kathy Morris, Library Director

Trustees: Polly Longworth, Lisa Freden, Barbara Guiney

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

Saturdays: 9:00am - 12:noon

978-249-3572 www.royalstonlibrary.org

Thank you

Marjorie Bassett, Ashley Sawyer, Doreen Sawyer, Sonja Vaccari for books

Gus Williams and the Plummer family for movie donations

Marcia Charest for magazine subscription

Rita Gates and Marcia Charest for donations of supplies

Molly Bremmer for a book

Recent Donations to the Friends

Nicole Bergevin

Donald and Elvia Richards

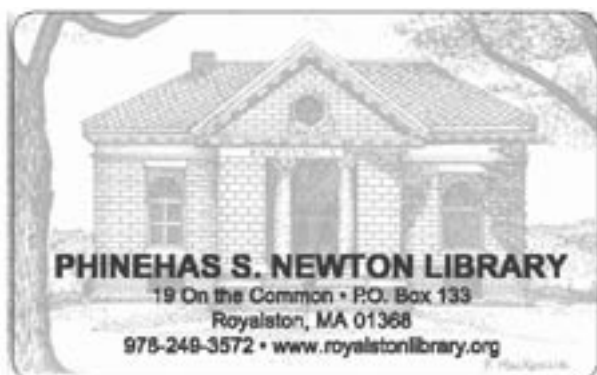
'We Get By With The Help of Our Friends....'

Children's Room Gets a New Sunny Coat of Paint

Thanks to Beth Gospodarek, Maureen Blasco, Tobey Chase, and Lorraine Casinginho for moving books and furniture, prepping the walls, and painting the children's room and to Aaron Richardson and Michael Richardson for moving books and bookcases. While everyone else was out enjoying a beautiful Labor Day, Beth, Maureen, Tobey, Aaron and Mike were moving books, bookcases, and furniture out of the children's room. Then, the scraping and washing began, followed by the priming of the walls. On Wednesday morning, Beth and Lorraine painted the walls and Wednesday night and Thursday morning the same crew moved everything back into sequence just in time to reopen Thursday afternoon. Lorraine donated the paint and Beth even baked scones for the work crew. Come check out how great the room looks.

Library Cards Available

The new bar-coded library cards are available at the library. Active numbers will be held until patrons can be contacted to determine if they want to keep the same number. Each person will have an account where he or she can review what items are checked out, see the status of the items currently checked out, renew items, reserve books, suggest items to purchase, and many other options.



The Library Gets into the Halloween Spirit

The library has many Halloween books, including some great books on making costumes, decorations, and goodies for the holiday. To get in the spirit, bring home some spooky music or maybe just watch a scary movie. There are also not-so-scary books and movies for the younger crowd. Stop by the library and browse the seasonal display.

Trick-or-Treating at the Library

The library will be open for trick-or-treating on Friday, October 31st from 5 - 7 pm.



PreSchool Storyhour's Annual Halloween Party

Come one, come all to the littlest costume party around! On Monday, October 27th at 10:30am, the Library will celebrate Halloween and the arrival of fall with pumpkin decorating, face painting and dressing up. Bring your own costume, or use one at the Library. Trick or treating at the desk and lots of ghostly snacks to go around!

Creepy Stories for Adults at the Library

On Tuesday, October 28th at 7:00 p.m. at the library, Richard Ballon and friends will present 'When the Dead Talk Back' a performance of original creepy stories. This program is most appropriate for adults and young adults 16 and over. Richard Ballon is a playwright and author of *Enough of a Little* and *To Know the All*, a book of poems and monologues. He graduated from University of Massachusetts and then lived for three years in Southeast Asia teaching in Macau and Thailand. It was there that he wrote his first full length play: *In the Name of God*, which was performed to sold out audiences at the UMass Hampden Theater. His work has been performed in Amherst, Northampton, and New York City. Richard believes that the short play is the poem of the theater and the monologue, its lyric. Please join us for holiday refreshments and an evening of chills. This event is sponsored by the Friends of the Phinehas S. Newton Library and funded by a grant from the Royalston Cultural Council.

October Trip to Beryl Hill Mine

By popular demand, the Friends of the Library are organizing a public outing to the Royalston Beryl Mine on Sunday, October 19 at 2 pm. Thanks to the generosity of the owners, the Hall family, all are welcome. Be ready for a half mile walk in the October woods to the open mine site. Bring rock hammers, safety glasses and collection containers. Large pieces of beryl have been found at this site, including the specimen on display at Boston's Museum of Science, but even when the gems are not forthcoming, it's always fun to poke around, hope for treasure, notice the geology and whack at the rocks. Meet at the Phinehas Newton Library on the Common by 1:45 and carpool to the mine for 2 pm. Call the library for more info: 978-249-3572.

Meteorite Expert to Speak at Library



On Friday, November 14, right before the annual Leonid Meteor Showers, Carla Barringer Rabinowitz will be presenting a very cool talk on meteorites at the library. It includes the fascinating story of her grandfather Daniel Moreau Barringer, the discoverer of Arizona's Meteor Crater and the first person to prove the impact of a large body from space on the Earth. There will be video, show and tell and refreshments to augment the evening. Here's a preliminary outline:

1. Three reasons why we might not be here if it weren't for meteorites
The Giant Impact theory (YouTube animation)
The Late Heavy Bombardment and the origin of life
Chicxulub and the extinction of the dinosaurs
2. Carla's personal link to meteorites;
Grandfather Daniel Moreau Barringer's story
Geology of Barringer Meteorite Crater
How the impact theory was finally accepted
What the Crater Company is doing these days
3. More about impact craters.
How many are there?
Types, sizes, ages (with pictures)
How often meteorites hit the Earth
The Tunguska event
How you identify an impact crater, and what landforms are NOT impact craters.
4. What's going to hit us next? What will happen when it does?

Carla says, "I've tried to hit the exciting stuff, and answer the questions most frequently asked. Except for the Chicxulub impact, I think most of it will be new information to the audience." Mark your calendars and plan to attend this out-of-this-world event.

A shooting star is not a star; it's not a star at all;

a shooting star's a meteor that's headed for a fall.

*A shooting star, a meteor, whichever way you like,
the moment that it falls to Earth it's called a meteorite.*

Roger Ticknell, kids' singer-songwriter

Some of the New Books at the Library

Adult Fiction

Barry, Brunonia *The Lace Reader*

Bradford, Barbara Taylor *Being Elizabeth*

Brown, Sandra *Smoke Screen*

Buffett, Jimmy *Swine Not?*

Francis, Dick & Felix *Silks*

Green, Jane *The Beach House*

Hammond, Diane *Hannah's Dream*

Kerouac, Jack *On the Road*

Lessing, Doris *Alfred & Emily*

Olmstead, Robert *Coal Black Horse*

Peters, Elizabeth *The Laughter of Dead Kings*

Proulx, Annie *Fine Just the Way it is: Wyoming Stories 3*

Rand, Ayn *Atlas Shrugged*

Reichs, Kathy *Devil Bones*

Rimington, Stella *Illegal Action*

Shaffer, Mary Ann *The Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Pie Society*

Sittenfeld, Curtis *American Wife*

Stirling, S.M. *The Scourge of God*

Weisberger, Lauren *Chasing Harry Winston*

Wiggs, Susan *Just Breathe*

Adult Non-Fiction

Levin, Diane E. *So Sexy so Soon: The New Sexualized Childhood...*

Pausch, Randy *The Last Lecture*

Seierstad, Asne *The Angel of Grozny*

Resident Recommended Reading

Read any good books lately? Seen any videos you'd recommend? Write a mini-review and pass it on to the RCN.

Lian Cutting says of *The Commoner* by John Schwartz, "Don't miss this one. "A slow start, but worth the wait."

Mary C. Barclay finds Robin Cook's medical mystery, *Crisis* (Aug., 2006 Putnam Publishing) an excellent read that delves into the topic of concierge medicine, its benefits and drawbacks surrounding doctors who agree, for a fee, to treat a limited number of patients. This is the sixth book that centers on forensic pathologists Dr. Jack Stapleton and his love interest, Dr. Laurie Montgomery. Their relationship has persevered as Dr. Jack has grieved the tragic loss of his first wife and their children, and is again tested as result of the *Crisis* in which they become involved.

Be an Informed Voter -

Official Voting Resources at your Library

The Official Massachusetts Information for Voters, with information on the three questions on the ballot, offices on the ballot, and other voter information, is available at the library.

The Library Web-Site:

A local cyber-link to your town and your world

It seems unbelievable, but the library web-site had 170,475 hits last fiscal year. The web-site, www.royalstonlibrary.org, offers information on library resources and events, links to academic data-bases, local photos as well as the complete archive of the Royalston Community Newsletter. In fact, due to the vagaries of volunteer labor, printing time, and snail mail, a monthly issue of the RCN is often available on-line via this site well before the mail is delivered. Many thanks to Jeff Mangum for developing the site and keeping it current.

South Royalston General Store Announces Fall Dinner Specials - good food; good prices

Busy? Pick up supper on your way home. In addition to its popular breakfast all day, subs, pizza and pasta, the Royalston General Store is now offering home-made soups, stews and chowders as well as full course meals like pork loin, roast turkey, chicken and meatloaf to get customers through the approaching dark months. Chefs are Barb Richardson and Pat Bushee. Eat in or take out. The most expensive thing on the menu is \$7.50 and cup of chili only runs a few bucks. Credit cards accepted. The offerings change daily, but diners can't go wrong as all are delicious. Call ahead to find out the daily specials or place an order 978-249-9798.

While dining at the store, don't forget to shop. The general store carries grocery staples like milk, beer, or cat food as well as extras like wine, liquor and lottery tickets. It also has an interesting line of local products, perfect for holiday giving, including Royalston hoodies, t-shirts, and magnets, Doane's Hill maple syrup, Betty Cooke's hand crocheted dish towels and Friends of the Library local artist note cards.

Sign up now at the store to join the deer pools for 2008. For \$5, each hunter has a chance of winning all the money contributed to the pool if he/ she brings in the heaviest deer. There are separate pools for archery, shotgun and black powder seasons.

Shop locally; eat locally. Your Royalston General Store, conveniently located in the middle of nowhere.



Pick up supper on your way home. The South Royalston General Store offers full course meals for under \$7.50 as well as soups and stews to eat in or take out.

Luncheon Club and COA

The Town Luncheon Club continues to meet on Wednesdays at 11:30 in the Town Hall. Contact Betty Woodbury at 978-249-9656 by the Monday prior. The suggested donation for the meal is \$2/ senior and \$2.50 for up-and-coming seniors. Local grocery stores and farmers often provide additional baked goods and produce, all free for the taking!

Ladies Benevolent Society Annual Memorial Piano Concert

Deb Nunes: pianist, lady

This year's annual LBS Memorial Piano Concert will be held on Wednesday evening, October 22nd, beginning at 8 p.m. in the lovely ballroom at the Maples, hosted by the ever gracious Patience and Werner Bundschuh.



Becoming a tradition, the original concert was held the fall after Maxine Willcox passed away to celebrate her life and her continuous support of the arts in Royalston, and was called the Maxine Willcox Memorial Concert. The following year, with the loss of beloved member Pat Poor, the name was changed to the Memorial Piano Concert to encompass and honor any and all LBS members who were no longer with us.

Under the direction of LBS member Deb Nunes, local musicians will perform on the grand piano which once belonged to Royalston benefactrix, founder of the Royalston Academy, Katherine Cole. Elizabeth and Benjamin West will be performing, along with Rene Lake, just off the plane from several fabulous honeymoon weeks in Italy. Pianist Deb Nunes will play, and will be joined with classical guitarist Carl Kamp for several selections. As always, incredibly scrumptious desserts will be offered following the concert by the Ladies. **This concert is 100% free and all the public is invited. You don't have to be a ladie to attend!**

The **LBS business** meeting will precede the concert at 7:30 to finalize plans for our upcoming famous fundraising events:

Braised Beef Dinner - November 15

Giant Election Day Bake Sale, with goodies at both precinct voting sites, including stews, chili, casseroles and quiche, and of course, the usual delectable delights like cookies, cakes and candies.

Donations to the Athol-Orange Family Inn are still being accepted. To help, place donations of paper goods, non-perishable food or disposable diapers in the "helping hands" boxes at the post office or country store. In particular the LBS, would like to raise money towards the inn's request for a new vacuum cleaner. Please make checks out to the LBS and address to Kristen West (PO Box 35/ Royalston 01368)

Royalston Community Coop

October orders should be entered on-line prior to 5 p.m. on Thursday, October 2. If the minimum order is met, delivery will be the following Thursday, October 9. Anyone interested in promoting their local agricultural products can contact Mary Barclay at 978-249-2598 or mbarclay@juno.com .



CONGRATULATIONS AND GOOD NEWS

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

Joel Richford, son of **Mr. and Mrs. Donald W. Richford**, formerly of Royalston and **Kristen Bissonnette**, daughter of **Mr. and Mrs. David**

R. Bissonnette Sr. of Leominster, were married on July 19th 2008. They were joined by many family and friends for their special day. The ceremony was held at the gazebo behind the Fraternal Order Of The Eagles #477 in Leominster MA, and the reception was held inside the hall. Smiles, tears of joy, and fun was had by all. The dancing and festivities carried into the night with the help of the DJ, Kevin Jacques, who did an amazing job! The newlyweds took a cruise to Canada for their honeymoon and are now back at their home in Royalston.

Other Rumors of Recent Nuptials with a Royalston Ring...

Congratulations to Tom Musco, Jess Guiney, Laura Freden and RCS music teacher Erin Richman. All got married over the summer. *ed. note: Many readers turn first to the wedding and birth announcements in the RCN. Hometown readers, (not to mention fond neighbors, curious gossips and obiquitous busybodies,) find the announcements some of the most interesting and relevant information in this newsletter. Got milestones? We need them at the RCN.*

Congratulations to **Jim and Janice Draper** of Prospect Hill Rd on the birth of a new great-grandchild Aaron Jack Horrigan, 7 pounds, 3 oz. on Sept. 8, 2008.

Bailey Fortwengler celebrated her 4th birthday Sunday the 14th in Springfield Mass. with about 45 friends and family.

Royalston Cultural Council Seeks Proposals for Artists and Programs

The Royalston Cultural Council announces that \$4,300 in funds are available for artists, craftspeople, naturalists, and educators! Applications are due October 15, 2008, and can be downloaded directly from the Massachusetts Cultural Council website at: <http://www.massculturalcouncil.org/programs/lccgrants.html>. Contact Elizabeth Farnsworth (249-6771, efarnsw@mtholyoke.edu) or Lorraine Casinghino (249-5151, lorrainecasi@gmail.com) for more information. ALSO, stay tuned for upcoming announcements about our 2008-2009 Open Mic season! The season opener will be November 15 after the Ladies Benevolent Society Braised Beef supper.

“New England by Land and Sea”

A Photo Exhibit by Paul Rezendes

at the Petersham Craft Center, Petersham, MA

September 21 – October 30, 2008

Gallery hours: Wednesday – Sunday 12:00 noon - 4:00pm
978 724-3415

Recipe of the Month- part 1

Dadje Scott submitted this month's recipe for Plum Cake, an Eastern European seasonal favorite, a variation of which is served up each year at AREF's Oktoberfest.

She writes, “My husband and I moved two years ago from Franklin, Mass. to a log home we built on Rt. 32 (innocents that we were). We're neighbors of Ralph and Joy Cutter, a blessing. We are both retired clergy, and members of Memorial Congregational Church in Baldwinville, where an old friend is pastor. Mike is working part time as an interim pastor in Dublin, NH. I'm a volunteer at the House of Peace and Education in Gardner, and a very amateur but dedicated gardner who absolutely loves Larry Siegel's column!”

Plum Cake (using the small purple plums (prunes) that are available only in very late summer/fall)

- 1 C. flour
- 2 tsp. baking powder
- 1 tbsp. sugar
- 1/4 tsp. salt
- 1 egg
- 2/3 C. milk
- 4 Tbsp. butter/margarine
- plums (maybe 25-35), washed, halved and pitted

Sift flour, baking powder, sugar and salt together. Cut butter in (as in pie crust). Mix well-beaten egg and milk, and add to the flour/butter mixture. Blend well, by hand. Spread mixture in a 9x13 greased cake pan (you can use a cake roll pan, but crust will be very thin). Arrange plum halves as close together as possible. Sprinkle with 1/3 C. of sugar. Bake in 350 degree oven until lightly browned (about 30 minutes).

Mix custard..

- 1 egg
- 1 Tbsp. sugar
- 2 Tbsp. milk

Pour over plums. Bake 5 minutes until custard sets.



Congratulations! It's October and you live in Royalston. Enjoy.

Athol High School News:

Upcoming Theater Productions

The Athol High School Drama Club, under the direction of Christopher Dawson and Laura Robinson, will be presenting the play *The Werewolf's Curse* on Friday, November 7 and Saturday, November 8, 2008 from 7 PM to 9 PM in Anzaldi auditorium at the high school. Tickets are by donation. The musical *Oliver* is scheduled for March 20 and March 21, 2009.

Monty Tech Career Awareness Night

If you've ever been curious about Monty Tech, Monday, October 20 is your chance to answer that curiosity! Career Awareness Night, from 6:30 – 9 p.m., is the annual open house which includes an ice cream social, a car show, and the opportunity to speak with administrators, faculty and staff, as well as students in all academic and vocational areas. Fifth and sixth graders who might consider attending Monty Tech should definitely go to find out how their performance over the next two and a half years will affect their eligibility. Taxpayers who want to see where their education dollars are going should see how Monty Tech invests those dollars. Adults considering enhancing their education or changing careers should see what opportunities Monty Tech offers.

In addition to all of that, check out the beautiful re-do of the lobby – with predominantly student labor – using the interior design by Royalston's own Gia Smith! The first major overhaul of the entryway in the school's history has blended the old with the new for an elegant look which should last for another thirty plus years!

RCS PTG Seeks Scrimpers and Savers

As usual, the Parent Teacher Group at the Royalston Community School are participating in a variety of programs in which big companies give money to schools. The amounts seem small, but they add up over time. The school buys playground equipment, computer software or other extras with these funds. Therefore, the PTG encourages parents and community members to drop off these items at the school:

1. Hannaford dollars
2. Used printer cartridges and discarded cell phones
3. Campbell Soup labels
4. Box Tops for Education

Certainly, the PTG doesn't encourage residents to shop for any items that they wouldn't usually buy just to take advantage of these promotions, but if the items are something in the shopping cart anyway, send the redeemable scrips and such to RCS.

Village School Offerings

After School Program for Royalston children

If you are looking for after school care, the Village School has an After School Program from 3 to 5:30 on school days. Children can take the RCS school bus and get dropped off at the Village School on the common. The cost is \$6 an hour. There is homework help, supervised outdoor play, and lots of arts and crafts, run by Royalston resident, Lynn Anair. To sign up, call the school at 249-3505.

Dean's Beans Coffee You can get yours delivered, fresh, once a month to the Village School, whole beans or ground. You can view the order form at www.villageschool.to There are lots of varieties. Prices are around \$7.50 a pound

What's happening at the Village School

All of the students and staff participated in harvesting the garden, under the Harvest Moon. Younger children were paired with older buddies, digging potatoes, and picking tomatoes, cucumbers, beans, corn, pumpkins, beets and carrots. A few days later, the school population enjoyed a mid morning snack of roasted potatoes from the harvest.

It's field trip time! We are taking advantage of the weather. Classes are climbing Tully Mountain, visiting Sturbridge Village, visiting Sweetwater Farm in Petersham, going to Red Apple Farm, and climbing Jacobs Hill. Most science classes are taking place outside, investigating the local flora and fauna.

Upcoming events at the Village School

Autumn Lantern Walk Celebration for Families Friday, November 7

The Village School hosts the annual Autumn Lantern Walk on Friday, November 7th. The public is invited to participate in this seasonal celebration. The evening starts at 5:00 p.m. at the school (the old Raymond School building) with a gathering in the dark for a bonfire, stories, and songs. Everyone then joins in a procession on Royalston Common to the Town Hall, singing and carrying glowing homemade lanterns. Bring a lantern! A community pot luck Italian supper at the Town Hall at 6:00 p.m. will be followed by a family contra dance with the No Name Band, beginning around 6:30 p.m. All over Europe, children participate in lantern walks to mark the seasonal transition in nature from light and warmth to darkness and dormancy. The Village School has adopted this custom with songs, stories, and handmade lanterns that bring light in the darkness. The contra dance will be called, and children of all ages will find it easy to join in the dances. Donations are suggested of \$5 per adult, \$2 per child, or \$10 per family.

Open House Saturday November 15 10 a.m. to 12 noon.

Come meet the teachers, talk with parents, meet alumni, see the classrooms, find out about our unique curriculum and get your questions answered! Bring your children; they will enjoy activities in the classrooms just for them. Preschool is already filling up for next year.

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Rich DeMar

Military News

Mary C. Barclay

Daughter Caitlin was the first to tell us about the Adopt-a-Platoon program, a volunteer program where individuals, families or groups of people agree to either become the pen pal of or adopt an individual or group of military personnel. Long story short, the Barclay family adopted Marvin the Medic, who will return home to his wife and teenaged children in November. It has been an enjoyable and rewarding experience for us, and Marvin has expressed his appreciation on numerous occasions. Once Marvin's safely home, I will adopt another individual – and hope others will check out the web site and consider doing the same. Click on www.adoptaplatoon.org for all the details. (And check out the recipe Marvin, now an enthusiastic reader of the RCN, has supplied!)



KP Duty - Recipe of the Month 2

This is a perfect, cold weather recipe is from the Barclay family's adopted Army pen pal who is coming down the homestretch of his 15 month deployment. The 20 year Army veteran has become quite a fan of the RCN, often asking for details on various articles and ads – his boss is quite curious about what happened to the two ducks that were free to a good home! Marvin's particularly fond of "Wildlife Sightings" and Larry Siegel's "Garden Notes." Of the September issue, Marvin said, "The Octoberfest really caught my attention. My family and I lived in Germany for three years...we even got to go to the "real" Octoberfest in Munich."

Marvin the Medic's White Chicken Chili

Ingredients:

- Two pounds chicken breast with skin and bones
- Four cans white beans (ie: Bush's Great Northern)
- One pound of white cheese (mozzarella or jack best; swiss, okay)
- 16 oz. broth from cooked chicken
- 16 oz sour cream
- 8 oz chopped green chilis
- one medium white onion
- 2-4 cloves of fresh garlic
- ground cumin
- red pepper powder
- 3 tblsp. Olive oil

Cook the chicken in a pot of water on the stove. Add some red pepper powder while it is cooking. Once the chicken is done, drain off liquid, saving 16 oz. Let the chicken cool, then remove skin and de-bone. Cut into bite sized pieces. While the chicken is cooking, get out that handy-dandy crock pot and turn it on. If not, a nice big pot on the stove will work, too. Now cut the onion, and sauté in the olive oil along with garlic, chili peppers and cumin. Open the can of beans and drain the juice, and put in Crock Pot. Add the cheese to the Crock Pot. If you want it to melt quicker, cut the cheese. Add the bite-sized chicken pieces to the Crock Pot, along with the sauteed onion, garlic and chili pepper mixture. Stir in the sour cream. Add more red pepper powder if spicier is better.

Marvin's daughter likes to thicken the mixture (presumably with more cheese) and use it as a dip for chips.

Birch Hill Rangers Snowmobile Club

The Birch Hill Rangers Snowmobile Club meets from September thru April at the Royalston Fish & Game Club at 7:30 p.m. Meetings for the 2008-2009 season are scheduled for Oct. 8, Nov. 19, Dec 17, Jan 21, Feb 18, Mar 18 & April 15th. Club officers are President - Roy Smith, Vice President - Scott Caisse, Secretary - Marsha Charest & Treasurer - Donna Smith. SAM (Snowmobile Association of Massachusetts) delegates are Michael Caisse and Roy Smith.


The club meets to discuss trail improvements and grooming. It not only maintain trails for snowmobilers but welcome skiers, snowshoers, dog sleds and hikers to share our trails this winter. New members are always welcome. Royalston Fish & Game Club memberships along with SAM stickers are available at each meeting.

Royalston Emergency Management Agency

Jim Barclay, EMD 978-249-2904

As hurricane season comes to a close over the next month, damaging winds – which can take out phone lines, power lines and, subsequently, make a number of tasks far more difficult than normal – are still possible. On the heels of hurricane season is winter, and again, potential for phone and power outages. Check what supplies you already have on hand for just such an occasion, and over the next month, add a few more necessities or conveniences as you do your regular shopping:

A three day to one week supply of necessities is a good idea. A gallon of bottled water per person per day is recommended for those whose water is pumped with electricity. Nonperishable foods such as peanut butter and crackers, canned goods (be sure to have a manual opener!) and dried fruits and nuts are all nutritious foods that keep well. Some items will be specific to certain families, like medications, infant care items and pet food. Every family should have disposable plates, cups and utensils, battery operated clocks and non-electric lighting on hand. Visit www.ready.gov BEFORE you lose power and step through the simple process of preparing for power outages. With a little advance preparation, power outages are generally an inconvenience rather than an emergency. With confidence in advance preparations and the right attitude, a power outage can even be an exciting, and enjoyable family or neighborhood adventure.



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Wildlife Sightings

John McLure saw a bear on RT 68 between Stockwell Rd and Harrington Farm on September 15. It's time to bring in the bird feeders.



Garden Notes

September 21, 2008

Larry Siegel

The light frosts of the last few mornings slipped by, though I suspect they may have settled in some of the town's low-lying areas. It is far easier for me to endure those bone chilling winter winds with the knowledge that I have escaped the first fall freeze. It is just as well: unlike many of you whose tomatoes are a distant memory, mine are just now in full production. With two bean plantings still in flower, a third of the corn still to be picked, and winter squash still to mature, I need a couple more frost-free weeks.

While on the subject of weather (a subject I am often on), I did not find myself complaining (as I am wont to do) about the summer heat. Yes, there was a hot stretch in mid-July, but none since. Admittedly I reside up here on the hill and my minimum-maximum thermometer only half works (the minimum half), but since then, I have recorded only a couple of days in excess of 80°. My personal heat indicator, the number of pajama-less nights, could not have exceeded a handful.

Bug banter: In the July newsletter I gloated about the absence of potato beetles. They were not absent, simply late in arriving. And, once arrived, they did not depart. Usually, they have disappeared by the onset of August. This year, those few potato plants remaining in the ground three weeks later were rife with adults, larva, eggs even. Resourceful creatures. Previously, Japanese beetles were present in such small numbers that I was hardly aware of them. Now, there are enough for me to observe their consumption of an assortment of leaves, mostly from favored annual flowers (though they seem to have an attachment to the raspberry patch as well). I seem unable to rid myself of flea beetles and cucumber beetles and have an increasing need for that grotesque-appearing, spun-polyester row cover. To the uninitiated, even the initiated, the tomato hornworm is a fearsome thing. When finally grown it is as long and round as my pinky. (I have a healthy-sized pinky.) They strip the leaves from atop the tomato plants and at first sight it appears that deer have grazed the plants. Some gardens in town have many; some have none. I have many. And, finally, there were the bugs that fed off me rather than my plants. I, who shrug off mosquitoes and deer flies, who treat blackflies as a gathering of little fellows keeping me company, got my come-uppance with no-see-ums. They were particularly bothersome around sunrise and sunset, when I was most likely to be in the garden. My eyes and ears were favorite targets and I was most troubled by the fact that I could not see 'um.

I find myself increasingly grooming my plants. (There is an irony here since I'm an ungroomed sort of guy.) I always provide myself some practical reason for the exercise. The chickens devour old leaves from the brassicas, the beets, and the chard. By keeping basil from flowering, I can bring new-growth stems to the market each week. Pulling off the blighted leaves of the tomatoes opens up the fruit for ripening. I've had entire rows of beans mold to extinction; by pulling off leaves I've been fairly successful in preventing that. Practical reasons notwithstanding, there is simply an underlying desire on my part to fuss with the plants. It is not for me to reason why.

The column must draw to a close. There is a cabbage plant that needs grooming.

Rain Gardens

Join members of the North Quabbin Garden Club on Thursday, October 16, 2008 at 7 p.m. at the Millers River Environmental Center at 100 Main Street in Athol for an evening of give and take, questions and answers and tips to share about gardening. Successes and failures will be addressed. An affiliate of the Millers River Environmental Center in Athol, the North Quabbin Garden Club formed in 2006 to encourage interest in all phases of home gardening. With efforts to promote better horticultural practices and foster civic beauty, emphasis is placed on use of native plants, organic gardening, and the conservation of natural resources. Monthly meetings are usually held on the third Thursday evening of each month featuring informative speakers or workshop sessions. Members are currently working on a wildlife habitat garden at the Millers River Environmental Center and planning their annual spring sale of perennial plants and specialty items. Guests and new members are always welcome, so join us this month and learn something new about gardening. Meetings are free to members and guests are asked for a \$5 donation.

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