

# THE ROYALSTON COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

February 2009



Volume XII, Issue I

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

## Calendar of Events

February 2 Monday

**Groundhog Day**

February 4 Wednesday

7 p.m. **Monty Tech SchoolCom meets**

February 5 Thursday

3:30 pm **Friends of the Library meeting.** All welcome.

February 6 Friday

7 - 10 pm **Open Mic** at Town Hall. Come to listen or to take the stage. Free admission. Home-made dinner fare and goodies available for purchase. Sponsored by the Cultural Council.

February 7 Saturday

10 a.m. - noon **Village School Open House**

February 9 Monday

**Full Snow Moon**

February 11 Wednesday

11 a.m. - noon **Blood Sugar and Blood Pressure Clinics** at Town Hall: all ages, no charge; walk-ins

February 12 Thursday

noon **Early dismissal** at RCS. Lunch served.  
5:30 - 6:30 pm **Lasagne supper** to benefit 5th-6th grade trips to Natures classroom at RCS. Kids \$5 and adults \$7  
7 pm **All School Zumba Dance/ Fitness Night** at the RCS

February 13 Friday

Close of School **February School Break** Begins

### ***Thank You letter from the Board of Selectmen:***

We would like to tell you about the spirit of Royalston. This is a place where neighbors help neighbors. We heard many stories of neighbors visiting neighbors offering generators, water, and food. This is a place where residents stop to thank the out-of-state workers for helping restore our services. The National Guard was called to some towns to help protect line workers from angry residents.

*We would like to thank those whose efforts we know. We know it does not include all the good will and energy expended that week.*

-Thank you to Jim Barclay, Emergency Management Director. Jim worked tirelessly coordinating emergency management supplies, setting up the emergency shelter, and providing updates to residents through AM radio.

-Thank you to Fire Chief and DPW supervisor Keith Newton and the members of the Royalston Fire Department and the DPW. Keith proved that he truly can perform two jobs at once. The FD pumped basements, responded to medical calls, transported generators, cleared roads; and at the same time conducted a LifeFlight evacuation - mostly without sleep for the first 36 hours. The DPW sanded, cleared, and plowed without sleep; then came out for a significant snowstorm a couple days later, plowing through an obstacle course.

-Thank you to Police Chief Curtis Deveneau, Sgt Roland Hamel and the other members of the Royalston Police Department who continuously responded to calls, did wellness checks, and transported people and equipment.

February 14 Saturday

**Valentines Day**

February 16 Monday

**Presidents' Day**

George Washington's and Abraham Lincoln's Birthday Observation- Post office and library closed

February 17 Tuesday

no later than 5 pm **Signed nomination papers for annual town election are due** in the Town Clerk's Office

February 20 Friday

1:30 p.m. **Southwick Zoomobile Eco-Ed Program** at Town Hall

February 23 Monday

**Schools reopen** following February Break

February 24 Tuesday

8:35 p.m. **New Worm Moon**

**Mardi Gras; Shrove Tuesday**

February 25 Wednesday

**Ash Wednesday**

7:30 p.m. **LBS business meeting** followed by Preparing for the Unexpected with Emergency Management Director Jim Barclay. Light refreshments following. Contact Andrea Lively at 249-2705.

February 26 Thursday

3:30 pm **Kids' Cross Culture Club** visits Belize with Elizabeth Farnsworth at the Phinehas Newton Library. Call 249-3572 for info.

March 4 Wednesday

**Last day to withdraw** from the election ballot

-Thank you to Vickie Paine and the South Royalston Improvement Corporation for leading the effort to power the water pump, provide public water, and keep the water tank full.

-Thank you to the Royalston Fire, Police, Emergency Management, DPW, and SRIC for your coordination, communication, and interoperability.

-Thank you to Representative Bob Rice for getting us whatever we asked for and assisting with MEMA where needed.

-Thank you to the 20 Massachusetts National Guard for cutting trees and providing generators.

-Thank you to National Grid for a full and continued response until the problems were fixed.

-Thank you to Verizon for stocking a stash of new poles in Royalston just after the storm and setting them as soon as the lines were cleared.

-Thank you to the tree crews and linesmen who drove 1,000 miles (each way) just before the holiday season to help restore services.

-Thank you to Mary Barclay for organizing hot food at the Town Hall shelter every day for a week to feed workers, linesmen, and residents. Thank you to the Ladies Benevolent Society for putting out the word for food donations and to all those that responded (enough hot food for 50-60 people every day). Thank you to everyone who showed up to serve the food at the Town Hall - many who still did not have electricity at their own home. The grateful linesmen said that they had never been served free hot food by disaster victims before.

## Save the Date:

March 6 Friday

7 - 10 pm **Open Mic.** Come to listen or to take the stage. Free admission. Home-made dinner fare and goodies available for purchase.

March 8 Sunday

3 pm **Music for a Sunday Afternoon** in the Ballroom at the historic Maples on Royalston Common. Royalston musicians Carl Kamp and Deb Nunes will perform classical guitar and piano music by a variety of composers. Refreshments. Free will donation to benefit the Friends of the Library.

March 14 Saturday

6:00 p.m. **Ladies' B. Corned Beef & Cabbage Supper** at Town Hall

March 17 Tuesday

before 8 pm **Last date to register to vote** in Town Election

March 27 Friday

6:30 pm Fun and Fabulous **RCS Talent Show.**

## Royalston Emergency Management Agency



There are SO many residents who came forward to help during and after the December 11-12, 2008 ice storm, to try to name them would succeed only in leaving someone's name out. To those who looked in on or took in friends and neighbors, shared generators, supplied firewood, delivered water to those without working water pumps, supervised a shelter or feeding site, ran out-of-town errands for those tied up helping in Royalston, invited relative strangers into your home to shower, cooked and delivered food to either the fire station, town hall or to the scene where safety, service or utility personnel were cold and hungry, I say thank you. It hardly seems sufficient for all that you provided, but then again, there probably aren't any words to express gratitude for such generosity of heart, talent and resources. As a friend and neighbor, I am grateful to live in Royalston. As a relatively new EMD, I am also deeply indebted to those of you willing to pitch in whenever and wherever needed. Again, insufficient, but Thank You!

The regional Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) program has begun! This program helps individuals and households better prepare for various challenging situations. Royalston has a half-dozen or so participants and more have inquired about signing up. It's not too late to join in, and a list for upcoming classes is being maintained. If interested, please contact EMD Jim Barclay at [ema@royalston-ma.gov](mailto:ema@royalston-ma.gov) or 978-249-2904. (Photo: Siegel)

## Annual Town Election

*Melanie Mangum, town clerk*

### important deadline dates

Signed nomination papers are due in the Town Clerk's Office, on Tuesday, February 17, no later than 5 p.m. The last day to object or withdraw from the election ballot is March 4, 2009.

The following officials have indicated they will seek reelection. Candidates for reelection have until February 17 to sign blanket nomination papers to be placed on the ballot.

Roberta Newman - Athol-Royalston Regional School Committee - 3 year Royalston seat

George Northrop - Moderator 3 years

Barbara Guiney - Library Trustee 3 years

Eugene Kolimaga - Board of Health 3 years

John Chencharik - Constable 3 years

In addition, Roy Smith, Jr. has taken out papers to run for election to a seat on the Trustees of J.N. Bartlett Fund. Smith was appointed to the Bartlett Fund in 2008 to fill a vacancy.

The following are the remainder of open positions which will appear on the ballot. Lists of all open positions and the officials currently in office have been posted around town.

Selectman - 3 years;

Tree Warden - 3 years;

Assessor - 3 years;

Cemetery Commissioner - 3 years;

Planning Board - 3 years

Sewer Commissioner - 3 years

Trustees of the J.N. Bartlett Fund - total of 4, 1 year positions

Board of Public Welfare - 2 years

Board of Public Welfare - 3 years

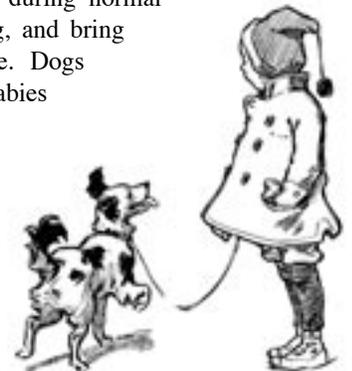
In addition, there will be 2, 3-year Athol seats for School Committee on both the Royalston and Athol ballots.

The last day to register to vote in this election will be March 17, 2009, when voter registration hours will be held from 2-4 p.m. and 7-8 p.m. in the Town Clerk's office, Whitney Hall, 5 School St. All mail-in registrations must be postmarked no later than March 17, 2009.

### 2009 Dog Licenses Now Available

Dogs must be licensed by March 31, 2009. 2009 Licenses are valid until March 31, 2010. Licenses for neutered/spayed dogs are \$6.00, unaltered dogs, \$10.00. Kennel licenses are also available. Please visit the Town Clerk during normal business hours to license your dog, and bring a copy of the dog's rabies certificate. Dogs that are not up to date with their rabies vaccinations cannot be licensed.

**2009 Census:** 2009 Census forms will be going out in the mail and should be returned within 10 days of receipt. **Want a 2008 street list?** 2008 street lists are still available for a cost of \$2.00 at the Town Clerk's office.



## Board of Selectmen's Corner

*Andy West*

Headline -Ice Storm: Congratulations and Thank You to all town departments for their work in the December ice storm. Many basements were pumped, citizens served, and generators distributed. Overall, Royalston emergency services exceeded the challenges presented.

Economics: Rumors of cuts have turned to reality. We are promised cuts in State Aid THIS year and next. We do not have the details yet, but we are preparing to cut as much as \$30,000 from THIS year's current expenses (our year ends June 30) and as much as \$50,000 from next year's budget. We already operate on a very tight budget. But, now services will be affected. Work on next year's truncated budget has begun.

Route 32 update: We expect a 75% submission to MassHighway in early February. This means that we are on the "early" edge of the schedule that takes us to construction. We have seen no indication that any of the funds reserved for this project are in jeopardy of cuts.

## Board of Health News

*Phil Leger, chair*

For the first time in history the transfer station was closed the weekend of the ice storm. Not only was the power out not allowing the compactor to operate, but it was impassable in the early going. Some people, however were not deterred and left bags of trash at the gate. PLEASE, IF WE ARE NOT OPEN, DO NOT LEAVE YOUR TRASH FOR OTHERS TO DEAL WITH! This is not only selfish, but illegal. Thankfully, it was a small minority.

Our hours of operation are (and have been for over 10 years): Friday 1-4pm and Saturday 8am-2pm. If the gate is open during the week due to plowing, container shipping etc. please do not come in and make deposit at will. Leaving trash out on the compactor invites wildlife and makes a big mess to clean up. Thanks for everyone's cooperation.

On another note, the town received an award for recycling more than 700 pounds per person in town. Good work. We apologize for any inconvenience caused by containers being full during the past month. Weather, holiday backups have prevented more timely pickups from our vendor. We hope to have this resolved quickly.

The BOH would like to commend all the neighbors who helped each other during the recent ice storm. Many went 9 days without power. Our transfer station attendant, Tony, went 12 days, breaking the record set in 1968 of 11 days. Many neighbors were shuffling generators, making water available to each other, and just plain checking up on each other. In emergency management terms, this is called, "sheltering in place". Since the town has no municipal building with emergency power, this was the best we could do. There is discussion about equipping RCS with generator capability for the future. The BOH strongly supports this effort. We also send a big thank you for all the volunteers, neighbors, police, fire, DPW, emergency management, BOS, National Guard et al that did their part during the ice saga. We all have stories to share.

## Open Burning Permits Available

*Chief Keith R. Newton*

Open Burning began 1/15/09 and ends 5/1/09. The Fire Dept. is issuing open burning permits at Fire Station #1 on Athol Road the 2nd., 3rd., and 4th Mondays of each month. Deputy Chief James Putney has been assigned the duty of permit issue. He will be at Firehouse # 1 starting at 7:00 P.M. on those nights. You must appear in person, read the Open Burning Law Form and sign your application to receive a permit. All regulations are a product of Massachusetts D.E.P. and will be enforced by Royalston Fire Dept. The winter months are best for safe burning due to the snow cover to assist in preventing a fire from spreading out of control. I would urge all who intend to burn, please do it as soon as possible. During periods of unsafe open burning conditions, especially windy and/or dry weather, permits will not be issued. Please know that it is a privilege to burn, not a right. Burn safe and thank you in advance for your cooperation.

## News from the Open Space Committee

*Aaron Ellison, chair*

With the CPA behind us, this year the Open Space Committee is working on the required 5-year update to our Open Space & Recreation Plan. The Plan establishes the goals and objectives that guide us in making decisions about land use, open space, and recreation in town. Along with other plans, such as the recently completed Royalston Heritage Landscape Inventory, Royalston Community Development Strategy, and Greater Gardner Sustainable Growth Management Plan, the Open Space and Recreation Plan helps us think about how to best preserve our history and heritage, protect our natural and scenic resources, and ensure that we set aside space for recreation while at the same time allowing for growth and development that maintains our town's rural character. Having an Open Space & Recreation Plan also allows us to qualify for certain federal and state funding for the purchase and protection of land designated for recreation or open space.

To collect the information needed to revise the Open Space & Recreation Plan, we need your help! We are conducting a town-wide survey about open space and recreation - the survey is inserted into this newsletter. Please fill it out, fold it and tape it, put a stamp on it, and mail it back to us by March 1! Next, we will host two public meetings to discuss the evolving Plan. The first meeting will be at the end of March, and at this first meeting we will present the results of the survey and propose goals and objectives for the Plan. The second meeting will be in mid-April, and at that meeting we will finalize the goals and objectives for the Plan. The final version of the Plan should be presented to the Board of Selectmen by the end of May. We encourage everyone in town to participate in this planning process. You can learn more about the activities of the Open Space & Recreation Committee from our web site: <http://www.royalstonma.gov/OSC/indexopen.htm>. You can also read the current (2004-2009) Open Space Plan on the web site or at the library.

# Phinehas S. Newton Library News

Kathy Morris, Library Director

Trustees: Polly Longworth, Lisa Freden, Barbara Guiney

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

Saturdays: 9:00am - 12:noon

978-249-3572 [www.royalstonlibrary.org](http://www.royalstonlibrary.org)

## Recent Donations to the Friends

Nancy and James Melbourne

Celt Grant

Shirley Hubbards and Arthur Yeblon

Stephanie and John McClure

Mary Eliot (Pat) Jackson

Marie and Pierre Humblet

## Donations to the Friends Newsletter Fund

Aaron Ellison and Elizabeth Farnsworth

Chuck and Polly Longworth

## Thank you:

Cady Boucher for spending many hours helping us 'weed' the collection.

Salena Bensanin, the Dawson/Easton family, Marcia Flanagan, Hannah Seghir, Janet Bettey and Rolanda Brousseau for donating audiobooks

## Some of the New Books at the Library

### New Adult Fiction

Bohjalian, Chris *Trans-Sister Radio*

Box, C.J. *Three Weeks to Say Goodbye*

Burke, Alafair *Angel's Tip*

Clark, Mary Higgins *Dashing Through the Snow*

Cornwell, Patricia *Scarpetta*

Harrison, Sue *Mother Earth Father Sky: A Novel*

Johansen, Iris *The Treasure*

Koontz, Dean *Your Heart Belongs to Me*

Krentz, Jayne Ann *Running Hot*

Lamb, Wally *The Hour I First Believed*

Patterson, Richard North *Eclipse*

Roberts, Nora *The Pagan Stone*

Turtledove, Harry *The United States of Atlantis*

Woods, Stuart *Mounting Fears*

### New Adult Non-Fiction

Shirihai, Hadoram *Whales Dolphins and Other Marine Mammals of the World*

Olmstead, Larry *Snowshoeing: A Trailside Guide*

Miller, Pat *The Power of Positive Dog Training*

Brende, Eric *Better Off: Flipping the Switch on Technology*

Cay, David *Perfectly Legal: The Covert Campaign to Rig Our Tax System to Benefit the Super Rich and Cheat Everyone Else*



## Resident Recommended Reading

The Barclay girls recently read the *Twilight* series by Stephanie Meyer. According to their mother, "It's obviously a fabulous read - Caitlin barely came up for air. She did manage to come up long enough to BEG us to go find the other books in the series. She says it's "vampirey" and not her usual genre, but she could not stop reading once she got started. She recommended it to her sister Heather, who also claimed she didn't know WHY, but she couldn't stop reading once she got started either.

Beth Gospodarek was impressed with *The Brief Wonderful Life of Oscar Wao* by Junot Diaz. Its hero is a chubby Dominican high school/ college-aged geek living in New Jersey. He dreams of writing a Hispanic *Lord of the Rings* type trilogy. This novel is simultaneously humorous and poignant about the realities of being a recent immigrant in the inner city and even more affecting conveying Carlos' family's history in the Dominican Republic in the 1940s-60s under the brutal cleptocracy of Rafael Trujillo. Diaz' style flirts with magical realism. At times, it can be very funny; however, be warned that at other times, it is dark and disturbing. The reader is moved by the characters and learns a lot about rather ignored chapters in U.S and Dominican history.

## New Young Adult Fiction

Gottesfeld, Jeff *A Heart Divided*

Jocelyn, Marthe *Would You*

Levine, Gail Carson *The Two Princesses of Bamarre*

Moriarty, Jaclyn *The Year of Secret Assignments*

Naidoo, Beverley *Burn My Heart*

Pearson, Mary *Scribbler of Dreams*

Peters, Julie Ann *Keeping You a Secret*

Salvatore, R.A. *The Stowaway: Stone of Tymora Vol. 1*

Stolarz, Laurie Faria *Blue is for Nightmares*

Walsh, Marissa *Not Like I'm Jealous or Anything*

## New Young Adult Non-Fiction

*Guinness World Records 2009*

Marguillies, Phillip *The Devil on Trial: Witches, Anarchists, Atheists, Communists, and Terrorists in America's Courtrooms*

Wood, Don *Into the Volcano*

## New Young Adult Audio Books

Levine, Gail Carson *Fairest*

## New Music CD's: *High School Musical 3: Senior Year*

Mozart, Wolfgang Amadeus *Musical Masterpieces*

Swift, Taylor *Fearless*

**New Movies:** *The Dark Knight, Fred Claus, The Green Mile, Horton Hears a Who!, Muse of Fire, Wall-E and Why Shakespeare?*

## Ride out the Recession with these Upcoming Free Programs at your Library

### Southwick Zoo Coming to Royalston Town Hall during February Vacation:

On Friday, February 20th at 1:30 p.m. the ZooMobile from the Southwick Zoo will pull into the Town Hall bringing animals for an exciting and educational, and fun program. Participants will be able to learn about the animals and get a close look at each of them. Some of the animals included will be tortoises, lizards, snakes, an alligator, a large parrot, a binturong, a kangaroo, a bush baby, an African porcupine, a chinchilla, a ferret, and hedgehogs. Southwick Zoo just celebrated its 50th anniversary as a zoo even though its roots go back farther. It began in 1903 as the dairy farm of the Southwick Family in Mendon. Justin F. Southwick started collecting exotic poultry breeds in 1930 and his son continued the project, becoming an expert on migratory wildfowl. They sold the dairy herd in 1956 to concentrate on the birds. Southwick Wild Animal Farm began in 1963 with several family members involved. Now over 500 animals, comprising over 100 species, make up the zoo. They are dedicated to the preservation and conservation of all animals. Earth Ltd., a nonprofit group bringing the ZooMobile to Royalston is a non-profit with a mission to provide environmental and conservation education with an emphasis on animal ecology, endangered species, and threatened habitats. This free program is sponsored by the Friends of the Phinehas S. Newton Library and funded by a generous grant from the Royalston Cultural Council.



### Kids' Cross Culture Club

The world is more and more interconnected. For the umpteenth year, the library's cross culture club lets local kids have fun while finding out a little about other customs, climates and countries. The programs run on Thursday afternoons from 3:30 - 4:30 at the Phinehas Newton Library. International snacks served. Free.

- |             |  |
|-------------|--|
| February 26 | Visit Belize with Elizabeth Farnsworth |
| March 5     | Visit Finland with Maba Cauthen        |
| March 12    | Visit Cameroon with Melanie Kamayou    |

*RCS students can take bus 302 to the library with a permission note from home. Pre-registration by calling the library 978-249-3572 helps plan for craft materials and food. Geared for elementary school aged students but all are welcome.*

### Scraps from the Town Scrapbook

The Town Scrapbook is a huge tome in the reference room full of photos, drawings, documents and reminiscences about our Town. It is maintained by the Friends of the Library. Do you have something to add? Submissions can be caned and returned.



**Music:** The Friends of the Phinehas S. Newton Library cordially invite you to "Music for a Sunday Afternoon" on Sunday, March 8, 2009, at 3 p.m. in the Ballroom at the historic Maples on Royalston Common. Royalston musicians Carl Kamp and Deb Nunes will perform classical guitar and piano music by a variety of composers, including Vivaldi, Guiliani, von Webber, Handel, and Carulli. This is a benefit to support our beautiful library, and a free will offering will be collected. As always, delicious refreshments will be served. *Don't forget to set your clocks ahead one hour the night before, so you don't arrive late!*

**Travelogue:** On Friday, March 13th at 7:30 p.m. at the library Kate Collins and Rebecca Krause Hardie will each share slides and memories of trekking through Nepal. Becky traveled there many years ago and Kate was there last year. Refreshments served. Free.

**Mysteries:** Want to learn to write mystery short stories? Join us for a panel discussion entitled "New England Crime Story Collection Explores Back Roads and Dark Streets" by authors whose short stories appeared in *Deadfall: Crime Stories by New England Writers*. Local author, Kathy Chencharik, who not only has a story in the book but also produced the photograph that graces the cover, will be among the authors on the panel. The program will be on Sunday, March 22nd at 2:00 p.m. at the library. Refreshments.

**Stone Walls:** Larry Siegel, much-praised author of the Garden Notes column, has spent his free time tramping over and mapping out the stone walls of Royalston in recent years. He will give a presentation/slideshow of his gleanings on April 11.

### Artist Exhibits at the Library

During the month of February, catch the wide variety of folk art and paintings by Bliss Hill resident Cindy Ross-Hamilton. March and April will feature the pen and ink and pencil landscapes and portraits of Phil Mickey.

Also available for perusing in the reference room is "On the Same Day," an art intallation by Margaret Bellafiore of Billerica. It consists of a series of newspaper car ads with photographs of car bombings superimposed. Both the ad and the bombing were published in the newspaper on the same day. The U.S. government banned all photographs of car bombing from appearing in U.S. newspapers in 2007. Information explaining the project is with the work.

Apparently, the winter of 1929 was as good as the current one for constructing playforts. This photo was taken by Maxine Wilcox in 1929, the year she arrived in Royalston to teach at School House #1. She was boarding next to her job, in the house where the Dawson family lives now. These children were the landlady's children. Does anyone know their names?

### RCS Poetry Club: Inaugural Poem

The Royalston Community School Poetry Club recently researched inaugural poems. Only 3 U.S. presidents have included a poem in their inaugurations: Kennedy, Clinton and Obama. In 1961, President Kennedy asked Robert Frost to speak. Frost composed a poem, "Dedication," for the occasion. However, the sun's sharp glare on Inauguration Day impaired the 86-year old poet's ability to read his new poem. On the spot, Frost opted to recite one of his older poems he knew by heart, called "The Gift Outright" and deeply affected the crowd. In 1993, civil rights poet, Maya Angelou, read her verse at the first Clinton inauguration and four years later, Arkansas poet Miller Williams did the same. Newly sworn in President Obama included a poem, "Praise Song for the Day," written and recited by his old friend and colleague Elizabeth Alexander. Below, is a poem written by an RCS poet after the recent inauguration.

#### The Heart of The Day

The heart of the day, now dismembered,  
The history of the country  
Forever remembered  
When Blacks had lived a harsh life  
Our knowledge of that  
As sharp as a knife  
43 presidents, and add one too  
America, our country, fairly new  
3 and a bit terms Franklin had  
Though at the end America became sad  
Lincoln killed in Ford's theatre  
Washington the first president  
Without him this might not have been the present  
The heart of the day, now dismembered  
The history of our country  
Forever remembered.



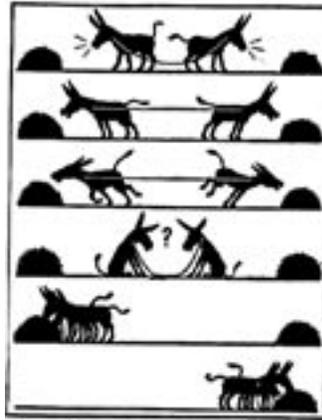
By Derek Bates, Grade 5  
January 21, 2009

Also recently, the younger group of RCS poets pondered and penned:

#### Useless Things

A desk without a top  
A stick without a mop  
A truck without a wheel  
A shoe without a heel  
A pencil without a point  
A leg without a joint  
A camera without a flash  
A cannonball without a splash  
*Those contributing were: Alexia, Krystal, MacKenzie, Julianne, Emily, Matthew, Molly, Tayiah, Aliyah, Anthony, Molly, Jayce, Hannah, Kevin and Isabelle.*

### Royalston Democrats Will Caucus



Royalston Democrats will caucus Feb. 7 at 1 p.m. in the town hall, it was announced by the town committee chair, Allen Young. All voters registered as Democrats in Royalston are eligible to attend the caucus and vote for a delegate to the June 5-6 convention in Springfield. The main item of business at the convention will be drafting a party platform. Royalston's delegate to the previous convention was Ruth Suyenaga. The committee currently has nine members, and new members are welcome.

**Bruces Browser Anniversary Bash:** Royalston resident Diane Lincoln would like to let everyone know that her bookstore, Bruce's Browser, 1497 Main St, Athol, will be having a 4th Anniversary Celebration on Saturday, February 7th, from 9AM to 7PM. Local radio station WJDF will be broadcasting live from the Browser from 10AM to 1PM, and there will be several authors on site all morning to chat with you. Free refreshments will be available all day, including locally roasted Dean's Beans coffee. There will be a 20% storewide discount on everything, so please join in on the fun and take advantage of the added value, too

### Recipe of the month

Here is a recipe from Arthur Yeblon and Shirley Hubbards, who have lived on Warwick Rd for the past 30 years. Before then, they lived in New York. Though technically retired now, Arthur continues to produce wonderful art. His paintings were recently on display at the library. Shirley, who worked as a dental hygienist, says that now she doesn't do much but read, read, read!

#### Braised Lamb Shanks

(for two shanks)  
Ingredients:  
1/2 cup flour  
salt and pepper to taste  
1/2 tsp. oregano  
1/3 cup salad oil  
3/4 cup chopped onion  
3/4 cup chopped celery  
1/4 cup chopped carrots  
1 clove minced garlic  
1/2 cup red wine  
1 1/4 cup broth or bouillon  
pinch thyme



steps: Preheat oven to 350. Dredge lamb in flour, salt, pepper and oregano. Brown in oil. Then, transfer to casserole dish. Now, put veggies, garlic, and thyme into the skillet used to cook the lamb and brown for 5 minutes. Scrape veggies over the lamb in the casserole dish and add the liquids. Bake until tender and the liquids thicken into a sauce, about 1 hour.

**NEWSLETTER ADS \$25 PER ISSUE**  
**\$200 ANNUAL DISCOUNT RATE (10 ISSUES)**

**PLEASE CONTACT STEPHEN CHASE**  
**978-249-0358 OR CHASEGOS@GIS.NET**  
**LEAVE A MESSAGE**



## CONGRATULATIONS AND GOOD NEWS

*Got something to crow about? Send it along to the RCN. Zap to [chasegos@gis.net](mailto:chasegos@gis.net) or drop at library.*

**Ashley...Willhite** has been living in Manhattan and enjoying NYC to the fullest for the past two years working for the New York Restoration Project (NYRP), a non-profit organization dedicated to reclaiming and restoring New York City parks, community gardens and open space. Since its founding by Bette Midler in 1995, NYRP has achieved dramatic results by investing in the greening and beautification of underserved communities throughout New York City. NYRP staff, AmeriCorps members and community volunteers have planted hundreds of thousands of trees, shrubs and flowers and removed over 1,890 tons of garbage from the city's green spaces. It has saved 114 community gardens from commercial development and established the New York Garden Trust to ensure NYRP's precious plots of land remain public gardens in perpetuity. This organization is also responsible for transforming an illegal dumping ground along the Harlem River into the five-acre Swindler Cove Park and building the adjacent Peter Jay Sharp Boathouse – the first floating boathouse on the river in over 100 years. Ashley has just accepted a promotion as project coordinator for the "Plant a Million Trees" program, –an initiative to plant and care for one million new trees throughout New York City's five boroughs by 2017 sponsored by a partnership between NYC Dept of Parks and Recreation and NYRP. As a result of this initiative – MillionTreesNYC – New York City will expand its urban forest by an astounding 20 percent, realizing the many environmental, health and economic benefits that come with planting trees. Ashley reports that at last count, over 172,000 have been planted since 2007.

**Nancy Ferron and Joan Katz** would like to sing to the heroism of their friend Kevin McGuirk, who on Friday Dec 12th, made his way by chainsaw to their home to see how they had made it through the storm. Finding them with trees on their house and holes in their roof, he braved the still falling limbs and ice, climbed a ladder and temporarily secured their home with a large tarp. A friend in deed!

**Sarah LeRay and Simba** (her horse) are in a photo contest for the cover of Dover Saddlery. People can vote for the picture. Sarah is under the attire section and show and competition. To vote go to [Doversaddlery.com/photocontest](http://Doversaddlery.com/photocontest).



Deland Rd's **Dante Divoll**, a junior at Athol High School, was recently named as a striker to the All WMass Division II Soccer First Team. Last fall, Dante led the Athol team in scoring with 18 goals and 10 assists. His 28 points were tops in the division.

## Milestones

**Obituary- Doreen M. (Hause) Simmington**, 85, of 48 Athol-Richmond Road, died Saturday, Dec. 13, 2008 at UMass Medical Center-University Campus in Worcester.

Doreen was born in Athol, Nov. 9, 1923, the daughter of Clarence F. and Florence M. (Emmett) Hause. She grew up in Athol, graduating from Athol High School in 1941 and since 1945 has resided in West Royalston. She and her husband operated the Highland Dairy Farm in West Royalston for 23 years. She was a member of the First Congregational Church in Royalston and the Ladies Benevolent Society, as well as a volunteer at the election polls and at the Athol Memorial Hospital for many years. She enjoyed rug braiding, doing crossword puzzles, bird watching and observing all of the animals that would come onto her property. She was always one who enjoyed her independence until her last day. Doreen especially enjoyed spending time with her children and many grandchildren. Her husband of 60 years, William Simmington Jr. died in 2001. She leaves four sons; William Simmington, III and his wife Lorraine of Monte Vista, CO, Robert J. Simmington and his wife Kate of Winchester, N.H., Larry P. Simmington and his wife Catherine of Orange, and Daniel C. Simmington and his wife Debra of Royalston. She also leaves 14 grandchildren, 34 great-grandchildren, one great-great grandchild; a brother, Franklin L. Hause of Calif.; two sisters, Emily L. O'Lari of Athol and Gertrude Wood of Situate and several nieces and nephews. She was predeceased by a sister, Charlotte A. MacDonald. A memorial service was held Thursday, Dec. 18, 2008, with her son Daniel Simmington, officiating. A reception followed at the family home. Burial will be at Maple Cemetery in West Royalston on June 6, 2009 at 1 p.m. In lieu of flowers the family suggests contributions be made to a charity of the donor's choice.



**Engaged:** Amy Louise Flagg, daughter of David and Mary Flagg of King Street, will be married to Geoffrey Michael Bloom, son of Pierrette Bloom of Gardner and Mitchell Bloom of Fitchburg. Amy, a graduate of Athol High School and Smith College, is currently an Associate Editor at Jones & Bartlett Publishers in Sudbury, MA and Geoffrey, graduate of Monty Tech, Mount Wachusett Community College, and Fitchburg State College, is a Graphic Designer at EH Publishing in Framingham, MA. The couple currently lives in Waltham, MA. They will be married on May 31, 2009 in Gardner.

## Luncheon Club and COA

Blood Sugar and Blood Pressure Clinics are scheduled for Wednesday, February 11, from 11 a.m. – noon at the Royalston Town Hall. They are free to all residents of any age. No appointments are needed. Why not plan on joining the Royalston Luncheon Club that day, which meets each Wednesday at the hall. Meals are just \$2/senior and \$2.50/youngers. Call Betty Woodbury at 978-249-9656 by Monday to reserve a seat at the next Wednesday's meal.

## Free Nicotine Patches for Residents of the North Quabbin, including Royalston

23% of North Quabbin residents smoke compared to 18% statewide. Please help spread the word about a new effort to give our friends and neighbors the help they need to quit smoking in 2009. During January and February, a free 2-week starter supply of Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT) patches will be available to any qualifying adult resident of the North Quabbin (plus the towns of Gardner, Hubbardston, Templeton and Winchendon) or Franklin County by calling the toll-free Quitline: 1-800-Try-to-Stop or 1-800-8-Dejalo (Spanish). Keep in mind that quitters that use a stop smoking medication are twice as likely to quit for good compared to quitting "cold turkey". Quitters that combine a stop smoking medication with cessation counseling further increase their chances of quitting for good. Free group cessation counseling is available every Monday's at 6PM in the cafeteria at Athol Memorial Hospital. Most public and commercial health insurances cover stop smoking medications. For more information or a list of cessation benefits by insurance, visit: [http://www.makesmokinghistory.org/franklin\\_north-quabbin/#towns](http://www.makesmokinghistory.org/franklin_north-quabbin/#towns) Follow the link to see this project on local news: [http://www.wvlp.com/dpp/news/wvlp-local\\_health\\_freenicotinepatchestoquit\\_200901091749](http://www.wvlp.com/dpp/news/wvlp-local_health_freenicotinepatchestoquit_200901091749)

## Ladies' Benevolent Society



The LBS wrapped up 2008 with the annual Election of Officers. The elected slate includes: President Laurie M. Deveneau; Vice President Kristen A. West; Secretary Mary C. Barclay; and Treasurer Maureen G. Blasco. Andrea L. Lively will serve as Devotions Leader and Helen E. Feliciano as Remembrance Secretary. Nancy D. Melbourne and Mrs. Lively will organize programs; Nancy

S. Bolton, Elizabeth A. Gospodarek and Theresa A. Quinn are the Scholarship Committee. Mrs. Quinn hosted the meeting, where more than a dozen generously-sized baskets full of goodies were packed. Members later delivered them to elders and shut-ins. The 2009 program guide is currently in production. Copies will be on display on various town bulletin boards and available by contacting any member of the Society.

## Congregational Churches News

Sue Vellieux

We pray that everyone has survived the holidays in good health and with fond memories. What about that ice storm! It's amazing how nature can devastate an area but yet still reveal it's beauty with the sun shining threw the ice crystals making them appear like diamonds. Amidst all the worrying of pipes freezing, cellars flooding, food going bad, keeping warm, and hauling water etc., it was a true blessing to see our town's people helping one another to get through this state of emergency, especially those who checked on the elderly shut-ins. The hearts of the people in Royalston is what sets it apart from other communities. Big kudos to everyone!

The Royalston Youth Group has come up with a name...."Revival Town". The name was inspired by our new Youth Pastor "RJ" who thought the lyrics to a song(Revival Town), he heard reminded him of our church, town, and group.

The fruits of our investments in our youth, both time and monetary are paying off. Three of our youth (Janelle & Abbi Poirier, Alicia McKean) have committed to going on a mission trip to the Darien Jungle in Panama July 12th.-Aug.6th.2009 during their summer vacation. They will be ministering one on one evengelism, assisting Vacation Bible School, and various service projects. This is a direct result of the Youth Group trip to Acquire The Fire we took earlier this year. Global expeditions is a branch of ATF designed to reach today's generation and make a difference. The cost per youth is \$2487.00. They are working very hard to raise all the money but need help. They are available to babysit or to do odd jobs, fundraisers, etc. and will gladly except any donation amt.; more importantly they ask for our prayers. We are so excited for these 3 young women and we hope you share in our excitement. Keep your ears and eyes tuned for more info to follow in future months concerning their progress. Contact info [jenlpoirier@comcast.net](mailto:jenlpoirier@comcast.net).

## Monty Tech News

Monty Tech, thanks to the ice storm, blew through the allotted pre-planned snow days and, with no alterations in scheduling, would be in session until after July 1. Since the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) made it abundantly clear no waivers would be granted, the following schedule was voted by the School Committee: April 10's day off will be canceled, and three of the four "school-able" days (Monday holiday that week) in April vacation will be canceled.

Why not February? In addition to a high chance of snow cancellations, there are many educators with advanced plans for travel, necessitating engaging an inordinate number of substitutes – expensive and disruptive to continuity of education. Why not add length to school days? That was the preference, but DESE said no. Saturdays? This idea created problems with contracts, overtime pay and bussing, not to mention Saturday sports.

While no single answer is acceptable to everyone, this re-scheduling seemed to meet the requirements, the spirit of the DESE's mandate to re-schedule, and is the least disruptive to the educational process at Monty Tech.



## Garden Notes

15 January 2009

Fair warning – there is little in the way of garden in Garden Notes this month. (Cut me some slack here; it is the middle of January.) My mind can wander to matters other than gardening. Like clipboards. Before me are arrayed three clipboards, ranging from the relatively new to the somewhat older to the older still. They seem the same: a wood composition board and a clip activated by a spring. Upon closer inspection (I got a lot of free time here, folks), I note that the older the clipboard, the larger and sturdier the clip and spring. Substantially so. The newest will manage a couple sheets of paper; the oldest appears capable of holding down a brick.

Moving onto blenders: I see no reason why my fifty-year old (two-speed) Osterizer blender (\$5, Winchester, NH thrift shop) won't last another fifty years. Made with nickled steel, glass, and rubber, there is not a trace of plastic. Its motor generates four times the power of the current (nine-speed) plastic model (\$29.95, Wal-Mart, or so I'm told). Hand tools. Hardware. Kitchen gadgets and equipment. Clothes pins. Thumb tacks. The quality of goods has been so compromised that they barely perform the functions for which they are intended. I would blame it on American industry except for the fact that American industry barely exists anymore. Not that many years ago, most everything we purchased was domestically manufactured. Now, most everything we purchase is Made In China. As consumers, our principal criterion for making purchases is CHEAP. The products are sold cheaply because they are made cheaply. Am I belaboring a point? Yup.

I would be remiss to not report on the Day of the Ice, as experienced on Prospect Hill. Prospect Hill was not the most desirable place to be during the ice, especially if you were a tree. In fact, the entire northeast quadrant of town has a new look with only a couple of exceptions. The orchard held up well. The remarkably spreading Chinese chestnut tree spreads no more. Virtually every branch snapped; the tree appears as if it was torn apart.



*The remarkably spreading Chinese chestnut tree spreads no more.*

A couple of the peach trees took a hit as well, but the apples shrugged it off, just another wintry day for them. It was not in the game plan but all of a sudden I was handed a winter's work: extracting, hauling, cutting, and stacking the firewood; building the mountains of debris; creating order out of disorder. Fortunately, I am a bit obsessed with creating order out of disorder and so do not bemoan the tasks at hand.

A gardening note: we are about to order our seed, for the twenty-seventh year from FEDCO Seeds out of Waterville, Maine. FEDCO caters primarily to the northeast grower, reflected in seed adaptable to those conditions, and, increasingly, to those among us who grow organically. It is not your typical seed catalog: no gloss, no photographs, but one hundred thirty eight pages of product descriptions, gardening tips, political comments, and what-have-you. A group of us order collectively as the Royalston Seed Coop, taking advantage of quantity discounts. While too late for this year, we would welcome additional participants. Finally, we have a limited number of catalogs available for those among you interested in ordering on your own.

*Larry Siegel*

## Wildlife Sightings

On December 3, 2008 Deb Nunes saw a **Black Bear** at the side of the road near Falls Brook Road.

John Poor has an unseasonable **Northern Flicker** at his feeders on NE Fitzwilliam Rd. After an absence of three weeks, John thought it had finally gone South, but it has been there all January.

On January 22, 2009, Lorraine Cassinghino had 4 little **Eastern Bluebirds** at her bird feeders on the north edge of the Common. She parked herself at the window with a camera and got this great shot. She contacted Dave Small from the Athol Bird and Nature



Club who said it was possible for the birds to adapt to this cold weather. She's gone out and bought some special feed for them – full of berries, which they seem to really like, at least, until the Blue Jays descend.

## Ice Storm Photo Gallery On The Royalston Website

Checkout,upload, and share with your friends and family, the page link to the Royalston Ice Storm Picture Gallery on the Royalston Website at <http://www.royalston-ma.gov/icestorm.html>

ART YEBLON AND SHIRLEY HUBBARDS WISH  
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House Cleaning 4 hr for \$50.00. Please ask for Fran. Royalston resident. Home 978-249-4596. Cell – 1 978-895-0817.

Looking for personal care assistant for elder Royalston female. Flexible hours available: evening, night, weekend, or live-in. Short term or long term. Strong references required. Please send contact information, qualifications, and availability to: crgvr2009@yahoo.com.

Winter Sale - All hand knit ski men's hats, mittens, and boot socks, baby sets, etc. Call Shirley at 978-249-4013,

Electric Knife - like new. Call Shirley at 978-249-4013.

Community Coop: February orders should be entered into the on-line ordering system by 5 p.m. Thursday, February 19. Delivery will be Thursday, February 26. Maple syrup producers from Royalston are invited to promote their products through the coop members' e-mail list. Once you get sugaring, contact mcb Barclay@juno.com or Mary at 978-249-2598.

The Royalston Community Newsletter  
Friends of the Phinehas S. Newton Library  
PO Box 133  
Royalston MA 01368

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Submission deadline for March issue is: Feb. 22

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