



# River Valley Current

September 27, 2016 No. 453

"So many things are possible as long as you don't know they are impossible."  
-- Mildred D. Taylor

## School Calendar

### This Week

**Thursday, September 29**  
*Michaelmas In-School Celebration*

### Looking Ahead

**Monday, October 3**  
*No School – Rosh Hashanah*

**Monday, October 3 – Friday, October 7**  
*3<sup>rd</sup> grade Hawthorne Valley Farm Trip*

**Wednesday, October 5**  
*School Tour* 9:00 am  
*6<sup>th</sup> grade class trip to New York City*

**Wed., October 5 – Mon., October 10**  
*Teaching Sensible Science*

**Thursday, October 6**  
*An Evening with Michael D'Aleo* 6:30 pm

**Thursday, October 20**  
*Board Meeting* 6:30 pm

**Saturday, October 22**  
*6<sup>th</sup> Grade Workday*  
*BoT Halloween Costume Ball* 7:00 pm

**Thursday, October 27**  
*Fall Assembly* 6:30 pm

**Friday, October 28**  
*No School – Faculty In-Service*

### How to Contact Us

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

## An Evening with Michael D'Aleo

### The Development of Self-Motivation and Its Relationship to Independent Thought

Thursday, October 6<sup>th</sup> 6:30-8:00 PM

"How do we create compassionate human beings while simultaneously developing the tenacious attitudes necessary for today's rapidly changing culture?"

"Can one really do one's own independent thinking without being self-motivated?"

Michael D'Aleo lectures nationally and internationally on the topics of science, education and environmental issues and is a founding member of the Saratoga Experiential Natural Science Research Institute (SENSRI) in Keene Valley, New York.

As the Director of Research. He was a co-founder of the high school at the Waldorf School of Saratoga Springs where he taught physical science and astronomy. Mr. D'Aleo is also an instructor of Waldorf School physical science teachers at The Center for Anthroposophy in Wilton New Hampshire as well as a guest teacher at various teacher training institutions and Waldorf Schools.

He is the cofounder of, and leads the successful 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade science teacher training, *Teaching Sensible Science*.

## Board of Trustees 80s Halloween Costume Ball

7.00 pm, Saturday, October 22

Come Grave-Dance the Night Away With All of Your Favorite Fiends!  
Costume and Dance Prizes! Food, Drink & DJ Andrew McIntosh!  
Join Us for a Devil of a Good Time!  
\$30/person \$50/couple/Faculty Free!  
For tickets, please visit

<https://rvws.ejoinme.org/MyEvents/2016RiverValleyWaldorfSchoolAutumnGala/JointheFun/tabid/809084/Default.aspx> or  
email Ron Ferguson at [rsferg@gmail.com](mailto:rsferg@gmail.com)

## Next Parent Council Meeting

Thursday October 13<sup>th</sup> @ 6:30pm  
Location TBA

## October Lunch Menu

The October Lunch Menu is attached to this week's Current. Please return it to the folder on the kitchen door by Friday, September 30<sup>th</sup>

## Parking Lot Safety

In order to make our parking lot as safe as possible we ask that you adhere to the follow guidelines:

- Please do not park along the curb in front of the school **at any time**. If you are dropping off in the morning, stop to let the children out and then keep moving, do not leave your car even for a minute. **In the afternoon during pick-up, no stopping along the curb is allowed;** buses and vans need to get through.
- No parking is allowed (even on the grass) opposite the parking lot entrance (between the stop signs) where cars need to turn and buses need to get by.
- If you park along the driveway leading up to the school, please park perpendicular to the driveway and make sure your vehicle is **fully off the macadam** and that you and your children **walk along the grass**, not in the driveway.
- Parking across from the front door, and down toward the circle is for small cars only.

There is no parking allowed in the circle near the playground during the day because that area is used during recess. If we all follow these guidelines, we will stop receiving complaints from bus and van drivers and everyone will be a lot safer. Thank you.

## From Administration

### Water Update

On Thursday our leaking well pipe, well pump, and wiring were all completely replaced after more than 30 years of faithful service. The workmen said that our quantity of water is plentiful and can be heard rushing into the well. This is good news; hopefully we will be in good shape for many years to come.

Thank you for your patience and support as we identified the problem and made the repairs. On a lighter note, the children seemed to really be excited by the novelty of using the porta-potties!

### Family Trip Request Form

Attached to this week's Current you will find the form that needs to be filled out if your family is planning a trip that will cause grade school students to be absent from school.

Completed forms may be turned in to the office.

### Thank You

A big Thank You to the following 7th and 8th grade families who participated in the September 24th work day: the Smith family, the Thompson, Schaufele family, the Temples, Fury family, the Miles family, the DeVan family, the Nyberg family, the Aherne family, the Niemczura, Robinson family.

The chicken house and gaga pit are newly stained, there is fresh mulch under the swings, and our sheds are now accessible and organized!

If anyone was not able to make it and would like to donate a few hours, please contact Lynne Allbaugh or Maria Workman directly. Our volunteers really help support the school community, the teachers and students and any volunteer work is greatly appreciated.

### Vendors Wanted for the 2016 Holiday Bazaar and Café

We are seeking vendors of hand-made items for our 2016 Holiday Bazaar and Café. Our festive event offers indoor display spaces, optional table rental, delicious food offerings and entertainment. We would like to show hand-made items such as jewelry, ceramics, fabric arts, visual arts, etc...

The sale will be held at the school on November 12th from 10:00 to 5:00. We extended the sale by 2 hours to allow for more shopping time!

If you are interested in vending, please fill out the vendor agreement at the end of the Current. You may leave it in my mailbox in the office or mail it to school to my attention. If you sign-up by October 10th, your name will appear on the event advertisement.

Stephanie Spencer

Development Coordinator (sspencer@rivervalley.school.org)

## High School Open Houses

Beginning in October many high schools in our area and beyond are holding Open Houses. Here is a list for parents and students who are interested.

**Abington Friends School** - Open House: Saturday, October 22, beginning at 12:30

**Bethlehem Catholic High School** Open house Sunday, Nov. 6. email [Jpetruzelli@becahi.org](mailto:Jpetruzelli@becahi.org)

**George School** Open House: Sunday, October 23, 2016

Registration and refreshments 1:30 p.m. The program will begin promptly at 2:00 p.m.

Registration is required. Please allow time to register at the George School Meetinghouse; registration will open at 1:30 p.m. You may also register for the event through the website

at <http://www.georgeschool.org/admission/meet-us-in-person/admission-events/>

Parking is available at the Fitness and Athletics Center on Farm Drive, across from the Meetinghouse. If you have any questions, please call us at 215.579.6547.

**Gwynedd Mercy Academy** Open House: Sunday, October 9. 12-3 pm.

**High Mowing Waldorf School** Open House: October 17.

**Kimberton Waldorf School** Open House: October 23, at 1 pm.

**Lehigh Valley Charter High School for the Arts** Open House: Tuesdays, Oct. 25, Nov. 15, and Jan. 5 at 5:45 pm. The program begins promptly at 6:30 pm.

**Mercersburg Academy** Admission Office cordially invites you to attend one of our Open House events on Monday, October 10 or Monday, December 12 from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

**Moravian Academy** Open House: Saturday, October, 22, 9-12 pm at the Athletic and Wellness Center on the Merlse-Smith Campus.

**Solebury School** - Main open house: Sunday Oct. 16 - 1-4 pm. Register online. Mini open house: Thursday Dec. 1 2:30-4

## From the Faculty

### What the Children are Learning:

First Grade – Form Drawing

Second Grade – Language Arts

Third Grade – Language Arts

Fourth Grade – Norse Myths

Fifth Grade – Geometry

Sixth Grade – Rome

Seventh Grade – History-Age of Exploration

Eighth Grade – Physics

### A Scholarship in Amanda's Name

Sophia's Hearth, where Amanda Blanco was enrolled for early childhood training, is using the remainder of her tuition to create a scholarship in her name. Two students will benefit from this scholarship as they pursue their early childhood training at Sophia's Hearth in Keene, New Hampshire. This is one more way that Amanda's legacy will continue.

### Chickens at RVWS

As we welcome the chickens back this year, please note the chicken coop is just for the chickens. This coop is their 'bedroom' or private space and please help keep the children out of it. The new solar door opener system is sensitive and we don't want to put the chickens in danger of being left unprotected at night.

Thank you, Melanie Niemczura and the 3rd Grade class

## From the Faculty

### Torin Finser Books

There are still a few copies of Torin Finser's two books: *A Second Classroom: Parent-Teacher Relationships in a Waldorf School* (\$25) and *Leadership Development: Change from the Inside Out* (\$27). Come to the office if you would like to purchase one. Remaining books will be mailed back on Friday, October 7<sup>th</sup>.

## From the Community

### Seeking: Hand-me-down rain pants

Do you have a pair of rain pants that no longer fit your child and that you would like to go to a good home? Alice Bowers, grade 3, could use a pair. If you would like to pass a pair along, just leave them in her cubby or hand them to Tara, her mom. If we get extras we will donate them or return them. Feel free to leave a note attached if you like so we can thank you properly. Advance appreciation, Tara Bowers bowersbetara@gmail.com

### Bed for Sale!

Twin size with cabinet style headboard and trundle storage. All wood, warm brown stain. Sturdy construction. Pottery Barn. Dimensions - 77" (h) x41" (w) x91" (l) Mattress not included. Pictures available upon request. \$250 obo call or text Annie - 203-556-2162

### LARGE TREASURES SALE

204 Island Road, Kintnersville, PA  
Saturday, October 1 & Sunday, October 2, 10AM - 4PM  
Antiques, vintage jewelry, old books, original art, picture frames, tons of beautiful fabrics suitable for crafters, quilters, country home decor and much more!!

### Yoga Loka

*Meditation for Complete Beginners with John Fagan*  
A 5-week session starting Tuesday September 20<sup>th</sup> at 8:05 pm

*Trauma and Tension Relieving Exercises Group session with Bonnie Pariser*

Wednesday 9/28, Friday 9/23. Session runs from 11:00 am- 12:00 pm

*Introduction to Yoga Level 2 with Deb*  
Mondays 7pm-8:15pm. Begins Monday 10/17-11/14  
Learn as much as you can in this workshop format.

*Family Yoga 4 week session with Alli*  
Fridays 11:15am-12:15pm. Begins 10/14  
When we practice with our family we get to share our super powers with the people we love.

*Sound Meditation with John Muraco*  
Saturdays 6:30pm-7:45pm. Begins 10/22/2016  
A guided breathing practice will be followed by the sounds of crystal singing bowls.

*TRE and Meditation*  
Sunday 11:45-12:45, 10/16/2016 and 10/30/2016.  
Wednesday 11:00am-12:00pm 10/19/2016  
Tension and Trauma Releasing Exercises de-stresses your body and quiets your mind.

For more information please visit [www.Yoga-Loka.com](http://www.Yoga-Loka.com)

### Kundalini Yoga Beginner Series, with Felicia Holtz

Begins Tuesday 9/27 at Quantum Light Community Center in Pipersville PA.

Kundalini Yoga is considered "The Yoga of Awakening." Each class will provide meditations and kriyas (a series of poses and breathwork to provide a certain result). Handouts for each class will support the class theme. "Normally when you do a good set of Kundalini Yoga, it extends you. It is very good to get extended because you can use that energy for days and days." Yogi Bhajan

Eight Tuesdays from 9:30 AM -10:45 AM beginning 9/27 - 11/15 Series fee: \$88, drop in \$16  
Quantum Light Community Center, 7137 Old Easton Road, Pipersville, PA, Suite 102, Pipersville, PA

Week 1: Connecting to Breath to Relieve Stress and Build Vitality

Week 2: Form and Alignment- Navel Intelligence and an Open Heart

Week 3: Strengthen the Nervous System

Week 4: Meditation and the Mind

Week 5: Yogic Anatomy 1-Chakra System and Human Talent

Week 6: Yogic Anatomy 2-The Ten Bodies

Week 7: Glandular Function-Activate the Inner Pharmacy

Week 8: Release Unhealthy Habits and Develop Discipline

### **St. Luke's UCC Rummage and Bake Sale**

Thursday & Friday, September 29 & 30, 10 am-8 pm,  
Saturday, October 1 – Bag Sale All Day 9 am-4 pm.

Sale will take place at the building located at the intersection of Routes 412 & 611 in Ottsville.

Donated items welcome there from Sept. 12-26<sup>th</sup>. Or drop off items on the porch at the schoolhouse of St. Luke's UCC Church on Durham Road. No computers or TV's please.

For info call: 484-357-5247 or 215-479-2724.

### **After-school Art Classes**

This fall at The Paperboat and Bird Art Studio we will use a variety of media and techniques to explore art making in our after school classes. Starting with an idea or concept and getting lost in the process of making is the intent. I want to create an environment where artists can make mistakes, take chances, and wander off course to find their way into their own creativity.

*Classes will be held on Wednesdays*

Sept. 21 – Dec. 7 (10 weeks) (No Class 10/12 & 11/23)

Ages (8-11) 4:00 - 5:30. Ages (12-15) 6:00 - 7:30. \$200

21 Risler Street (Rte. 29), Stockton, NJ 08559

609-397-2121

To Register: email Kelley Roberts at

[paperboatandbird@comcast.net](mailto:paperboatandbird@comcast.net)

[www.paperboatandbird.com](http://www.paperboatandbird.com),

[www.facebook.com/paperboatbird](http://www.facebook.com/paperboatbird)

### **A Weekend Retreat**

Let Your Life Speak, Listen to the Sound of Other Lives

October 14, 2016 6:30 PM until October 16, 2016

Location: Kirkridge Retreat Center. Contact: Kirkridge <http://www.kirkridge.org/>

The weekend will inspire us toward embracing important life transitions and deepening dialogue with friends, colleagues and family. The work of Rudolf Steiner and Parker Palmer, *Courage to Teach*, are bridged this weekend. Human beings experience life cycles, reflecting nature's rhythms of day, week, month, year, decade, and century. Tune into seven year phases to get a deeper understanding of your destiny, mapping the encounters of your life, seminal meetings, transformative experiences, and important, perhaps forgotten stories from childhood, adolescence, early and late adulthood. At the same time, learn about creating Circles of Trust, by practicing the art to listen to others. Artistic exercises will engage us in conversation in new ways, growing meaningful relationships in a short time. Listening to what your life tells you is filled with surprises. Treat yourself! Get closer to nature, how it walks inside you and how you walk in nature's woods. Join us, you will not regret it!

Kirkridge Retreat Center in the Pocono Mountains, Bangor PA, provides a beautiful setting for study, great food, and as it located on the Appalachian Trail, walking paths are plentiful. <http://www.kirkridge.org/>

Patti Smith, Ed. D., *Courage and Renewal* Facilitator, Center for Biography and Social Art, Board Trustee where she develops programs for using biography as a source of meditation and self-discovery. She is the co-editor of *More Lifeways: Changes in Family Life in the '90's* and *Service Learning: Students at the Heart of Learning*, as well as the documentary, *Taking a Risk in Education:Waldorf Education in Public Schools*. She is a devotee of walking and hikes in nature every day to restore her sense of humor.

Jennifer Brooks-Quinn is an adult educator and a biographical counselor with a private practice in Spring Valley, NY and New York City. She is also a Waldorf teacher. She has been the director and co-director of Foundation Studies in Anthroposophy at Sunbridge College, in NY and the Brooklyn Waldorf School. She offers courses workshops and retreats in Latin America, China and the US.

See more at:

<http://www.kirkridge.org/index.cfm?e=event&eventId=24745&rDate=1476424549#sthash.X7u9JlqZ.dpuf>

### **Move-Making!**

#### **An Introduction to the world of creative theater for 8-12 year olds**

Join Muck and Gold and discover how our clever, funny, thinking body leads us to new worlds of creativity as we explore the elements of dance and theater improvisation to create our own mini works of art.

10 Tuesdays, October 11th - December 13th  
4:30-6pm, Stockton, NJ at Paperboat and Bird studio  
for details and registration, visit [muckandgold.com](http://muckandgold.com)

### **¼ Size Violin Free to a Good Home**

We received it from Miss Joyce, former RVWS kindergarten teacher. All she asked was to pass it on for free. That is our request also. Pass it on when your child outgrows it. Ed and Lisa George  
[edbillgeorge@yahoo.com](mailto:edbillgeorge@yahoo.com) 908-995-4083,

### **House Mate Needed**

Kids are gone and gone. Big old house on the canal in UBE, PA. Beautiful walks on the towpath & into Milford, across the bridge. Large kitchen, laundry privileges. No smoking/No pets. \$500/mo. Call (610)-982-9074

**From the New York Times**

## **Why Handwriting Is Still Essential in the Keyboard Age**

By Perri Klass, M.D.

Do children in a keyboard world need to learn old-fashioned handwriting?

There is a tendency to dismiss handwriting as a nonessential skill, even though researchers have warned that learning to write may be the key to, well, learning to write.

And beyond the emotional connection adults may feel to the way we learned to write, there is a growing body of research on what the normally developing brain learns by forming letters on the page, in printed or manuscript format as well as in cursive.

In an article this year in *The Journal of Learning Disabilities*, researchers looked at how oral and written language related to attention and what are called "executive function" skills (like planning) in children in grades four through nine, both with and without learning disabilities.

Virginia Berninger, a professor of educational psychology at the University of Washington and the lead author on the study, told me that evidence from this and other studies suggests that "handwriting — forming letters — engages the mind, and that can help children pay attention to written language."

Last year in an article in *The Journal of Early Childhood Literacy*, Laura Dinehart, an associate professor of early childhood education at Florida International University, discussed several possible associations between good handwriting and academic achievement: Children with good handwriting may get better grades because their work is more pleasant for teachers to read; children who struggle with writing may find that too much of their attention is consumed by producing the letters, and the content suffers.

But can we actually stimulate children's brains by helping them form letters with their hands? In a population of low-income children, Dr. Dinehart said, the ones who had good early fine-motor writing skills in prekindergarten did better later on in school. She called for more research on handwriting in the preschool years, and on ways to help young children develop the skills they need for "a complex task" that requires the coordination of cognitive, motor and neuromuscular processes.

"This myth that handwriting is just a motor skill is just plain wrong," Dr. Berninger said. "We use motor parts of our brain, motor planning, motor control, but what's very critical is a region of our brain where the visual and language come together, the fusiform gyrus, where visual stimuli actually become letters and written words." You have to see letters in "the mind's eye" in order to produce them on the page, she said. Brain imaging shows that the activation of this region is different in children who are having trouble with handwriting.

Functional brain scans of adults show a characteristic brain network that is activated when they read, and it includes areas that relate to motor processes. This suggested to scientists that the cognitive process of reading may be connected to the motor process of forming letters.

Karin James, a professor of psychological and brain sciences at Indiana University, did brain scans on children who did not yet know how to print. "Their brains don't distinguish letters; they respond to letters the same as to a triangle," she said.

After the children were taught to print, patterns of brain activation in response to letters showed increased activation of that reading network, including the fusiform gyrus, along with the inferior frontal gyrus and posterior parietal regions of the brain, which adults use for processing written language — even though the children were still at a very early level as writers.

"The letters they produce themselves are very messy and variable, and that's actually good for how children learn things," Dr. James said. "That seems to be one big benefit of handwriting."

Handwriting experts have struggled with the question of whether cursive writing confers special skills and benefits, beyond the benefits that print writing might provide. Dr. Berninger cited a 2015 study that suggested

that starting around fourth grade, cursive skills conferred advantages in both spelling and composing, perhaps because the connecting strokes helped children connect letters into words.

For typically developing young children, typing the letters doesn't seem to generate the same brain activation. As we grow up, of course, most of us transition to keyboard writing, though like many who teach college students, I have struggled with the question of laptops in class, more because I worry about students' attention wandering than to promote handwriting. Still, studies on note taking have suggested that "college students who are writing on a keyboard are less likely to remember and do well on the content than if writing it by hand," Dr. Dinehart said.

Dr. Berninger said the research suggests that children need introductory training in printing, then two years of learning and practicing cursive, starting in grade three, and then some systematic attention to touch-typing.

Using a keyboard, and especially learning the positions of the letters without looking at the keys, she said, might well take advantage of the fibers that cross-communicate in the brain, since unlike with handwriting, children will use both hands to type.

"What we're advocating is teaching children to be hybrid writers," said Dr. Berninger, "manuscript first for reading — it transfers to better word recognition — then cursive for spelling and for composing. Then, starting in late elementary school, touch-typing."

As a pediatrician, I think this may be another case where we should be careful that the lure of the digital world doesn't take away significant experiences that can have real impacts on children's rapidly developing brains. Mastering handwriting, messy letters and all, is a way of making written language your own, in some profound ways.

"My overarching research focuses on how learning and interacting with the world with our hands has a really significant effect on our cognition," Dr. James said, "on how writing by hand changes brain function and can change brain development."

**2016-17 After-school Program  
Fall Semester Registration Form**



Our 2016-17 Fall After-school Program will begin on September 27<sup>th</sup>. Josh Laker is ready once again to challenge and entertain RVWS grade school children. Below is a description of activities that will be held on each day.

Classes will be held on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays from September 27<sup>th</sup> through December 15<sup>th</sup>. **Dates are listed next to each class because the program will not be held during vacations, assembly days and early dismissals. Please Note: Mr. Laker will not be here during the middle two weeks of October.** The cost is \$20 per class with a \$10 materials fee for the session.

**Tuesday – Games, Drama, Challenges and Puzzles, Crafts, Outdoors**

(September 27, October 4, 25, November 1, 8, 15, 29 December 6, 13)

9 classes - \$190

Park bench, improv, Dinner party, dramatic reading, hunter, Mafia, storytelling, treasure and scavenger hunts, simple ball games, group challenges, nature art, cooperation puzzles, hand and nature crafts if desired, etc.

**Wednesday – Sports and Running Games** (5<sup>th</sup> grade and up)

(September 28, October 5, 26, November 2, 9, 16, 30, December 7, 14)

9 classes - \$190

Any and all sports, indoor and out, four square, battleship, shark attack, capture the flag, flag tag, handball, wall ball (big and small), indoor Olympics, obstacle courses, etc.

**Thursday – Cooking and Crafts**

(September 29, October 6, November 3, 10, 17, December 1, 8, 15)

8 classes - \$170

Baking bread (especially in the outdoor wood burning oven) pasta, tomato sauce, pickling, desserts, bagels, pizza, sushi, etc. These are just some of the things that were and could be done again, it will be tailored to students' desires.

-----✂-----✂-----✂-----✂-----✂-----

Child's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Child's Teacher \_\_\_\_\_

Parent's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Parent's Phone Home: \_\_\_\_\_ Work: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell: \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to register my child for the following After School Program(s):

- |                          |        |           |                                 |                        |
|--------------------------|--------|-----------|---------------------------------|------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Tues.  | 3:30-5:30 | <b>Games, Drama, Challenges</b> | <b><u>\$190.00</u></b> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Wed.   | 3:30-5:30 | <b>Sports and Running Games</b> | <b><u>\$190.00</u></b> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Thurs. | 3:30-5:30 | <b>Cooking and Crafts</b>       | <b><u>\$170.00</u></b> |

**NOTE: Materials fees are included in the prices.**

TOTAL: \_\_\_\_\_

**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.**