



River Valley Current

November 28, 2016 No. 461

*"It is good to have an end to journey toward.
But it is the journey that matters in the end."
~ Ernest Hemmingway*

School Calendar

This Week

Wednesday, November 30

7th/8th grade Class Meeting

Friday, December 2

Spiral of Light – in-school celebration

Looking Ahead

Wednesday, December 7

School Tour 9:00-11:00 am

Friday, December 9

Early Dismissal – Winter Fair set-up 1:00 pm

Saturday, December 10

Winter Fair 11:00am-4:00 pm

Friday, December 16

Winter Concert 6:30 pm

Tuesday, December 20

*6th grade to Planetarium
Shepherds Play 7:00 pm*

Wednesday, December 21

Shepherds Play 1:30 pm

Thursday, Dec. 22 – Tuesday, Jan. 3

No School – Holiday Vacation

Wednesday, January 4

School Resumes

How to Contact Us

info@rivervalleysschool.org

lc@rivervalleysschool.org

bot@rivervalleysschool.org

pc@rivervalleysschool.org

Spiral of Light Crystals

If you have large beautiful crystals you would lend us to make the Spiral of Light sparkle, please label them and leave them in the faculty room by Thursday December 1st. They will be there available for pick-up again on Monday, December 5th. Thank you!

Winter Fair Flyers and Postcards

Flyers for Winter Fair are attached to this week's Current and postcards are available at school. Please help spread the word.

December Lunch Menu

The December lunch menu is attached to this week's Current. Forms are due November 30th.

Spiral of Light

With quiet anticipation we mark the darkest days of the year and the approaching holiday season with a candle-lit journey inward at the Spiral of Light. The Spiral is a peaceful, meditative experience for children (and adults). The elements of this festival and the theme of light growing and expanding within darkness speak to us on many levels and are found in most cultures around the world.

The Spiral of Light is a simple, yet reverent tradition at River Valley Waldorf School. We will be celebrating it this year as an in-school festival on Friday, December 2nd with time for the kindergartens and all eight grades to participate. Families are welcome to attend their child's session.

The sessions of the classes are as follows:

9:00 am - 6th/7th/8th grades

9:55 am - Acorn and Star Room

10:30 am - Moon Room

11:05 am - Second Grade

11:50 am - First Grade

12:45 pm - Fifth Grade

1:30 pm - Third Grade

2:00 pm - Fourth Grade

(Please see top of page 2 for more about the Spiral of Light.)

Winter Fair!!

Saturday, December 10th, 11-4

Winter Fair is just a little over a week away!!

Please drop off your **20 Secret Garden Items** in the box in the lobby this week! **See this week's "From Parent Council" for Craft ideas.**

The Gingerbread Tea Room needs Gingerbread Cookies!

If you are able, please bake 2 batches of small gingerbread people.

Cookies can be left in the kitchen on Friday, Dec. 9th

If you need a recipe, Early Childhood has a good one.

King Winter is in need of your Flexible Flyer sleds! If you have any to

lend, please place your name on the bottom of the sled with masking tape and drop it off outside the front door - in the corner.

Please sign up on the Sign up Board!!! We need at least 1 parent from each family to do a shift. If you do not know what activity your class is doing, check the board - it will tell you! If all the slots are taken, please volunteer for whatever activity shift you like.

Remember - each class needs to start setting up Fri, Dec. 10th at 1 pm after the children have been dismissed. Children in middle school may stay with parents to help set up and help around the school as needed. Parents of children younger than 4th grade should arrange for their children not to be on the premises to maintain the wonders and mysteries of King Winter. Some classes arrange for playdates. Please check with your Festival Coordinator.

The Spiral of Light

At River Valley and many other Waldorf schools the Spiral of Light is a beautiful seasonal event celebrated in a quiet and meditative mood. A spiral of evergreen boughs adorned with sparkling crystals, shells and large pinecones is laid upon the floor of the All Purpose Room. At the center a single white candle burns as a symbol of life amidst the dead of winter. One by one, accompanied by the music of the lyre the children slowly walk to the center of the spiral, light their candles and then place them along the path. The beautiful illumination reminds us all of our own internal flame constantly glowing.

For those who experience or watch this deeply meaningful journey from darkness to light hope glows brightly that soon the darkest night of the year will herald the joyful return of light.

Please help us to create a quiet mood beginning at drop off and throughout the day. Signage in the lobby area will serve as a reminder that silence must be observed throughout the day beginning at 8:30 a.m. when the grades students are participating in Advent Assembly. Quiet should continue at pick up and into after school hours. Hallway traffic will be re-routed away from the All Purpose Room all day.

No photography by any means or recording of any kind will be permitted during the Spiral of Light. For safety near the candles children with long hair must wear their hair tied back while participating in the spiral.

From Administration

Amazon Smile Benefits RVWS

Dear RVWS Community:

The holiday shopping season is here! Did you know that you can support RVWS by shopping through Amazon? AmazonSmile is a program in which registered charities can receive up to .5% of your purchase total.

Use this link to go directly to our AmazonSmile page: <https://smile.amazon.com/ch/23-2704723>.

You will see the school listed on the left side of the dialog box. Sign-in with your username and password and shop as you normally would and RVWS will benefit by earning .5% of your purchase total. It is that easy!

Thank you for your support and Happy Holidays!

Our Martinmas Coat Drive was a Success

On the Friday before Thanksgiving a woman from Community Services for Children in Quakertown and Allentown visited our school to gratefully accept the 96 coats that our community collected on their behalf. She described their programs for families with young children who are part of Headstart and Safe Start, an organization for children from low-income families, many of whom have suffered from abuse and drug addiction. Many people will be warm this winter thanks to the generosity of RVWS families. Thank you to everyone who contributed.

After-school Capoeira at River Valley for Grade 5-8 Starts this Week

River Valley Waldorf School is hosting a new after school program, Capoeira, taught by renowned Contra-Mestra Gata Brava (Leigh Robertson) from New Hope's Morro Verde. The art form of Capoeira combines elements of dance, acrobatics and music, all within the context of Brazilian culture. It traces its origins back to the 1600's when West African slaves in Brazil developed it as a mean of resisting oppression. I encourage you to visit Gata's website <http://www.newhopecapoeira.com/> and get acquainted with Gata's background and Capoeira in general.

Classes will be offered every Monday, beginning this week from 3:30 to 4:30 pm for students in 5th grade and up. The cost will be \$15 per class and it's not too late to join. If you have any questions, please contact Euclides at: esantiago@rivervalleysschool.org

Waldorf School of Princeton Welcomes Kim John Payne

Loving Limits in a Digital Age: Not Anti-Screen but Pro-Connection to Nature and People

On Monday, November 28, 7 p.m. Waldorf School of Princeton is delighted to host Kim John Payne, author of *Simplicity Parenting* and *The Soul of Discipline*, for a public lecture that resonates this season and all year round!

"Loving Limits in a Digital Age: Not Anti-Screen but Pro-Connection to Nature and People" offers parents resources for navigating some of the greatest challenges facing our society today: How to maintain loving limits, warm, firm and calm discipline and strong family connections in a world where increasingly "screens are supreme." How to build focus, grit and good judgment so that our kids do not become overwhelmed with media-driven images but can shape their own self-esteem, hopes and dreams. How to encourage respect when negative images of adults pervade pop culture. Fitting in with friends ("Won't my kids be disadvantaged if I limit screen media?"). Aloneness vs. Loneliness: Helping kids know the difference. The alluring world of no boundaries that screen use develops and how this makes discipline difficult. A consultant and trainer to over 110 U.S. independent and public schools, Kim John Payne, M.ED, has been a school counselor, adult educator, researcher, education and a private family counselor for thirty years.

Tickets are \$10 online through Eventbrite / \$15 at the door;
Waldorf School of Princeton, 1062 Cherry Hill Road, Princeton, NJ

High School Open Houses

Many high schools in our area and beyond are holding Open Houses this fall. Here is a list for parents and students who are interested.

Lehigh Valley Charter High School for the Arts Open House: Tuesday, Jan. 5 at 5:45 pm. The program begins promptly at 6:30 pm.

Mercersburg Academy Admission Office cordially invites you to attend our Open House event on Monday, December 12 from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

From the Faculty

What the Children are Learning:

First Grade – Language Arts

Second Grade – Language Arts - Fables

Third Grade – Language Arts

Fourth Grade – Human Being & Animal World

Fifth Grade – North American Studies

Sixth Grade – Geometry

Seventh Grade – Creative Writing

Eighth Grade – Meteorology

From Parent Council

Less Than Two Weeks to Submit Your Secret Garden Items for Winter Fair!

Winter Fair is right around the corner and we need your Secret Garden items from natural materials to make the children's visit to King Winter and the Secret Garden a joy. When completed, please deliver to the Secret Garden box in the school lobby. Please don't use edible food, especially nuts or nut shells in making these items. Acorn caps or acorns are acceptable.

Ideas for Secret Garden Items

Made from Fabric & Wool

Sachets/pouches, angels, gnomes, fairies, crocheted or knitted items such as pins, bags, stars, dolls, animals, hair ties, hair bands, bandanas, bookmarks, pin cushions, pot holders, potpourri bags, yarn dolls, bells with ribbons, beanbags, wool sheep or other animals, felt stars & hearts, feltball necklaces & bracelets, bracelets, tree or window ornaments, felt mice, animals, candle holder decorations.

Made from Paper

Little cards and books, bookmarks, recipe cards, stars & snowflakes, folded boxes, origami figures.

(Continued on next page.)

More Secret Garden Ideas

Other Materials

Beeswax candles, figures or animals, wooden, paper, or glass bead bracelets, clothes pin gnomes and fairies, clay beads, necklaces, coins, wooden stars and snowflakes, key-chains with beads, magnets covered by stones, shells, painted rocks, wooden figurines, candle holders, twig or pinecone gnomes, magic wands, jewelry pins, pipe cleaner animals/figures, shell necklaces, bracelets, pins, dried & decorated orange slices and little soaps.

CALLING ALL ANGELS:

"I've served the school in many ways, some very time consuming over the years. The service that brightened my spirit the most was by serving as a Silent Angel. Placing a juice, a crystal, a word, a chocolate, a flower, a meal on the desk of a teacher (anonymously) was pretty exciting. I knew, that in doing so, our beloved teachers would receive the extra burst of energy to connect from their light and share their gifts. Feed our dear teachers so that they can hold our children with a pure and compassionate heart. The teacher's path is to be paved in love. Love them so that any bumps in their day are smoothed and they can have clear sight. And teachers, please be sure to take extra good care of yourself too. As the days become shorter, how can we keep our own candles burning bright? Do it!" Anonymous Parent Angel

From the Diversity Committee

Video Share from the Diversity Committee

Alison Goodman sent us this short video to share with River Valley parents. In a light and non-confrontational way, it outlines the reason that it is important for all of us to remember & take into consideration, the life experiences of those who are different from ourselves. This video is intended for adult eyes only – or perhaps your middle-schooler. Thank you for having a look!

Link to the video: <https://www.google.com/search?q=sometimes+you're+a+caterpillar&ie=UTF-8&oe=UTF-8&hl=en-us&client=safari>

From the Community

At Yoga Loka

Sacred Spaces with Rosalie Skakum

Saturday December 3rd, 12:00-4:00 pm, \$50

Materials will be provided but you can bring pictures and other meaningful objects.

Create a meaningful and deeply personal tool for dropping into comfort and joy wherever you go. Join us for an artful afternoon to create a portable sacred space. In this 4 hour workshop you will be guided to create a miniature altar using a variety of art collage and mixed media techniques. Bring photos, crystals, small cherished objects, magazine clippings, etc to be incorporated into your altar! Your altar can be used at home or you can take it with you when you travel. No previous art experience necessary. Materials will be provided.

Yoga Lounge

Now that the weather is getting chilly come in early for a cup of hot tea and warm conversation. Yoga Loka is opening its doors early for the community to gather and come together. For over a decade Yoga Loka has been the place where neighbors exchange ideas and thoughts, where advice is sought and given, and where life-long friendships have been created. We are nurturing that tradition with an official gathering time before selected classes. Come by early- before you need to run off to start the errands or the work day, or come in right after you drop the kids off at school.

The small room will be open for peaceful meditation or contemplation. The large room will be available for pre-class savasana, and the comfy couch will be yours to sit on and enjoy a hot beverage from our selection of teas and spices and to connect with like-minded people.

8:35 am Wednesdays and Fridays

***For a limited time we are offering River Valley families a 20% discount on class blocks. Use code RV2016 if booking online or at the studio. Discount applies to all classes on the schedule except workshops.
www.Yoga-loka.com

THANK YOU!

Kristyn, Zane, Annika, and Ridge Lederer would like to thank Tom Bell, Brad Brady, Clare Brunell, Ron Ferguson, the entire George Family, Charlie Kelly, Jennifer Kovach, Melanie Niemczura, Jill McMullen, Brenda Schaufele, and the entire Wesp/Robinson Family (especially John & Sawyer) for helping us move to our new home. We are so grateful to have such wonderful friends!

Lotus School of Liberal Arts

Please join us for our morning meditation series 7am to 8am, each Tuesday Nov 8 through Dec 20. All styles welcome. If you are new to meditation, our instructors will guide you. Suggested donation, \$10.00. Contributions of any size are appreciated. Proceeds go to The Lotus School of Liberal Arts. We are honored to have Felicia Ruth joining us.
<https://www.facebook.com/felicialight.ed/>

Looking for a Play Kitchen

Has your child outgrown their wooden play kitchen? If so the Berrocals will happily purchase it from you! Contact Ivy @ Karunagoddess@gmail.com OR 201-694-5166.

HOMEOPATHIC STUDY GROUP FORMING

If you are interested, contact Lois Dribin, d.hom. 215-297-0203 lois.dribin@gmail.com (aka lolo)

Wooden Dresser FREE to a good home

If you are interested, I can email/txt you photos. The dresser can be picked up at our home in Erwinna. Tara Bowers: bowersbetara@gmail.com; 908-674-2772

AQUARIUM hand-me-down request...

...for our accidentally won carnival gold fish, who I am told will live up to 20 years and easily grow over one foot! If you have a 30+ gallon aquarium that could use a home, we would be happy for one. Tara Bowers (Alice's mom, grade 3). bowersbetara@gmail.com; 908-674-2772

Lopez Island Farm Trust (LIFT); a program of Lopez Community Land Trust (LCLT)

Lopez Island is known for its scenic, rural, pastoral vistas and strong sense of community. The average age of a farmer here is 61 years, and ensuring succession farming through affordable access to farms and training of young farmers is critical. Our goal is to hold farmland in trust to support a resilient local food system that contributes to a healthy local economy and provides a community place to gather and learn.

LCLT is raising \$1,000,000 to purchase Stonecrest; a historic 48-acre working farm located in the center of the island. To date we have raised 42% of our goal, leaving just \$578,000 to be raised. We invite you to be a part of preserving the uniqueness of Lopez Island by contributing to the purchase of Stonecrest Farm.

For more information please see www.lopezclt.org or contact us at LCLT, PO Box 25, Lopez Island, WA 98261 or LCLT@rockisland.com.

HELPING HANDS FOR HIRE

Do you need a hand with something?

I enjoy the following:

Cleaning ("green"); sorting and organizing (even the messes!); Care-taking: land, home, people, animals; companionship; nourishing cooking/meal preparation; shopping; gardening and yard work (hand-based); personal assistant/helper; event preparation; and, I'm up for trying something not on this list too.

Available on an as-needed basis many weekdays 9:30-2:30. Sliding scale (pay what you can) or baseline hourly rate. Email bowersbetara@gmail.com Phone/Text: 908-674-2772 (Tara Bowers, mother of Alice, grade 3)

The Nutcracker

Come see an amazing performance and help raise money for our school!

Eden, Daphne and Coco Stuart will be dancing in Budzynski Ballet Company's full production of The Nutcracker at Central Bucks High School South, December 10th and 11th at 12PM or 4PM. Buy tickets at Budzynskiballet.org and enter "River Valley Waldorf School" in the the comments section and \$5 will be donated back to the school for each ticket. And...Tony Stuart is in it too!

Poinsettias for Sale

6" Red 5 Bloom \$8, 8" Red - 3 Plants per pot w/ 10+ Blooms \$20, 8" Tricolor - 3 Plants per pot w/ 10+ Blooms \$20, 7" Tricolor 4 Blooms \$15. Also available by the case at lower prices.

To order or for more information, contact: parksideroots@gmail.com, John 267-261-9977, Mark 215-932-5436. Plants available for pick up Saturday December 3rd and 10th. Pick up location at former Parkside Orchids, 2503 Mountainview Dr Ottsville PA 18942, Delivery available by appointment. Cash or check preferred.

Whimsical Rhyming Picture Books by two Steiner Alumni

Steiner parent and Early Childhood teacher collaborate on children's picture books in rhyme. Matt McFlack and His Flyaway Kite is a children's story written in rhyme about a young boy who buys a kite, loses it and then spends the entire day trying to retrieve it. Dance of the Seasons is a lyrical romp in rhyme through the seasons of the year. An ideal holiday gift for new readers! Ideal holiday gifts for young readers. Available on Amazon.com or at KyraRobinov.com.

Student Pottery Sale at Kissimmee River Pottery

Don't miss a chance to shop for unique and beautiful hand-made pottery. Just in time for the Holidays.

Great Pottery - Great Prices!!!

Reception: Friday, Dec. 2nd 6-9 pm Sale: December 3-4 10 am - 5 pm

Upcoming Events: Registration for the Winter session opens November 7th. Sign up online and come join the fun!! - 908-237-0671 riverpots@earthlink.net <http://www.riverpots.com>

Riegelsville Library Upcoming Events

Story Times are weekly on Tuesday @ 10:30 AM and Thursday @ 1:30 PM.

Get into the holiday spirit at the Riegelsville Library!

Make and decorate a mini-gingerbread house or mini-tree!

Saturday, December 10, 11am – 1pm

All materials provided by the library.

Riegelsville Public Library, 615 Easton Road, Riegelsville, PA

Winter Wonderland

December 27th

Puppet shows will be held instead of story time on these dates. Shows will be held at 10:30am on Tuesday and 1:30pm on Thursday. No registration required, free to attend.

Eyes of the Wild and Wallaby Tales Traveling Zoo

Tuesday, December 29th at 11am

Riegelsville Borough Community Room

Join us for a free program to learn about Chinchillas, Artic Fox and more during this exciting and educational show featuring LIVE wildlife!

For more than a decade, Eyes of the Wild has operated as a wildlife rescue and educational facility. ***Live animals will be present. If you are allergic to animal fur or hair, please take appropriate precautions. Absolutely no food or drink may be present during the program.*

For info call: 610-749-2357 www.riegelsvillelibrary.com

Myeong Shim Gum Do 明心劍道

Zen sword - meditation - mind training - clear mind, clear action

Shim Gum Do is an original Zen Art that integrates the practice and principles of Zen Buddhist meditation with the "action meditation" of martial art practice. The sword practice of Shim Gum Do comprises 330 forms, choreographed sequences of blocking and attacking movements. Each form is unique and generates a specific energy and a beautiful, athletic physical expression. The practice of Shim Gum Do emphasizes attaining a clear mind, clear thinking, and clear action.

Classes: Wednesday 4:30-6 pm 85 Sherman Rd, Ottsville, PA 610-297-1175 and Sunday 4:30-6 Dig! Yoga Lambertville, NJ. Very affordable! Fees vary slightly with location

Peter J. Ryan, Sabom Nim, M.Sc. is a certified instructor in this remarkable martial art who has deep experience with all ages and all types of learners. Group and individual instruction. 12 years study with Great Zen Master Chang Sik Kim. Each class will consist of individual and group instruction in Zen Sword and meditation, as well as guidance for creating a strong spiritual practice at home and at work.

Peter is a third degree black belt in Zen Sword and one of three certified American teachers of the martial art Shim Gum Do. This remarkable practice helps bring body, mind, and spirit together in unique and surprising ways that bring the student to "clear mind and clear action." Peter is a psychotherapist and an experienced and well-regarded teacher, who studies closely with the master. In 1998, he co-founded Tinicum Art and Science, the very first high school in the United States based upon the practice of mindfulness, and has served as principal and lead teacher there for many years. TAS closed this past June, and Peter launched a more ambitious successor, The Lotus School of Liberal Arts, which opened in September.

From: theconversation.com

Young Children are Terrible at Hiding – Psychologists Have a New Theory Why

By Henrike Moll & Allie Khalulyan

Young children across the globe enjoy playing games of hide and seek. There's something highly exciting for children about escaping someone else's glance and making oneself "invisible."

However, developmental psychologists and parents alike continue to witness that before school age, children are remarkably bad at hiding. Curiously, they often cover only their face or eyes with their hands, leaving the rest of their bodies visibly exposed.

For a long time, this ineffective hiding strategy was interpreted as evidence that young children are hopelessly "egocentric" creatures. Psychologists theorized that preschool children cannot distinguish their own perspective from someone else's. Conventional wisdom held that, unable to transcend their own viewpoint, children falsely assume that others see the world the same way they themselves do. So psychologists assumed children "hide" by covering their eyes because they conflate their own lack of vision with that of those around them.

But research in cognitive developmental psychology is starting to cast doubt on this notion of childhood egocentrism. We brought young children between the ages of two and four into our Minds in Development Lab at USC so we could investigate this assumption. Our surprising results contradict the idea that children's poor hiding skills reflect their allegedly egocentric nature.

Who can see whom?

Each child in our study sat down with an adult who covered her own eyes or ears with her hands. We then asked the child whether or not she could see or hear the adult, respectively. Surprisingly, children denied that they could. The same thing happened when the adult covered her own mouth: Now children denied that they could speak to her.

A number of control experiments ruled out that the children were confused or misunderstood what they were being asked. The results were clear: Our young subjects comprehended the questions and knew exactly what was asked of them. Their negative responses reflected their genuine belief that the other person could not be seen, heard, or spoken to when her eyes, ears, or mouth were obstructed. Despite the fact that the person in front of them was in plain view, they flat-out denied being able to perceive her. So what was going on?

It seems like young children consider mutual eye contact a requirement for one person to be able to see another. Their thinking appears to run along the lines of "I can see you only if you can see me, too" and vice versa. Our findings suggest that when a child "hides" by putting a blanket over her head, this strategy is not a result of egocentrism. In fact, children deem this strategy effective when others use it.

Built into their notion of visibility, then, is the idea of bi-directionality: Unless two people make eye contact, it is impossible for one to see the other. Contrary to egocentrism, young children simply insist on mutual recognition and regard.

An expectation of mutual engagement

Children's demand of reciprocity demonstrates that they are not at all egocentric. Not only can preschoolers imagine the world as seen from another's point of view; they even apply this capacity in situations where it's unnecessary or leads to wrong judgments, such as when they are asked to report their own perception. These faulty judgments – saying that others whose eyes are covered cannot be seen – reveal just how much children's perception of the world is colored by others.

The seemingly irrational way in which children try to hide from others and the negative answers they gave in our experiment show that children feel unable to relate to a person unless the communication flows both ways – not only from me to you but also from you to me, so we can communicate with each other as equals.

We are planning to investigate children's hiding behavior directly in the lab and test if kids who are bad at hiding show more reciprocity in play and conversation than those who hide more skillfully. We would also like to conduct these experiments with children who show an atypical trajectory in their early development.

Our findings underscore children's natural desire and preference for reciprocity and mutual engagement between individuals. Children expect and strive to create situations in which they can be reciprocally involved with others. They want to encounter people who are not only looked at but who can return another's gaze; people who not only listen but are also heard; and people who are not just spoken to but who can reply and thus enter a mutual dialogue.

At least in this respect, young children understand and treat other human beings in a manner that is not at all egocentric. On the contrary, their insistence on mutual regard is remarkably mature and can be considered inspirational. Adults may want to turn to these preschoolers as role models when it comes to perceiving and relating to other humans. These young children seem exquisitely aware that we all share a common nature as people who are in constant interaction with others.