



The River Valley Current

April 8, 2014 No. 376

*The best portion of a good man's life is his little, nameless,
unremembered acts of kindness and of love.*
-William Wordsworth

School Calendar

This Week

Thursday, April 10

1st grade Parent Evening 7:00 pm

Looking Ahead

Tuesday, April 15

Parent Council Meeting - Quakertown 7:00 pm

Thursday, April 17

School Tour 9:00 am
4th grade Class Play

Friday, April 18

4th grade Class Play

Mon. & Tues., April 21, 22

No School – Spring Break

Wed., Thurs. & Fri., April 23, 24, 25

Snow Make-up Days

Friday, May 9

Grandparents Day - Music Assembly

Saturday, May 10

Mayfaire

Monday, May 12

No School - Memorial Day

Saturday, May 31

RVWS Auction

How to Contact Us

info@rivervalleyschool.org
lc@rivervalleyschool.org
bot@rivervalleyschool.org
pc@rivervalleyschool.org

Seedlings for Sale

Christine Boston, our esteemed gardener, is planting seeds for your garden. A list of available biodynamic seedlings is attached to this week's Current.

The deadline for forms to be turned in is today. So **if you plan to order seedlings, please send Christine an email** right away (masnieve@hotmail.com) so she knows how many to plant. You may then turn in your form by Friday, April 11th. Seedlings will be available in early May. Sales will benefit our garden!

Next Parent Council Meeting

Please join us on Tuesday, April 15th

In our ongoing effort to bring PC meetings 'closer to home,' our April meeting will be held at Beckers Corner, 110 Old Bethlehem Rd, Quakertown, PA 18951 (<http://goo.gl/maps/vuMeu>).

If you have suggestions for future meeting locations, please contact us at PC@RiverValleySchool.org.

Save the Date

Saturday May 10th is Mayfaire!

Mayfaire is our spring festival, open to the wider community, as well as an outreach event for River Valley. The festival relies on the resources and the helping hands of the RVWS community for its success!

Mayfaire Activities

Each class holds a specific craft or activity in addition to some school wide participation in some general tasks like flower gathering.

In addition to the grades dancing around the Maypole and the EC puppet show, many activities will be held.

Folks from Acorn Room and Sun Room are not holding an activity but we invite you to sign up for a work shift if you can. Morning Glory parents are invited to help out too! The following is a breakdown of the activities that each class will 'hold' for this year's Mayfaire:

Moon - Garland Making

Star - Parking

1st Grade - Scavenger Hunt

2nd Grade - Cafe: Dessert, Drinks and Smoothies

3rd Grade - Silk Dying

4th Grade - Jump Rope Making

5th Grade - Ticketing

6th Grade - Music Stage and Sound; Trash too

7th Grade - Cafe (Desserts, Drinks and Smoothies) & Pocket Fairies

8th Grade - Pocket Fairy and Volley Ball game

We will be having 2 jump rope machines to help reduce the long line that always forms at this popular activity. So we are asking those classes that have a surplus of people to help us man the extra machine as the 4th grade won't have enough people.

Grandy is vending the main course and will need servers.

There will be pony rides too.

Got Yarn?

We will need lots and lots of yarn so if you have any to spare please bring it to school. We will be using it to make jump ropes. Since we will be having 2 machines we will need more than usual. Look for the basket in the lobby or outside the 4th grade.

Please see "From Parent Council" for more Mayfaire info.

From Administration

Screen Free Week

On May 5 - 11, 2014 people around the country (and world!) will turn OFF TV, video and mobile games, and other screens they use for entertainment, and turn ON the world around them! Join the fun!

Ink Cartridge and Cellphone Recycling

We recently received \$23.45 from Planet Green for recycling inkjet cartridges & cell phones! Please keep those contributions coming.

Grandparents Day

Before you know it May will be here. The birds are already starting to sing and the days are growing longer. If you would like to ensure that your child's grandparents or special friends are invited to this year's Grandparents Day, please share their contact information with us. We will need their name and address. If interested, we can also send the Current weekly as well. Please give information to Robbie at the front desk or email info@rivervalley.school.org. Thanks!

Opening for Marketing and Outreach Support

River Valley Waldorf School is accepting applications to fill a part-time Marketing and Outreach Support position starting in July or August 2014. This person is responsible to research, design, prepare and place display ads, press releases and postings of upcoming events in calendars and to distribute event postcards and flyers. This person provides logistical support to the Outreach Enrollment Coordinator's initiatives in the community; assists the Admission Coordinator with parent teas and school tours and provides internal support for school-wide events such as the Holiday Bazaar, Winter Fair and Mayfaire. The position is approximately 20 hour per week.

If you are interested, please contact Brian Wolff

Van Driver Class

There are a few spaces left in the van driver certification class, being held Saturday, April 19, 9 AM - 3 PM at school (no cost). As a certified van driver, you can minimize the need for parents to drive their own cars on field trips, as well as help out during festivals and other school events. Open to all parents and faculty. Please email Kira Willey at kira@kira.net.

Last Call for T-shirts

If you would like a Secret Garden t-shirt and haven't ordered one yet, this is your last chance. A form is once again attached to the Current this week.

Orders due with payment by Thursday, April 10th. Please put them in Carol Diven's mailbox.

From the Faculty

WHAT ARE THE CHILDREN LEARNING?

First Grade: Arithmetic

Second Grade: Language Arts

Third Grade: Grammar

Fourth Grade: Norse Mythology/Class Play

Fifth Grade: North American Geography

Sixth Grade: European Geography

Seventh Grade: Geometry

Eighth Grade: Chemistry

Saturday Circus Club

The River Valley Circus Club meets Saturday mornings from 10:30 to 12:00 in the All-Purpose Room for children in 1st grade and up. Parents may participate or drop off their children and leave. Come any week. Suggested donation is \$5 to \$10. Open to those totally new to circus and those with experience. Call Mr. Friedman at 610-847-8749 or just come.

WECAN Regional Conference Coming to RVWS

RVWS is honored to be hosting the Waldorf Early Childhood Teachers Regional Conference this Spring. On April 26th, teachers from numerous Waldorf schools in the Mid-Atlantic states will converge upon our community. If you would like to offer a visitor a place in your home for a small fee (\$20-\$50?) or even for free, please let Melanie in the Star Room know.

From the Board

Board Of Trustees Swing Dance and Workshop

at Ottsville Traditional Arts Center, 250 Durham Road, Ottsville, PA

SAVE THE DATE! - Sunday, April 13

at Ottsville Traditional Arts Center, Ottsville PA. Instruction with Peggy Leiby & Ret Turner

Live Music with Nobody's Bizness

Did you buy a ticket at last year's Auction? Great News! If you were unable to purchase tickets at the 2013 Auction, tickets will be available for sale at the door beginning at 4PM for \$25 per person. If you purchased tickets for sale at the auction, Refreshments are Complimentary during our Auction Donor Appreciation Social Hour.

3 - 4pm Complimentary Refreshments and Libations for Auction Donors

4 - 5pm Instruction with Peggy Leiby & Ret Turner

5 - 7pm Swing Dance

Tickets at the door \$25 each

Refreshments will be available for purchase between 4 & 7

MAY 17 - DAY OF SHINING LIGHT ON RIVER VALLEY WALDORF SCHOOL

Please join us for our first ever Wellness Event at RVWS! Part of this year's auction, all proceeds go directly to support our school. Please join us for this pioneering event. These wonderful sessions come at outstanding prices and are investments not only in the wellness of our school but in the wellness of you and your family.

The Three Reiki Masters 10:00am-1:00pm

-Our three Reiki Masters Felicia Holtz, Sabine Rahman and Molly Watson channel energy to inspire the self-healing of your body, mind and spirit. \$25 for a 30 minutes session.

River Valley Circus Clinic 10:00am-1:00pm

-Our gifted teachers Ken Friedman and Christine Boston share their love of the circus arts to bring the joy and skills of the circus to your children. \$10 per child.

Musical Family Yoga- 1st Grade and Older 3.00pm

-Yoga teachers Kira Willey and Felicia Holtz deliver this yoga event based on Horton Hears a Who by Dr Seuss and grounded kids yoga. Learn how to best align yourself for deep listening. Come share your Light! \$15 includes one parent and one child; \$25 includes whole family.

To reserve your spot in any part of the day, please sign up by contacting auction@rivervalleyschool.org

From Parent Council

Additional Mayfaire Info:

Family checklist for Mayfaire:

- o 20 Pocket Fairy items
- o Having lots of fun!
- o Help to prepare your class craft or activity
- o Sign up for work shift
- o Sign up for a Set up OR Clean up shift
- o Bread dough for the outdoor oven
- o 3 bouquets of flowers. These may be wildcrafted like ferns or flowering bushes or purchased
- o BYO plates and utensils and water bottle.
- o picnic blanket if desired

Flowers Needed

The Mayfaire Committee is again asking for assistance from all families to donate flowers for our raffia-flower garland making. Please keep an eye out for flowers in bloom around the time of Mayfaire. Supermarkets are also a good place to find flowers if you don't have any growing in your yard.

Pocket Fairy Items

Each RVWS family is asked to make/provide items for the Pocket Fairy.

The Pocket Fairy is usually an upper grade school student wearing a specially made cape with many small pockets. In each pocket is hidden a treasure, usually very small and simple and children use their tickets to 'purchase' a pocket to try. They get to keep the treasure they find hidden in the pocket. RVWS families are asked to make 20 items per family (not per student!) for this event. The small children really do love this activity!

Some examples might be:

painted rock, shell, bead on a string, crystal or polished rock,
felt cutout of a butterfly or something small,
felted acorn or ladybug, small beaded bracelet
(These will be collected a week or 2 before the festival.)

From the Community

Lettuces & Basil For Sale

Dennis Riling, father of Ceara Riling 1st grade, has been growing lettuce and basil hydroponically with his business Doylestown Fresh. With our abundant harvest we would love to offer a weekly sale to our River Valley community each Wednesday afternoon at pick up. You can purchase our 5oz lettuce spring mix for \$4 each as well as our 1/2oz basil package \$2 each. If you are interested in preordering or have questions please give us a call 267-337-2355

The Healthy Habit

Megan Slater, mother of Ari Michael in 1st grade, is the new owner of The Healthy Habit in Milford, NJ. Stop in to show your support and say hi.

Megan is very knowledgeable in herbal health and nutrition. Her store is stocked with a wide variety of foods to please all dietary needs. Fresh sandwiches, soups, and gluten free desserts are on the daily menu. The deli case always has fresh salads, roasted veggies, and kimchi.

Fresh produce arrives every Wednesday afternoon. If you have a special request just let Megan know, and she will do her best to get it. Orders are due by Friday afternoon. Case deals are available.

Spring is here and Megan will be ready to provide you with a wide selection of heirloom and organic seeds. Megan has furnished a comfortable room upstairs we are calling the Watchtower. It's a great space to relax and enjoy your lunch. The Watchtower will be available for anyone needing space for meetings, gatherings, or for artist and crafters to sell their goods.

Mark your calendar for May 3rd. The Healthy Habit's Grand Opening will be quite the event! More information to come. Contact Megan for availability and additional information.

Tibetan Sand Mandala

Tibetan Monks from the Drepung Gonang Monastery are at Lafayette College this week creating a sand mandala.

Today, April 8th and on April 9th visitors are welcome to watch the creation of the mandala. The Closing and Dissolution of the Mandala Ceremony will take place at 4 pm on April 9th.

Interfaith Chapel (Hogg Hall) Lafayette College in Easton, PA

Yoga Loka

Singing Bowls Concert- 4/12 at 6:00 pm

Divine Feminine- The Power of Ritual with Lori Thatch- 4/13 at 1:00 pm

Interested in the upcoming Teacher Training/Yoga Immersion? Come to the informational meeting on 4/26 at 10:20 am

Happy Hip Openers- 4/27 at 4:00 pm

Free Brand-new-to-Yoga class- 4/27 at 6:30 pm

Please see the website at Yoga-Loka.com for more information and to register

Babysitter Available

My name is Marcella Harvi. I am in 7th grade and 13 years old. I have taken the American Red Cross babysitters course. I am available for babysitting or mother's helper work on most weekdays and some weekends. I charge \$5 an hour for 1 child and \$1 per additional child per hour. You can reach me at 203-343-2500.

American Red Cross Blood Drive

Plumstead Township Police Explorers
Wednesday, April 30th, 2pm – 7pm
Plumstead Township Building, 5186 Stump Road
APPOINTMENTS ARE PREFERRED
For an appointment or info please contact:
1-800-RED CROSS or Nancy.Taylor@redcross.org
Or sign-up online at: redcrossblood.org
Enter sponsor code: plumstead township

Ottsville Traditional Arts Center Contrawaltz with Run of the Mill String Band and Peggy Leiby

Friday, April 11th 6:00PM-10:30PM
6-7PM Waltz Workshop with Peggy Leiby (\$7)
7-7:30PM Contra Beginners workshop
7:30-10:30PM Contradance with Run of the Mill String Band (\$9)
\$13 combined ticket to both events!

Wednesday Jams/Song Swaps

6 pm community potluck
6:30 - 8ish tunes and songs
\$5 donation or bring a dish to share!
March 26th with Daniel Hawkins
March 19th with Jane Rothfield

We meet to share a meal and traditional music in a collaborative, judgment-free setting. All are welcome, even if you've never sung or been to a jam session before! If you want to come extra-prepared, check out our website, where we post learning materials including sheet music, videos, and recordings ahead of time. At the Ottsville Traditional Arts Center, 250 Durham Rd. Ottsville, PA 18972 Learn more at ottsvilletradarts.weebly.com

Concert in the Round

By the Lenape Chamber Ensemble
Saturday, April 12, 10-11am (For Children 4-12).
Featuring music by Mozart, Schedel and Elgar for flute, violin, viola, cello & piano. Refreshments and Instrument Demonstrations! At Delaware Valley College Student Center, 700 East Butler Ave (at State St. exit, off Rte. 611) Children \$2.00 – Adults Free. For more info, please call 610.294.9361

Easter Egg Hunt

Sponsored by Rieglesville Public Library and Rieglesville Recreation Board
Friday, April 18th @ Rieglesville Borough Park
1:00pm – Preschool and younger
1:05pm – Kindergarten – Grade 2
1:10pm – Grades 3 – 5
Egg hunt will be held rain or shine. For more info please call 610.346.7986

The Parzival Academy 1st Annual Art Show Benefit

April 13, 2014, 12-8 pm
Location: The Mill at Camp Sankanac, 68 Bertolet School Rd., Spring City, Pa 19475
Contact: Nancy Morgan 610-935-0757 info@parzivalacademy.org
Cost: \$15 Adult
Featuring 20-25 Artists. Hor d' oeuvres. 35% of the purchases will be donated to The Parzival Academy. 100% of all proceeds go to the school.
The Mission of The Parzival Academy is to awaken and cultivate the unfolding capacities innate in a child. Individualized academic programs will be developed through integrating Waldorf pedagogy, special educational approaches and therapeutic resources to meet the needs of children with learning and social differences. Teachers, therapists and staff will strive to nourish the unique capacities of every student with love and devotion, recognizing the spiritual nature inherent in each human being.
The Parzival Academy supports the student who finds conventional academic space stressful for whatever reason. Featuring Individualized Assessments, 5:1 Student : Teacher Ratio, Prescriptive Educational Plans, and In-School Therapeutic Support.
www.parzivalacademy.org

Calling All Artists:

Booths available contact: Info@parzivalacademy.org

Healing Ceremonies

Sabine Rahman/Saharra White Wolf (her spiritual name) invites you to join her spirit guided ceremonies in Clinton, NJ.

~Children/Family Full Moon Fire Ceremonies (next one on April 15th, 4 pm)

Ceremonies are free of charge. It is a way to show gratitude for everything we have. As you attend these ceremonies, healing takes place not only for yourself, but also for Mother Earth and her children.

For more information on upcoming events, please join Awakya on Meetup.com and RSVP for events you are able to attend.

The Hummingbird's Tour (an end of life comedy) Bucks County Playhouse - April 16 to 20, 2014

The Hummingbird's Tour (an end of life comedy) Bucks County Playhouse - April 16 to 20, 2014

1970, Northern California. Three aging siblings are thrown into a comic philosophical frenzy by an unexpected guest bearing unsettling mystical predictions. This "end of life comedy" takes a playful look at life, more life, and life after life with wit and more than a few surprises... with a talented ensemble cast from NYC and LA, written by Margaret Dulaney Balitsaris and directed by John Augustine.

Wed, April 16th, 2:30; Thurs, April 17th, 2:30 & 7:00; Fri, April 18th, 7:00; Sat, April 19th, 2:30 & 7:00; Sun, April 20th, 2:30

Ticket prices - \$40, \$25 for those 25 and younger purchased in person at the Box Office)
BOX OFFICE (215)862-2121. Call soon for best seats.

All proceeds from ticket sales will go to support the Haitian microfinance institution Fonkoze, committed to lifting Haiti's rural poor out of poverty since 1994.

House Needed

The Sessegolo family is looking for a house to rent in the Upper Black Eddy, Kintnersville, Riegelsville area. Our moving date has to be before the end of May.

Please let us know of any information at 610-751-4600. Beverly Sessegolo.

Backyard Stewardship Workshop

A roadmap to backyard design and stewardship
Any homeowner, gardener, teacher or land owners who is interested in helping the environment can benefit from this training about restoring ecology to backyards.

Cost: \$55. Saturday, April 12, 9:30 am—2:30 pm, American Native Nursery, 2191 Hillcrest Road Quakertown PA 18951. To register, email: ssaffier@audubon.org 610.666.5593 x112

Volunteers Needed

Are you looking for an opportunity to learn more about horses and work with people with a disability? TaKE Center Outpatient Rehabilitative Services, located in Kintnersville, PA provides physical therapy with the use of a horse. Hippotherapy, as it is called, is used to treat people with various disabilities including physical and cognitive challenges. By putting the patient on the horse, the horse's movement is transferred to the patient, which helps improve strength, posture, balance and gait.

Although TaKE Center is run and supervised by a qualified, licensed physical therapist, it would be impossible for us to provide this clinical setting for our patients without the assistance of volunteers, who play a key role in supporting the efforts of TaKE Center.

We are looking for individuals and groups to help with a variety of needs. Depending on interest and experience, roles can range from working directly with the horses and patients, to maintaining equipment, the barn, property or trails. Minimum age to volunteer in the riding ring is 13. We do ask that youth under the age of 10 are accompanied by an adult.

Cleaning the barn, tack and horses is as important to us as providing therapeutic session. Without you, we cannot provide the quality services we strive to achieve. By volunteering at TaKE Center, you are sure to walk away with unforgettable, valuable experiences from your connections with amazing people – and horses, too! Please do not hesitate to contact us with any questions or interest. We'd love to hear from you!

Terri K. Long, MPT

ph: 610-346-9446 email: tklong63@verizon.net

web: www.takecenter.com 1300 Woodcock Lane, Kintnersville, PA 18930

Save the Readers

A defense of 'Deep Reading'

By ANNIE MURPHY PAUL

When a minaret dating from the twelfth century was toppled in the fighting between rebels and government forces in Aleppo, Syria, earlier this spring, we recognized that more than a building had been lost. The destruction of irreplaceable artifacts—like the massive Buddha statues dynamited in the Bamiyan Valley in Afghanistan in 2001 and the ancient texts burned and looted in Iraq in 2003—leaves us less equipped to understand ourselves and where we came from, less able to enlarge ourselves with the awe and pleasure that these creations once evoked.

Which is why we should care about the survival of a human treasure threatened right here at home: the deep reader. “Deep reading”—as opposed to the often superficial reading we do on the web—is an endangered practice, one we ought to take steps to preserve as we would a historic building or a significant work of art. Its disappearance would imperil the intellectual and emotional development of generations growing up online, as well as the perpetuation of a critical part of our culture: the novels, poems and other kinds of literature that can be appreciated only by readers whose brains, quite literally, have been trained to apprehend them.

Recent research in cognitive science, psychology and neuroscience has demonstrated that deep reading—slow, immersive, rich in sensory detail and emotional and moral complexity—is a distinctive experience, different in kind from the mere decoding of words. Although deep reading does not, strictly speaking, require a conventional book, the built-in limits of the printed page are uniquely conducive to the deep reading experience. A book’s lack of hyperlinks, for example, frees the reader from making decisions—Should I click on this link or not?—allowing her to remain fully immersed in the narrative.

That immersion is supported by the way the brain handles language rich in detail, allusion and metaphor: by creating a mental representation that draws on the same brain regions that would be active if the scene were unfolding in real life. The emotional situations and moral dilemmas that are the stuff of literature are also vigorous exercise for the brain, propelling us inside the heads of fictional characters and even, studies suggest, increasing our real-life capacity for empathy.

None of this is likely to happen when we’re scrolling through TMZ.com. Although we call the activity by the same name, the deep reading of books and the information-driven reading we do on the web are very different, both in the experience they produce and in the capacities they develop. A growing body of evidence suggests that online reading may be less engaging and less satisfying, even for the “digital natives” for whom it is so familiar. Last month, for example, Britain’s National Literacy Trust released the results of a study of 34,910 young people aged eight to sixteen. Researchers reported that 39% of children and teens read daily using electronic devices, but only 28% read printed materials every day. Those who read only onscreen were three times less likely to say they enjoy reading very much, and a third less likely to have a favorite book. The study also found that young people who read daily only onscreen were nearly two times less likely to be above-average readers than those who read daily in print or both in print and onscreen.

To understand why we should be concerned about how young people read, and not just whether they’re reading at all, it helps to know something about the way the ability to read evolved. “Human beings were never born to read,” notes Maryanne Wolf, director of the Center for Reading and Language Research at Tufts University and author of *Proust and the Squid: The Story and Science of the Reading Brain*. Unlike the ability to understand and produce spoken language, which under normal circumstances will unfold according to a program dictated by our genes, the ability to read must be painstakingly acquired by each individual. The “reading circuits” we construct are recruited from structures in the brain that evolved for other purposes—and these circuits can be feeble or they can be robust, depending on how often and how vigorously we use them.

The deep reader, protected from distractions and attuned to the nuances of language, enters a state that psychologist Victor Nell, in a study of the psychology of pleasure reading, likens to a hypnotic trance. Nell found that when readers are enjoying the experience the most, the pace of their reading actually slows. The combination of fast, fluent decoding of words and slow, unhurried progress on the page gives deep readers time to enrich their reading with reflection, analysis, and their own memories and opinions. It gives them time to establish an intimate relationship with the author, the two of them engaged in an extended and ardent conversation like people falling in love.

This is not reading as many young people are coming to know it. Their reading is pragmatic and instrumental: the difference between what literary critic Frank Kermode calls “carnal reading” and “spiritual reading.” If we allow our offspring to believe that carnal reading is all there is—if we don’t open the door to spiritual reading, through an early insistence on discipline and practice—we will have cheated them of an enjoyable, even ecstatic experience they would not otherwise encounter. And we will have deprived them of an elevating and enlightening experience that will enlarge them as people. Observing young people’s attachment to digital devices, some progressive educators and permissive parents talk about needing to “meet kids where they are,” molding instruction around their onscreen habits. This is mistaken. We need, rather, to show them someplace they’ve never been, a place only deep reading can take them.

There’s another reason to work to save deep reading: the preservation of a cultural treasure. Like information on floppy disks and cassette tapes that may soon be lost because the equipment to play it no longer exists, properly-educated people are the only “equipment,” the only beings, who can unlock the wealth of insight and wisdom that lie in our culture’s novels and poems. When the library of Alexandria was lost to fire, the scarce resource was books themselves. Today, with billions of books in print and stored online, the endangered breed is not books but readers. Unless we train the younger generation to engage in deep reading, we will find ourselves with our culture’s riches locked away in a vault: books everywhere and no one truly able to read them.