



# River Valley Current

January 10, 2017 No. 464

*Your assumptions are your windows on the world.  
Scrub them off every once in a while, or the light won't come in.  
~ Isaac Asimov*

## School Calendar

### This Week

#### Wednesday, January 11

School Tour 9:00-11:00 am

#### Thursday, January 12

6<sup>th</sup> Grade Parent Evening 6:30 pm

### Looking Ahead

#### Monday, January 16

Martin Luther King Day – In school day of service

#### Thursday, January 19

Board Meeting 6:30 pm

#### Saturday, January 21

4<sup>th</sup> Grade Workday

#### Thursday, January 26

EC Parent Enrichment Evening 6:30 pm

#### Friday, January 27

Middle School Play 7:00 pm

#### Saturday, January 28

Middle School Play 2:00 pm

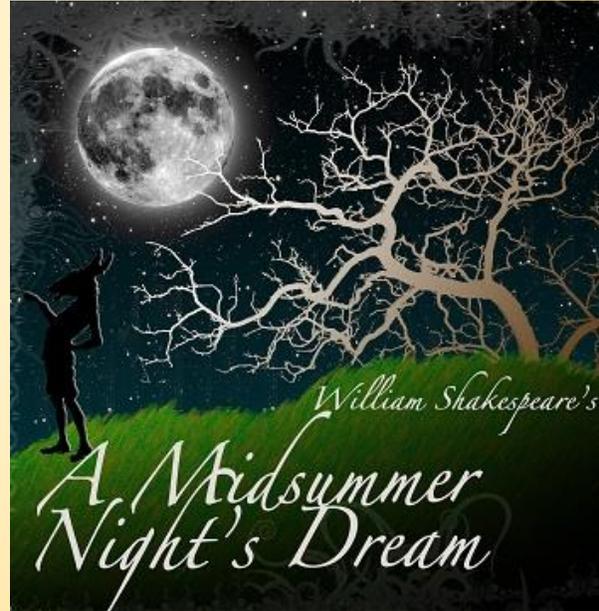
### How to Contact Us

info@rivervalleyschool.org

lc@rivervalleyschool.org

bot@rivervalleyschool.org

pc@rivervalleyschool.org



### A Midsummer Night's Dream by William Shakespeare Performed by RVWS Middle School

Friday, January 27<sup>th</sup> at 7 pm

Saturday, January 28<sup>th</sup> at 2 pm

Adults: \$12, Children: \$6,

Family (parents and children) \$30

Tickets are available in the office and can be paid for with cash or a check.

Reservations will not be taken without payment.

**Please join us for the next  
Parent Council Meeting,  
Thursday Jan. 12<sup>th</sup> at 6:30pm  
at The Ship Inn**

### After-school Programs Have Begun!

If you would still like to sign up for Capoeira on Monday or Josh Laker's Program on Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday, forms are available on the wall next to the office.

### 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Hoagies

Hello Wonderful Families!

Our fundraising for the Class of 2017 end-of-school trip continues!

This semester our 8<sup>th</sup> graders are looking forward to serving your grade school children

**Hoagies on Thursdays! January 19<sup>th</sup> through May 25<sup>th</sup>**

Kid tested and kid approved! Delicious hoagies made to order, with love, right here in Grandy's Kitchen. Please see the order form at the end of this week's Current for all of the delicious details.

## From Administration

### Birth Announcements

A warm welcome to two babies who were born to River Valley families in December.

Rowan Galvin, son of Erin and Dennis Galvin, brother of Colette in the Acorn Room, was born on December 11<sup>th</sup> at 9:04 pm.

Iver Zheng, son of Christine Bennett and Tommy Liang Zheng, brother of Simone Zheng in 2<sup>nd</sup> grade arrived on December 20<sup>th</sup> at 4 am.

Congratulations to all!

### "The Talk: Media, Sexualized Culture, and the Well-Being of Children"

#### An Evening with Dr. Sharon Maxwell

At Waldorf School of Princeton, 1062 Cherry Hill Road, Princeton, NJ 08540

Friday, January 13, 7 p.m. in Hagens Hall. Tickets are \$10 and are available online and at the door.

In continuing its year-long conversation around media and parenting, Waldorf School of Princeton hosts Dr. Sharon Maxwell, author of *The Talk*, for a parent lecture about ways of cultivating balance, respect and developmentally appropriate childhood environments in our media-driven, over-sexualized, digital culture.

Dr. Sharon Maxwell has been a practicing clinical psychologist for over twenty years, specializing in adolescent and family therapy. Her award-winning book, *THE TALK: A Breakthrough Guide to Raising Healthy Kids in an Oversexualized, Online, In-your-face World*, has been published in Italy, Poland, Vietnam, and mainland China. She is currently working on a new book about raising healthy, responsible, happy kids in a media-driven culture.

### High School Open Houses

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

**The Learning Cooperatives Open House:** Hear from teen members, parents and staff mentor/teachers what it is like to be part of a self-directed learning cooperative. Tour our center.

**Saturday, January 7th, 1:00-2:30pm**, Princeton Learning Cooperative, Princeton, NJ  
info@PrincetonLearningCooperative.org 609-851-2522

**Monday, January 16, 8:30-10:00am**, Princeton Learning Cooperative, Princeton, NJ  
info@PrincetonLearningCooperative.org 609-851-2522

**Tuesday, January 24, 7:00-8:30pm**, Bucks Learning Cooperative, Langhorne, PA  
info@BucksLearningCooperative.org 215-512-0707

**Monday, February 20, 8:30-10:00am**, Princeton Learning Cooperative, Princeton, NJ  
info@PrincetonLearningCooperative.org 609-851-2522

## From the Faculty

### What the Children are Learning:

First Grade – Arithmetic

Second Grade – Math

Third Grade – Math

Fourth Grade – Fractions

Fifth Grade – Mesopotamia

Sixth Grade – Business Math

Seventh Grade – Drama

Eighth Grade – Drama

## TIRED OF THAT LONG COMMUTE? WOULD YOU LIKE TO BE CLOSER TO SCHOOL?

Our music teacher, Carol Diven, is planning to sell her beautiful home in preparation for her move to California. This lovely 3 bedroom, 2 bathroom house with a detached and fully finished studio space, set on an acre just one mile from school, is ready to move into and is a real gem! If you are interested or know anyone who is looking for a home, please contact Carol at [cdiven@rivervalleysschool.org](mailto:cdiven@rivervalleysschool.org) or at (530) 209-2711. Thank you



## From Parent Council

### 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

**If you are interested in becoming a Silent Angel, please email [pc@rivervalleysschool.org](mailto:pc@rivervalleysschool.org) by January 10<sup>th</sup>.** This will be coordinated anonymously and on a first come, first serve basis! Once the faculty angels have been assigned, extra angels may be called upon for other angelic giving as needed. We will be in touch soon as we hear from you!

## From the Community

### Singing Workshop & Concert with Brendan Taaffe

Ottsville Traditional Arts Center

250 Durham Road, Ottsville, PA 18942

Wed. January 25<sup>th</sup> - 5pm potluck, 6pm workshop (\$10), 7pm concert (\$10), \$15 combined ticket

### Crankies & Ballads, Appalachia & Africa

An acclaimed composer and song leader, Brendan's workshops create community through singing together, drawing on songs from American traditions (shape note, gospel, ballads) and his original compositions. The workshop is open to people of all experience and ability level—each part will be taught by ear, and you will be amazed at what we can create together.

On mbira, banjo, and guitar, Brendan blends Appalachian ballads with Zimbabwean rhythms, reimagining these songs in a way that invokes both Dock Boggs and Graceland. Steeped in the Shona tradition of Zimbabwe, his mbira playing has been hailed as 'something of a revelation' by fRoots magazine and the combination of that instrument's hypnotic lines with his lush tenor creates 'the kind of hushed, lonely warmth you experience sitting by a fire in a drafty house.' With his band, The New Line, Taaffe recorded *Can't Hold The Wheel* in 2013, a collection of these songs flanked by an all-star cast. Lauded by HuffingtonPost, Songlines, fRoots, and others, you can listen to it at [brendantaaffe.bandcamp.com](http://brendantaaffe.bandcamp.com)

Crankies are scrolling illustrations, hand-cranked in a wooden frame so that the image moves across a viewing screen. They are magic. Originally called 'moving panoramas' in the 19th century, this old art form is making a bit of a comeback now. Brendan's uses cut paper art that evokes the beauty of shadow puppetry to bring songs and stories to life. You can watch some examples of his crankies at [www.brendantaaffe.com](http://www.brendantaaffe.com)

### 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!

### **We Live in Outerspace - Get to know your neighbors!! The Nurture Nature Center**

518 Northampton Street, Easton, PA 18042  
610.253.4432 - [nuturenature.org](http://nuturenature.org)  
Thursday, January 19th, 7-8pm

Join NNC for a pop-up science on a sphere show that features the planets and moons in our solar system. Learn about NASA's current space missions to explore our planetary neighbors and about the star that makes life on Earth possible.

### **Solebury School Summer Programs Fair**

Sunday, January 29th 1-3pm  
at the John D. Brown Athletic Center, 6832 Phillips Mill Rd, New Hope, PA 18963

Learn how to send you kids to college without going broke. Representatives from a variety of local, national and international programs will be available to talk with interested students and their families. Programs represented include: Academic Classes, Domestic & International Travel, ESL & Foreign Language Studies, Gap-year Programs, Community Service, Sports & Arts Enrichment.

### **SELF-DIRECTED LEARNING FOR TEENS - Upcoming Events**

Free and open to the public. Teens Welcome!  
Details at [www.LearningCooperatives.org/events/](http://www.LearningCooperatives.org/events/)

Living and Learning Without School: Current and past members of The Learning Cooperatives will share their experiences, take questions. Wed Jan 18, 7:30-8:30pm - Langhorne, PA. Wed Feb 22, 7:30-8:30pm - Flemington, NJ

How Self-Directed Learning Works: Join us to discuss the why, how and what of Self-Directed Learning. Wed, Jan 11, 7:00-8:00pm - Flemington, NJ

### **"Bucks for Freedom"**

Please join the Bucks Coalition Against Trafficking and Chimayo Gallery in Perkasie for an evening of food, crafts, jewelry making with Chimayo artist Susan Anderson, shopping, silent auction, prize drawings and more! Free admission. Friday, January 20, 2017, 4pm-8pm (snow date is January 23). Location: 21 North 7th Street, Perkasie PA. Questions, please call (215) 343-6543 x27 or email [Deirdre@novabucks.org](mailto:Deirdre@novabucks.org)

Bucks Coalition Against Trafficking (BCAT) mission is to eradicate human trafficking in Bucks County through victim identification, community education, enhancements of arrests and prosecution of traffickers, legislative advocacy and a coordinated response to survivor services.

Sex and Money: A National Search for Human Worth

January 11<sup>th</sup> is National Human Trafficking Awareness Day and there will be a screening on that day of the feature length documentary, Sex and Money: A National Search for Human Worth, at the Newtown Theater, 120 North State Street, Newtown, PA. Doors Open at 6 pm, movie begins at 6:30. Admission is free. Rain date: January 12<sup>th</sup>.

### **Travel Opportunities**

Sophia Services Presents...

#### **A Goethean Safari in Kenya – Aug. 6<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup>, 2017**

We will try to imagine, and even emulate, how Goethe would have experienced nature in East Africa. This trip will be especially valuable to Waldorf teachers and anyone who has an interest in holistic science.

#### **In Search of Saint Francis of Assisi – July 20<sup>th</sup> – 29<sup>th</sup>, 2017**

Rudolf Steiner held St. Francis in great esteem. During our visit to Francis' home, the Umbrian hillside town of Assisi, we will spend time exploring why he felt the life of Francis was so important to human development, while at the same time, we will examine the works of others who have also had particular insights into the life of Francis.

For more info, cost and complete itinerary: Sarnia Guiton at [sarnia@sophiaservices.ca](mailto:sarnia@sophiaservices.ca) -- 604.740.0676  
[www.sophiaservices.ca](http://www.sophiaservices.ca)

## Upper Bucks Code Blue Shelters

If you or anyone you know is lacking inside shelter in Upper Bucks County during periods of extreme, life-threatening weather (temperature or wind chill of 26°F or below) between November 15 and April 15, your neighbors and friends are ready with an Upper Bucks Code Blue Shelter at the Quakertown Masonic Lodge (501 W Broad St, Quakertown, PA 18951) from 9:00 PM to 7:00 AM the following morning. We'll have a hot meal and breakfast for you as well as shelter. Car rides will be provided from the following stops:

- Turkey Hill @ Ottsville/Harrow 8:20 PM
- Perkasio Square Shopping Center 8:30 PM

Call 267.450.5191 to request a ride

To find out if the shelter is open, contact the Code Blue Status Line: 267.450.5191 after 1:00 PM

The Upper Bucks Code Blue Shelter is a ministry of Advocates for the Homeless of Upper Bucks (AHUB)

Hello Wonderful Families!

Our fundraising for the Class of 2017 end-of-school trip continues!

This semester our 8th graders are looking forward to serving your children

### **Hoagies on Thursdays!**

**January 19 through May 25**

Kid tested and kid approved!

Delicious hoagies & all natural fruit seltzer

Made to order, with love, right here in Grandy's Kitchen

Sign-up is for the whole semester (16 Thursdays)

\$84.00 for a semester of hoagies only (\$5.25/hoagie)

\$100 for a semester of hoagies and seltzer (\$5.25/hoagie + \$1/seltzer)

Please place your order form in the "8G Thursday Lunches" folder on the office door

### **Deadline for orders: Thursday, January 12**

Please make **checks payable to RVWS with "8G Lunches"** in the memo.

**8<sup>th</sup> grade thanks you for your support!**

16 Hoagie Thursdays lunches (1/19- 5/25)

Whole semester of hoagies only (\$84.00) or

Whole semester of hoagies and seltzer (\$100)

### **My Special Hoagie (Please Circle Your Choices):**

Turkey Only

Cheese Only  
(provolone and cheddar)

Turkey & Cheese  
(provolone)

Lettuce

Tomato

Mayo

Oil&Vinegar

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_

From: Screenfreeparenting.com

## Managing Screens with Grandparents: Screen-Free Parenting Q&A

By Dr. Screen-Free Mom

Welcome to the first in a new series: Screen-Free Parenting Q&A. I aim to provide some helpful advice and research-backed information for parents with questions about all things related to kids, screens and all the other great stuff that kids should be doing instead of screens.

Hello Dr. Screen-Free Mom,

I am a new mother and an early childhood educator. Because of my job and educational background, raising my now 8 month old in a screen free environment was something I knew I wanted to do before she was even thought of. Things are going great, but there is one situation that I would like some input on, if you're up for it.

My parents live four hours away, and about once a month I take the baby and stay with them for a week or so at a time. My mother and I are very close. She baby sits two young children during weekdays- a 6 month old and a 2 year old. My mother absolutely insists on having the television on for the children in the mornings. She will not budge on this, despite being shown all of the evidence proving that screen time for children that young can be damaging. The 2 year old "needs" to watch Dinosaur Train and the 6 month old "needs" the background noise to sleep. This often results in arguments and leads to myself and my baby being isolated to the bedroom so that she is not exposed to the screens.

My parents think that I'm being absolutely ridiculous and excessive. They have accused me of helicopter parenting because of the situation. They either don't understand or choose to ignore why I would want to keep my infant screen free. They are television lovers- the TV at their house is gigantic and takes up the entire tiny living room.

So, what's a girl to do? Getting a hotel room while we visit is expensive and impractical- we'd be over at their house and exposed to their TV anyway. The idea of not visiting makes me sad, as I do love my parents dearly and want my baby to grow up knowing them. Speaking to them about it has not worked in the past. Any advice?

Thank you,

A Family Divided

Managing Family Screen Disputes

Family screen disputes are the most common subscriber question I receive, so I decided it would be a great question to use for our first Screen-Free Parenting Q&A.

Firstly, I want to say that anytime you take a parenting position that is not the norm, you are going to experience push-back. Friends and family may see your choice as an insult to their own choices, which it is not, of course. Screen-limiting parents may want to share their experience and readings with everyone, which is not likely to be well-received. However, when this issue causes tension with close family members, as it does for our reader above, it can sometimes move away from the "issue" at hand and into deeper feelings about respect, worthiness and appreciation.

The battle our reader described seems more about the deeper issues to me. She is asking her parents to respect her choices and she is being met with insults ("helicopter parent"). Her parents may also feel disrespected and disregarded as they likely feel they are making the best parenting choices possible.

First, I am going to provide some general options on how to handle screen disagreements as I know these apply to many of our readers. Secondly, I will write some about what happens when screen disputes run deeper, as I see in the above reader question.

### 1. Don't Teach (Preach)

In general, I do not explain my views, readings or research on parenting unless someone asked. It is not likely to be well-received and I don't suggest anyone attempts to be an amateur parent educator around friends or family. When a difference becomes apparent ("No, he doesn't know much about Little Einsteins. We don't really watch television"), I am more likely to be self-deprecating than educating. I acknowledge that what we are doing (screen-free) is not the norm and that we don't intend to do it forever. I may give one or two reasons why it works for my family at this time and then I move on.

*(Continued on the next page.)*

## 2. Your House, Your Rules

The research on screen-time is concerned with daily excessive-use, which most children in the United States are subjected to. However, random intermittent use is unlikely to have any (long-term) effect on your child. Therefore, when I am at another person's house, I generally follow their parenting rules, screens included. I would hope they would respect my parenting within my own home and not be met with criticism when I open my doors to them. Therefore, I extend them the same courtesy. If it is a family member that we spend a little more regular time with, I generally bring my children out the screen room and into a different play area (without insulting anyone or explaining my views). I may also limit the amount of time we spend in that household and suggest gatherings at my house or in out-of-the-house safety zones (see below).

Regarding our reader: This obviously does not apply to our reader because she spends one entire week with her parents every month. It is not an intermittent thing, but rather a very regular thing.

## 3. Out-of-House Safety Zones

When it's clear to me that my friends or family and I have different views about screens, I generally try to limit the amount of time we spend in that household. I do so by suggesting spending time together in areas that won't highlight our screen-conflict. Most parents have more in common than they disagree about. Therefore, it is easy to highlight our common ground by meeting at a park or indoor playground. Our children are excited and we get to relax and catch up while they burn up their energy.

Regarding our reader: It may not be possible given the grandmother's child care responsibilities, but it might be nice for the grandparents to come visit their daughter and granddaughter in their home environment. After observing their daughter's parenting in her home environment, they may have more appreciation for it.

## 4. Close Family and Grandparents

I think the relationship my children have with their grandparents is incredibly important. Therefore, I try to make sure they spend regular time with both sets. I understand that grandparents may do things differently with my children than my husband and I. I try to allow as much freedom as possible to the grandparents. I respect them and their child-rearing capabilities. Most importantly, I don't want them to be offended or hurt and I believe children (especially as they age) are able to tolerate many differences in style and rules.

However, because my children see their grandparents very regularly, this means that they don't get the same pass as the friends in the "Your House, Your Rules" category. I don't shy away from laying basic ground rules (screen-free is one) and expecting them to be enforced during grandparent time. The grandparents and I have common ground: the benefit of the children. For children to benefit from time with their grandparents (and any regular caregiver), consistency is key for small children and helps them in the transitions throughout their day. Grandparents "spoiling" children doesn't really help the children if it makes them miserable afterwards (i.e. when they need to follow rules, deal with a sugar crash etc.), so I don't have too much tolerance for this. However, I am all for grandparents spoiling my children with their time, attention and the S.P.O.I.L. system.

Regarding our reader: This section does not apply to our reader, as she has already been unsuccessful in attempting to lay down some ground rules for her child when visiting grandparents.

## 5. When Screen Disputes Run Deeper

As I said previously, my first hint that this screen dispute ran deeper was how much our reader had tried to win her parent's support for her parenting style to no avail. Her parents seem more comfortable with their daughter and grand-daughter spending time locked in the guest room than altering their routine during her visit. This seems hurtful to me. Secondly, her parents attacked their daughter's parenting style with insults when she has tried to argue her case. So, what is she to do?

I cannot pretend to have the answer to this question, especially without knowing all the intricacies of this relationship. However, I suggest our reader acknowledge the depth of this issue. I would suggest she try to talking to her parents yet again, but with an open-mind and a focus on the relationship, with much less emphasis on the screen-time quarrel. I would use the following steps in setting up that conversation.

Scheduling a time to talk: I suggest our reader schedule a time to talk with her parents. Rather than bringing up the fight when the screen issue occurs, plan ahead for a time when everyone is relaxed and capable of having a good conversation. Opening with the value of the relationship: Spend some time discussing how important this relationship is to you. You clearly value your parents a great deal in order to visit them once per month despite your distress over this conflict. Discuss what you value and respect about your parents.

Focus on feelings (not issues): Rather than focusing on coming up with a way to solve the screen-time battle, discuss how it makes you feel in the relationship. Take responsibility for your own feeling and perhaps use the "When you do X, I feel Y" formula. Allow your parents to share their feelings: Give your parents a chance to express how they feel about the relationship and the visit.

Don't plan to solve the conflict in this first discussion. Make this discussion about the value of the relationship, your feelings about the conflict and their feelings about your visit. Plan to solve the conflict at a later date. Perhaps there is some sort of compromise that allows respect for both parenting styles. But, don't try to get there too fast. Focus on the relationship and the feelings first.

#### Your Child's Relationship with You

With regard to screen disputes with family, friends, schools, etcetera, I want all of our readers to understand that your child's relationship with you is the most influential. What you do in your own home is what is going to have the largest impact on your child. Screens are not toxic and little exposures here and there will not do anything to your child. Take a breath. Relax. Stay your course. Different rules and exposure to screens outside the home will occur and they will be less impactful than what you maintain at home. As your child ages, you can begin to discuss why you have different rules and beliefs than other families (conversations you will have about much more than screens).