



River Valley Current

March 7, 2017 No. 471

"Words form the thread on which we string our experiences."
-Aldous Huxley

School Calendar

This Week

Wednesday, March 8

School Tour 9:00 am
Parent Council Meeting - Homestead 2:00 pm
5th grade Parent Evening 7:00 pm

Saturday, March 11

2nd grade Workday

Looking Ahead

Tuesday, March 14

6th grade to Bryn Athyn Cathedral
Diversity Committee Meeting 6:30-8:00 pm

Saturday, March 18

All-School Open House 10:00 am

Monday, March 20

4th grade Parent Evening

Thursday & Friday, March 23 & 24

No School - Parent-Teacher Conferences

Friday, March 24

Middle School Dance

Monday, March 27

7th grade Parent Evening

Mon. March 27 - Wed March 29

4th grade to PEEC

How to Contact Us

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

RVWS All School Open House Saturday, March 18th, 10 am

Invite a friend and come yourself! We are hosting this year's Open House using a whole new format. Participants will see a performance by our 5 & 6th grade chorus, meet some of our wonderful alums, alumni & current parents as well as have time to converse with our grade school, early childhood and specialty teachers, view student work and see how our program fits together as a synergistic whole.

This is about outreach and it is also an opportunity to learn more about what comes next for your children as they move up through RVWS and beyond! Please RSVP so we can plan for our group. We will have childcare. Please let us know if you are coming and if you have a need for childcare.
RSVP to the office, or info@rivervalleyschool.org

RVWS Gala Auction

Saturday, April 1, 2017, 6:00-11:00 PM
Nurture Nature Center, Easton, PA

Click this link to purchase tickets and to see a sampling of items
<https://rvws.ejoinme.org/RVWSAuction>

Final Week for Auction Donations

Are you or is someone you know an artisan willing to donate your craft to the Auction? Do you have a unique experience that would make a great auction item? We are also very grateful for donations of gift certificates for local dining, recreation, entertainment, shopping or personal care services. Contact us at auction@rivervalleyschool.org Deadline for donations to be delivered to the collection box in the lobby is **THIS** Friday, March 10.

Help Us Bring New Faces to the Gala and Receive a Free Ticket!

Do you have friends, family or acquaintances that could help support our mission by attending the Gala? Sell three tickets to the April 1 Gala and receive one ticket free! Make it a double date with some neighbors, co-workers or relatives and share the joy of supporting our school with those similarly generous and fun-loving people in your life! <https://rvws.ejoinme.org/RVWSAuction>

If you would like more information on any aspect of the annual auction, please contact auction@rivervalleyschool.org
Many Thanks from the Auction Committee!

Parent Council meeting -
Wednesday, March 8th, 2 pm at the
Homestead.

Diversity Committee meeting -
Tuesday, March 14, 6:30 - 8:00 pm

New Capoeira Session
March 13 through June 5th
Form is at the end of the Current.

Food Drive Deadline Tomorrow
Wednesday, March 8th
Please donate what you can.

Volunteer Opportunities at the Auction Gala

We have many important tasks needing volunteer support on Auction night. Can you help on our big night? We would be grateful. Contact us at auction@rivervalleysschool.org

The Auction Gala is one of the most anticipated school events of the year, fostering community building while raising funds that ensure the health of our school. You will find a diverse selection of quality items our guests have come to expect over the years such as handmade gifts, apparel and toys, artwork and the perennial favorite classroom items. Live music, dining, friendship and goodwill, though, are the real hallmarks of this outstanding event.

If you would like more information on any aspect of the annual auction, please contact auction@rivervalleysschool.org

From Administration

New Session of Capoeira – March 13-June 5

Leigh Robinson (Contra-Mestra Gata Brava) would really like to continue with our school – she loves our kids! She hopes to continue introducing additional instruments to our group, to bring children from another program to have a joint class at some point and she and Mr. Santiago are planning to present at a Friday assembly in the spring. However she travels a bit to come and we do need to have a minimum number of students to make the program work.

A registration form is at the end of the Current. We'll hold all checks until we know for sure that we'll be able to launch.

Open House Yard Signs

Yard signs are in the lobby and we have extras. Take one if you have a spot for it.

From the Faculty

What the Children are Learning:

First Grade – Language Arts

Second Grade – Math

Third Grade – Math

Fourth Grade – Human Being & Animal World

Fifth Grade – Ancient Egypt

Sixth Grade – Middle Ages

Seventh Grade – Geography

Eighth Grade – Geography

From Parent Council

Parent Stage – Saturday, April 22nd

"Lend me your ears and I'll sing you a song. And I'll try not to sing out of key." Fortunately, our friends are always supportive!

Parent Stage is April 22, at school, doors open 6:30. Get your babysitter now!

Performances for parents, by parents. Free, pot-luck. Come. You'll be glad you did.

If you'd like to perform (music, dance, comedy, poetry, juggling. . .) please contact Chellie Bader michelle@smorgasb.org /617-501-7517, or Kira Willey kirawilley@rcn.com.

From the Diversity Committee

Next Diversity Committee Meeting - Tuesday, March 14, 6:30 - 8:00 pm

Meetings are every three weeks on Tuesdays, and alternate between afternoons and evenings.

The Diversity Committee would like the RVWS community to know that any parent or faculty member is welcome to reach out with thoughts, concerns, or suggestions relating to diversity. Please contact Molly MacDonald, interim faculty co-chair, or Holly Low, interim parent co-chair. The committee would also like the RVWS community to know that we seek to make the committee itself diverse and inclusive - all are welcome to our meetings.

From the Community

Duplex/Apartment for Rent

Scenic and quiet beauty right outside your door on the towpath of the Delaware Canal. Tucked away in the village of Upper Black Eddy, yet just a walk to Milford necessities.

1,000 sq foot duplex in a renovated historic country building. Some distinctive wood work. High ceilings, 2 bedrooms, 1.5 baths, a new washer/dryer, hardwood floors, and a porch area to the south side. \$1,200/month. No smoking, no pets, please. Call Karen (610)-982-9074

Items for Sale

As part of the process of moving back to Europe, we will be selling items after items (till the house eventually). Next items, for sale, that we no longer need are:

Troy-Bilt Storm 2410 179-cc 24-in Two-Stage Electric Start Gas Snow Blower (used in only few occasions)
A Samsung Bx2235 22" Led Monitor 1920x1080
Dvi Scratch And Dent (in excellent condition)
Garmin Nuvi 50LM Navigator (in excellent condition)
Interested? Please contact Piergiorgio, Oscar's (Moon Room) dad at 646 830 9250 or pgv.pier@gmail.com

Ottsville Traditional Arts

Concert and Jam Workshop with Wheezer & Squeezer!

Wednesday, March 22

5:00 - 6:00 Potluck meet & greet

6:00 - 7:15 Concert (\$15)

7:30 - 8:30 Jam Workshop (\$15)

\$25 combined ticket!

Jeremiah McLane and Timothy Cummings (Wheezer & Squeezer) are an energetic Vermont-based duo who share music deeply rooted in the traditional dance repertoire of Northern Europe and North America. Wielding accordions and bagpipes - and often whistles and piano - they create a beguiling blend which utterly subverts the common stereotypes of their Old World instruments. McLane and Cummings draw from a broad repertoire that includes bourrées from Central France, gavottes from Brittany in Northwestern France, dance tunes from the Scottish Lowland & Border region, and original compositions reflecting North American influences. Their 2016 release *The Wind Among the Reeds* won the Montpelier's Times-Argus album of the year award.

Weekly Wednesday Jam Session

6-8pm every Wednesday: tunes and songs, \$5 suggested donation

Traditional music in a collaborative, judgement-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. Sheet music also available at the jam, but try playing by ear if you can!

Vernal Equinox Family Ritual

Join us to honor Mother Earth as she welcomes spring! Let us come together and connect with her awakening energy of renewal through song and the offering of our blessings as we stand upon her fertile farmland.

Sunday March 19, 2017, 3-4 pm. Free, family friendly ritual offered by Rebekah Barnes of Rooted Rhythms <https://www.facebook.com/groups/rootedrhythms/>
Hosted by Blooming Glen Organic Farm Perkasie, PA <http://www.bloomingglenfarm.com>

Waldorf Family Camp Programs in Hungary

29th July – 5th August - Hamor Waldorf School, Miskolc, Hungary

For further information see the flyer on the RVWS bulletin board or contact:

waldorf.family.camp@gmail.com, or kunosnora@gmail.com

Waldorf Family Camp Hungary on Facebook and waldorfcamp.hu

Rooster Looking for a Home

The Miles family is looking for someone to adopt a big, kindly rooster. (We have too many.) Please contact Jonny if you are interested. jonny@jonnymiles.com

Looking for a Dollhouse

If your family has a large wooden dollhouse that you are no longer using, we would love to buy it from you! Contact Sara, mother of Isaiah in Mrs. Atkinson's first grade. 908-323-9691 sarajoyfishkin@gmail.com

BYRON KATIE WORKSHOP APRIL 7, 8, & 9th

There will be an introductory retreat in the work of Byron Katie, presented by Tania Tierro. The retreat will take place at the James-Lorah House in Doylestown, PA.

The work is a way to question the beliefs that underpin our stress. It's a simple, profound process of self-liberation and, consequently, self-realization. For the 2nd year, Lisa Naples, a local resident, is organizing this event. She can be reached for questions at 215-340-0964 or at lisanaplesceramics@gmail.com.

Cost for the workshop is as follows:

- Friday night only option: \$60

- Full weekend retreat: \$275 with an early bird special of \$240 if registration takes place by March 15th

Scholarships are available for those who otherwise cannot come.

From Psychology Today

This Is What Screen Time Really Does to Kids' Brains

Too much at the worst possible age can have lifetime consequences.

By Liraz Margalit Ph.D.

Screen time is an inescapable reality of modern childhood, with kids of every age spending hours upon hours in front of iPads, smartphones and televisions.

That's not always a bad thing: Educational apps and TV shows are great ways for children to sharpen their developing brains and hone their communication skills—not to mention the break these gadgets provide harried parents. But tread carefully: A number of troubling studies connect delayed cognitive development in kids with extended exposure to electronic media. The US Department of Health and Human Services estimates that American children spend a whopping seven hours a day in front of electronic media. Other statistics reveal that kids as young as two regularly play iPad games and have playroom toys that involve touch screens.

Saturation and long-term consequences

When very small children get hooked on tablets and smartphones, says Dr. Aric Sigman, an associate fellow of the British Psychological Society and a Fellow of Britain's Royal Society of Medicine, they can unintentionally cause permanent damage to their still-developing brains. Too much screen time too soon, he says, "is the very thing impeding the development of the abilities that parents are so eager to foster through the tablets. The ability to focus, to concentrate, to lend attention, to sense other people's attitudes and communicate with them, to build a large vocabulary—all those abilities are harmed."

Put more simply, parents who jump to screen time in a bid to give their kids an educational edge may actually be doing significantly more harm than good—and they need to dole out future screen time in an age-appropriate matter.

Between birth and age three, for example, our brains develop quickly and are particularly sensitive to the environment around us. In medical circles, this is called the critical period, because the changes that happen in the brain during these first tender years become the permanent foundation upon which all later brain function is built. In order for the brain's neural networks to develop normally during the critical period, a child needs specific stimuli from the outside environment. These are rules that have evolved over centuries of human evolution, but—not surprisingly—these essential stimuli are not found on today's tablet screens. When a young child spends too much time in front of a screen and not enough getting required stimuli from the real world, her development becomes stunted.

And not just for a while. If the damage happens during these crucial early years, its results can affect her forever.

Much of the issue lies with the fact that what makes tablets and iPhones so great—dozens of stimuli at your fingertips, and the ability to process multiple actions simultaneously—is exactly what young brains do not need.

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Tablets are the ultimate shortcut tools: Unlike a mother reading a story to a child, for example, a smartphone-told story spoon-feeds images, words, and pictures all at once to a young reader. Rather than having to take the time to process a mother's voice into words, visualize complete pictures and exert a mental effort to follow a story line, kids who follow stories on their smartphones get lazy. The device does the thinking for them, and as a result, their own cognitive muscles remain weak.

Trouble making friends

The brain's frontal lobe is the area responsible for decoding and comprehending social interactions. It is in this corner of the mind that we empathize with others, take in nonverbal cues while talking to friends and colleagues, and learn how to read the hundreds of unspoken signs—facial expression, tone of voice, and more—that add color and depth to real-world relationships.

So how and when does the brain's frontal lobe develop? Not surprisingly, the most crucial stage is in early childhood, during that same critical period, and it's dependent on authentic human interactions. So if your young child is spending all of his time in front of an iPad instead of chatting and playing with teachers and other children, his empathetic abilities—the near-instinctive way you and I can read situations and get a feel for other people—will be dulled, possibly for good.

Life has no on/off switch

Have you ever seen a mother chuckle as her baby tries to “swipe” a real photograph, or punch their fingers onto a poster or book as if it were a touchscreen? It may seem cute, but it points to something much deeper in the child's brain—an internalization that all actions have an immediate effect, and all stimuli elicit a quick response.

This is true in the on-screen world, but nowhere else. When every finger swipe brings about a response of colors and shapes and sounds, a child's brain responds gleefully with the neurotransmitter dopamine, the key component in our reward system that is associated with feelings of pleasure. Dopamine hits in the brain can feel almost addictive, and when a child gets too used to an immediate stimuli response, he will learn to always prefer smartphone-style interaction—that is, immediate gratification and response—over real-world connection.

This pattern mimics, in a less intense manner, the dangerous cycle psychologists and physicians regularly see in patients with drug and alcohol addictions.

Don't trash those tablets for good

Despite the danger that overexposure to smartphones can pose for young brains, there are a lot of benefits to letting little ones use technology. Once a child is over the age of two, feel free to allow limited screen time—think an hour, max, of playing with tablets and iPhones each day—to help develop coordination, hone quick reactions, and even sharpen language skills. As with all the other toys and tools available to your developing child, smartphone use should stay in moderation, and never stand in for human interaction or real-world face time.

The bottom line? Power off regularly to help your child understand the clear boundaries between the virtual world and the real one.

RVWS After-School Capoeira Program

Open to grades 5-8

Monday afternoons from 3:30-4:30 pm

Capoeira at River Valley is 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.

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Registration Form

Student's Name _____

Student's Teacher _____

Parent's Name _____

Parent's Phone 1: _____ Phone 2: _____

Email 1: _____

Email 2: _____

I would like to register my child for Capoeira:

Mondays, 3:30-4:30 \$15/class

_____ 3/13 through 6/5/2017 **\$150**

Payment in full must be attached to the registration form. Payment is non-refundable and is set regardless of the number of classes actually attended by your child. Classes will be filled on a first come first served basis.

ADULTS ARE ALSO WELCOME TO ENROLL