



# River Valley Current

January 17, 2017 No. 465

"I have decided to stick with love. Hate is too great a burden to bear."  
~ Martin Luther King, Jr.

## School Calendar

### This Week

**Thursday, January 19**  
Board Meeting 6:30 pm

**Saturday, January 21**  
4<sup>th</sup> Grade Workday

### Looking Ahead

**Thursday, January 26**  
EC Parent Enrichment Evening 6:30 pm

**Friday, January 27**  
A Midsummer Night's Dream 7:00 pm

**Saturday, January 28**  
A Midsummer Night's Dream 2:00 pm

**Saturday, February 4**  
3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Workday

**Wednesday, February 8**  
School Tour

**Thursday, February 9**  
6<sup>th</sup> Grade Parent Evening

**Friday, February 10**  
Grade School Ice Skating Party

**Monday, February 13-Friday, February 17**  
Winter Break – No School

### How to Contact Us

info@rivervalley.school.org  
lc@rivervalley.school.org  
bot@rivervalley.school.org  
pc@rivervalley.school.org

## Student Photos

Once again, Mr. Santiago's beautiful photographs of the grade school students are on display in the hallway opposite the All-Purpose Room. If you would like to order photos, there is a form at the end of this week's Current.

Early Childhood photos will be taken soon.



Friday, January 27,  
7 pm  
Saturday, January 28,  
2 pm

Adults: \$12,  
Children: \$6,  
Family (parents and  
children) \$30

Tickets order forms are on the wall next to the office and tickets may be paid for with cash or a check. Reservations will not be taken without payment.

## Snow Day Closings and Delays

We would like to share with you the process we go through when there is inclement weather. As a general rule we follow what Palisades School District does however because our school community reaches far and wide there are occasionally exceptions

Cindy, Robbie, and Christina Hummel wake up at the crack of dawn and assess the situation based on weather reports and the decisions made by surrounding school districts. A call goes out as early as possible to the community followed by an email notification. The phone system sometimes has glitches so if you receive only part of a message or are uncertain, please check your email. Cindy updates the recording on the phone at school and our school closings are listed on Channel 6 ABC News and the WFMZ Channel 69 news and website. School buses follow what their district decides so if your child rides the bus check with your local district to find out whether there will be bus service.

If you are hesitant to drive on a day when school is open, please trust your instincts and do not bring your children to school. Most of all, we want to make sure everyone is safe.

## From Administration

### Birth Announcement

Rowan Wilson, son of Ani and Regan Wilson and brother of Luca in 2<sup>nd</sup> grade was born on Wednesday, January 11<sup>th</sup> at 1:04 am. A hearty congratulations to the Wilson family!

### Capoeira Update

A new Capoeira registration form is at the end of this week's Current for classes from February 27<sup>th</sup> - April 3<sup>rd</sup>. There is also an opportunity to sign up for classes for the next two Mondays if you have not already done so.

## 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@rivervalley.school.org](mailto:cdiven@rivervalley.school.org) or at (530) 209-2711. Thank you



## From the Community

### Need A Babysitter?

Marcella Harvi, a 16 year old RVWS alum from Easton, PA, with certified CPR training is available for \$10/hour. Call: 203-343-2500 or email: [mharv.jp@gmail.com](mailto:mharv.jp@gmail.com)

### “Into the Woods” at the Solebury School

This year's musical at Solebury School is Stephen Sondheim's “Into the Woods.”

RVWS alumni Teva Rose Skovronek, Safwa Ozair, Ava Smith and Dominique Wander are all in the cast. The show will be performed on THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 16 2017, 7:30 PM — 9:30 PM; FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 17 2017, 7:30 PM — 9:30 PM; SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 18 2017, 2:00 PM — 4:30 PM; SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 18 2017, 7:30 PM — 9:30 PM; SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 19 2017 3:00 — 5:00 PM

For tickets go to: <https://solebury-school.ticketleap.com/>

### German Club in Milford

This year's second round of German Club for 3rd-6th graders will begin after school on Thursday, February 2, at the Milford Presbyterian Church. The cost is \$150 for the ten week round, or \$15 per class, and car pooling may be available.

German Club provides an opportunity for kids to continue (or begin!) their enthusiasm for the German language, to learn about European culture, or to prepare for a family vacation abroad. There will be songs, stories, games, and activities that have delighted kids at River Valley and elsewhere for years. If there is interest, a second class in Milford or Buckingham for novices or more advanced students is possible. Contact: Peter Ray, [peter.ray@comcast.net](mailto:peter.ray@comcast.net).

## Yoga Loka

**TRE** With Bonnie Pariser 1/18 Wednesday and 1/27 Friday 11:00am-12:00pm TRE (Tension and Trauma Reducing exercises) provide the tools for you to become more resilient and peaceful.

**Stress Reducing Clinic** With Bonnie Pariser 1/19 - 2/23 Thursdays 6:15pm-6:55pm

Stress symptoms affect your body, thoughts, feelings and behavior. When stress is ignored it can contribute to health problems such as high blood pressure, heart disease, obesity and diabetes. 6 weeks

**Introduction to Meditation** With John Fagan Tuesdays 8:05pm-9:00pm 1/24 - 2/28 Bring your questions, your curiosity, even your frustration to Introduction to Meditation.

### Introduction to Yoga Series for Complete Beginners

With Deb Kline Saturdays starting 1/28 11:45am-12:45pm

If you have ever wanted to start yoga in an intimate, comfortable setting, here is your chance

### Yoga for People who have Never Done it but Always Wanted to Try

With Cindy Buckley 1/23 - 2/27 Mondays 6:30pm-7:30pm

If you have wanted to practice yoga, but you weren't sure if you were right for it, this class is for you!

### Peace Project

Friday, January 20<sup>th</sup> Come together with your community to share food, positive energy, and your voices. After the morning asana class we will sit for a meditation (if you like at that time you can tremor) After that we will share some food, and then we will chant the Maha Mrytunjaya Mantra for world healing. Participate in whatever way you would like. The purpose is to gather our energies together for positive movement. Pot Luck Meditation/Tremoring Chanting for peace 11:00am -2:00pm (You can leave whenever you need to) Bring a pot luck dish to share. Donations collected will go to the Delaware River Keepers, a watchdog organization that is caring for our water.

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

## 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!

### **“Bucks for Freedom”**

Please join the Bucks Coalition Against Trafficking and Chimayo Gallery in Perkasio 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, Perkasio 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.

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>.

### **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.

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

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

### **Blood Drive at Palisades Middle School**

4710 Durham Rd, Kintnersville, PA 18930  
(In the Cafeteria)  
Monday, February 6, 2017 – 3:00pm – 8:00pm

Please register at [redcrossblood.org](http://redcrossblood.org). Enter sponsor code: palisades  
Call 1.800.RED CROSS or email [edifilippantonio@palisadessd.org](mailto:edifilippantonio@palisadessd.org)

### **Palisades Area Girls Softball League**

Palisades Area Girls Softball League is a fastpitch youth softball league affiliated with the Amateur Softball Association. Our mission is to provide an opportunity for girls, ages 7 to 18 from the Palisades School District in Bucks County PA to participate in organized, recreational fastpitch softball. Teams are organized, coached and operated through PAGSL and its participating Athletic Associations in the townships of Bridgeton, Durham, Revere (Nockamixon), Riegelsville, Silver Creek (Springfield) and Tinicum.

Softball Registration per child is \$105.00 for the Spring 2017 season Additional players from the same household can be registered for \$80.00. Fees can be paid with a credit card or physical check-All registrations regardless of payment form should be made via our website. Eventzilla/Ebay's credit card processing fees will be applied above PAGSL's registration fee. Additional questions can be emailed to our website at [pagsl@palisadessoftball.org](mailto:pagsl@palisadessoftball.org). Go to [www.palisadessoftball.org](http://www.palisadessoftball.org) to register.

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

Sunday, January 29<sup>th</sup> 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.

### **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 19<sup>th</sup>, 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.

### **Silver Creek Athletic Association - Springtown, PA**

\*Co-Ed Tee-ball-5-6 years old  
\*Penn-Jersey Rookies, Minors, Majors-8, 9&10, 11&12  
\*Bushkill Valley League-13-16 years old  
\*Connie Mack League-13-16 years old  
\*Senior Connie Mack League-17-19 years old  
\*Travel Opportunities  
To register go to: [www.silvercreekathleticassociation.com](http://www.silvercreekathleticassociation.com)

2017 Volunteer Opportunities are:  
Spring Carnival  
Wed, May 17, Thurs. May 18, Friday, May 19, 2017  
6:00-10:00 pm  
Saturday, May 20, 2017 4:00-10:00 pm  
15th Annual Father's Day Car Show  
Sunday, 6/18/17 8:00-Noon & 11:00-3:00 pm

## 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)

Dear Parents,

Euclides Santiago has once again taken our school photographs this year.

A package will cost \$30.00. The package consists of: one 5x7, 4 wallet size of your child and one 5x7 of the entire class. If you buy the package and would like an additional 5x7 print or set of 4 wallet size, you may order them for \$9 each. Individual prints will not be available to those who do not order the package. You may order one 5x7 of the class only for the cost of \$9.

Please return the slip below, with payment. The sooner your order is in, the quicker you will receive your pictures. There will be a folder on the door of the office. Please return a separate form for each child, as we will organize by class. In the case of two house families, each parent needs to fill out his or her own form.

Thanks!  
Cindy

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### **PAYMENT MUST BE INCLUDED WITH YOUR ORDER**

I would like an individual photo package of my child \_\_\_\_\_ \$30.00  
(includes 1 5x7, 4 wallet size and 5x7 class picture)

I ordered the package and would also like additional 5x7 prints \_\_\_\_\_ \$9.00

I ordered the package and would also like an additional set of 4 wallet size \_\_\_\_\_ \$9.00

I would like only a class picture. \_\_\_\_\_ \$9.00

Total Enclosed \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher's name: \_\_\_\_\_

Child's name: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent's name: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please return this slip to the folder on the office door with payment - make checks payable to Euclides Santiago**

# 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

\_\_\_\_\_ 1/30 and 2/6/2017 **\$30** (only if you are not already registered for the January session)

\_\_\_\_\_ 2/27 through 4/3/2017 (6 classes) **\$90**

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**

From the Irish Times

## **How Creeping and Crawling Influence Children's First Step in Education**

Grey-area' children, who are not physically developed, may underperform in the classroom

By Sheila Wayman

It's endearing the way newborn babies fling their arms out when somebody closes a door too loudly, in what is known as the "startle" reflex. And the way they instinctively grasp an outstretched finger, or turn their heads to "root" when their cheek is stroked.

These are all examples of primitive reflexes that should disappear between six and 12 months as the brain starts to inhibit them when more sophisticated, neural functioning begins to develop. If these reflexes persist, they will interfere with the mastering of intentional control of muscles and, in the run-up to starting school, hinder the development of physical readiness for academic learning.

What is later seen in the classroom as bad behavior, lack of impulse control, poor social skills and difficulty in learning, despite good intelligence, may, in some cases, be symptoms of an underdeveloped central nervous system. This issue of what's called "neuromotor immaturity" brings a whole other dimension to the common parental dilemma of whether or not a child is ready to start school. It's a topic that will be addressed by the director of the UK's Institute for Neuro-Physiological Psychology (INPP), Sally Goddard Blythe.

Physical maturity supports learning at all levels, Goddard Blythe tells The Irish Times, ahead of her visit to Tralee. "Just as with any foundations, if they are a bit rocky, it doesn't matter how good the intelligence in the executive brain at the top, it is going to have to work much harder because it hasn't got the structural support from underneath."

She quotes the philosopher and educationalist Rudolf Steiner as saying the time of reading readiness comes at the time of shedding the first milk teeth, usually around age six. "While there may not be a scientific basis for that, there is a lot of empirical evidence that it is probably a valid observation," she remarks. As a result, the education systems in Britain and Ireland may be "forcing – not all, but some – children into reading and writing before they have all the neurological tools in place to be able to succeed".

There is a big variation in children's development, Goddard Blythe stresses, and some children will be ready at four, while others won't be ready until they are nearly seven. "Those who are not ready are the ones who are potentially at a disadvantage, unless that is recognized" and a physical remedial program put in place, she says. Going back 30 or more years in the UK, every child was assessed by a doctor at the time of school entry, she says. They were asked to do simple physical tasks such as stand on one leg, hop to the end of the room and back, pile some bricks, as well as have their sight and hearing tested. "Those tests were phased out because they didn't know what to do with the children who failed them," she says.

Her institute has developed screening tests for neuromotor immaturity that teachers can use, as well as movement programs they can implement to help children overcome it. We're talking about "grey-area children" here, Goddard Blythe explains. "They're not bad enough that they are picked up as having a medical problem but neither do they have all the tools in place to succeed in the classroom."

In 2005 the INPP published a series of studies, of which the biggest was conducted in Co Antrim, where the institute's screening tests were used and the results compared to educational measurements in children aged five to six and eight to nine. "They found 48 per cent of the five- to six-year-olds still had traces of baby reflexes that should not be active beyond the first year of life, and that 35 per cent of eight- to nine-year-olds had a similar profile, and there was a correlation between neuromotor immaturity and lower education performance."

Similar findings are being made in an ongoing study in the UK and the day we speak she has just got results from schools in New York. "They all show that children with lower physical skills are performing in the lower third of every group they are looking at in educational measures. "We can't say it is the cause," she stresses. "It could be part and parcel of the same thing, but it suggests a very interesting picture and that there is room for remediation in the physical sense, rather than simply looking at more reading and writing."

The remedial program she and her colleagues have devised for teachers involves 10 minutes of exercises in school every day for an academic year, taking children through repetitions of movements they should have made from being an infant to the creeping and crawling stage of development.

(Continued on next page.)

“What we have found in small-scale studies – and they are only small-scale studies – is that it does improve the measures of neuromotor immaturity. There is a significant improvement in all children participating,” she reports. But the improvement in educational measures occurred only in a much smaller group: those who had both neuromotor immaturity and were underperforming at the outset. However, that is what the program is targeting: “It wasn't designed for those children who didn't have problems,” she points out.

Early learning

What can parents do to reduce the likelihood of such problems arising? Well, for a start, we need to know that we turn our backs on nature and evolution at our children's peril. Early learning is done through movement. With an over-riding emphasis on academic achievement and developing technology we are hot-housing cognitive skills, “at the expense of the fact that we are all mammals”, says Goddard Blythe. “Mammals require sensory, emotional and social development before they become adults.”

There is “growing ignorance among first-time parents – just as bad among the highly educated as among the other socioeconomic groups – of what babies and children need in biological terms from the environment in which they are developing, to become well-rounded, well-adjusted children”, she continues. Without wanting to guilt-trip parents, she says they can help to minimize the potential for developmental problems but they can never eliminate them because there are so many different reasons for them.

The mother of three grown-up children, Goddard Blythe was amazed at the array of modern baby equipment when her first grandchild was born five years ago. Not only could you buy a car seat, but a car seat you take out with the baby in it, place in a rocker and then press a button so that it plays nursery rhymes and rocks at the same time.

“That's lovely, and nobody is saying a parent shouldn't do that for periods of time, but the danger is that they get overused,” she warns. Then the child is deprived not only of the movement experience they get by lying on the floor, waving their arms and legs in the air, but they lose out on touch and communication between parent and child.

“Artificial equipment does something completely different,” says Goddard Blythe, whose books include *The Genius of Natural Childhood*. Children pick up nuances of mood from the quality of a parent's touch and movement, from how they are held and whether the parent has time to talk to them, the eye contact, and so on.

“All those are non-language verbal skills that contribute up to 90 per cent of effective communication between individuals later on.” And “when I see the iPad plonked on the front of baby equipment, I think, really . . .” she trails off as her effort to be diplomatic about modern parenting wears thin.

“Conversation is completely different from sitting in front of an iPad where the entertainment is provided for you: lots of things are thrown at the baby but the iPad is not interested in what the baby has to say back.”

Conversations with a baby

Studies led by psychology and psychobiology professor Colwyn Trevarthen at the University of Edinburgh have shown if an adult doesn't wait for the baby to respond when carrying on a “conversation”, the baby gives up trying, says Goddard Blythe. Before babies can talk they will respond to conversation through babble, kicking their feet or making facial expressions. “They try to talk back; if you wait they will continue to try, but if you ignore it or interrupt, the baby gives up.”

Other traditional parenting practices such as singing lullabies also have a specific developmental spin-off. “Singing slows down the sounds of speech in preparation for being able to hear the individual sounds in reading,” she explains. And then being read to frequently in early childhood is a big help in developing speech, vocabulary and reading skills.

Meanwhile, as the human race has “become almost too good”, she remarks, at minimizing physical effort. “Children are missing out on the building of physical vocabulary, which is what helps us to understand the world around us. “We are losing the recognition of how important physical development is for anything else we want to happen later on.”