

School Calendar

This Week

Wednesday, January 6

3rd grade Parent Evening 6:30-8:30 pm

Monday, January 11

Tea & Play at RVWS

Looking Ahead

Tuesday, January 12

4th grade Parent Evening 7:00 pm

Thursday, January 14

School Tour 9-11:30 am
EC Parent Enrichment Evening
Previously scheduled 5th grade mtg. moved to 2/2

Monday, January 18

M.L. King Day In-school Celebration

Thursday, January 21

Board Meeting 6:30 pm

Saturday, January 23

Workday – 4th Grade

Monday, January 25

Tea & Play at Morning Glory

Wednesday, January 27

1st and 2nd grade Parent Evenings 6:30 pm

Thursday, January 28

3rd grade Play 9:00 am & 6:00 pm

Monday, February 1

Faculty In-Service - School Closed

Tuesday, February 2

5th grade Parent Evening 6:30 pm

Monday, February 8

EC In-Service – NO EC CLASSES

How to Contact Us

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

Parent Council Corner

The next Parent Council meeting will be on Wednesday afternoon January 20th at 2:00 at Homestead.

Anyone who has Winter Fair feedback is welcome and encouraged to send it to pc@rivervalleyschool.org. We appreciate any kind of feedback!

Santa Lucia



As part of the second grade curriculum, the children celebrated Santa Lucia Day on December 13th.

They visited each classroom bringing beautiful songs and delicious buns for everyone.

(More photos at the end of this week's Current.)

Food for Thought (and Action)

Soup and Bread Thursday

The 8th Grade is delighted to offer nourishing and delicious soup and bread to the RVWS community every Thursday for lunch, starting January 14th. The soups are made by the family-owned Peasant Grill restaurant and catering company of Hamilton, NJ. The chef/owners are Frenchtown residents and these soups have been selling out to rave reviews at the Early Bird cafe in Frenchtown.

Soups can be ordered in cup (8oz) or bowl (16oz) sizes with bread and butter, and with an optional seltzer.

Each month there will be a choice of two different soups, with at least one vegetarian option. Please fill out your child's preference for a soup choice each week; if you would like to change flavors during the month we will be glad to make that switch for you!

Lunch order forms may be placed in the box labeled "Soup for Lunch" on the office door. Please return them by January 8th along with payment up to Spring Break (11 weeks), checks made payable to RVWS, "8th grade soup" in the memo.

All profits are used to support the 8th Grade Class Trip at the end of the year.

Pizza Update

Pizza for the rest of the year will be coming from Galasso's in Frenchtown. Please find the order form at the end of this week's Current.

From Administration

Mending Help Needed

Several costumes from the Shepherds Play are in need of loving care. They need minor mending, nothing requiring a great deal of skill. If you have the time and the inclination, please let Robbie know.

Missing Clothes

Tierra Venini (G-3) lost a bag of clothes right before Winter Fair. If you took them home by mistake, please email her mother at: tinavenini@msn.com.

Thank you

Thank you, Carol Diven, and our talented students for another beautiful Holiday Concert. It was magical. And thank you Lisa Sforza for your wonderful accompaniment.

The Shepherds Players wish to thank Lisa Sweeney, our drama coach; Lisa Sforza, our accompanist; Karl Bernhardt, our stage manager and Grace Morgan for hay bales. We couldn't have done it without you.

Amazon.com and RVWS

Right now, RVWS is part of the Amazon Smile program – you can designate RVWS as your beneficiary of choice.

Tis the season for online holiday shopping...If you shop through Amazon you may designate River Valley Waldorf School to receive .5% from your purchase. There is no extra cost to you on your purchase. Simply place your Amazon orders through Amazon Smile, and designate RVWS as your chosen charity. The site will remember your preference, so you only need to do this once. In order to register for this program, please follow these instructions: Sign in to <http://smile.amazon.com> on your desktop or mobile browser.

From your desktop, go to Your Account from the navigation at the top of any page, and then select the option to Change your Charity.

From your mobile browser, select Change your Charity from the options at the bottom of the page. Type in River Valley Waldorf School and our name should appear for you to select.

We are also in the process of becoming an Amazon Associate – which will mean a much larger percentage of everyone's shopping will be paid to RVWS. That part is a bit more complicated and we are in the process of getting the proper links set up on our website and arranging the necessary routing. Stay tuned for this part!

From the Faculty

What the Children are Learning:

First Grade – Math

Second Grade – Language Arts

Third Grade – Drama/Language Arts

Fourth Grade – Math

Fifth Grade – Mesopotamia

Sixth Grade – Business Math

Seventh Grade – Wish, Wonder and Surprise

Eighth Grade – Physics

After School German and Schuhplattler

A new six-week round of After School German begins next Wednesday with songs, games, and conversation. The next round of Monday afternoon Schuhplattler will start in a few weeks. Both classes run from 3:20-4:20.

Contact Peter Ray at peter.ray@comcast.net.

A New Opportunity

Every child works at his or her own pace in Handwork and sometimes a project does not get completed by the end of the year. Miss Till is offering after-school opportunities (free of charge) for help with current or past handwork projects. She will be offering these most Tuesdays 3:30 - 4:30. Please get in touch with her to let her know to expect your child. mtill@rivervalleysschool.org

From the Leadership Council

What we are working on?

What are we working on?

Working with TDC on teacher mentoring and evaluation.

Looking at the math curriculum in the grade school.

IAT evaluation with the Board of Trustees

The LC has open hours every Tuesday from 3:30-4 for anyone who would like to meet with us. If you have a question or a concern, please stop by. All are welcome.

Building & Grounds

School Work Days

Below is the calendar of the upcoming workdays. Please note that some changes have been made from the school calendar. Please RSVP to Mary K. Till (mtill@rivervalley.school.org), to let us know if you will attend. This way we can plan what projects can be undertaken. Mary K. Till and Lynne Allbaugh - Building and Grounds

2015-2016 Work Days

TBD - 5th grade

January 23 - 4th grade

February 27 - 3rd grade

March 12 - 2nd grade

April 23 - 1st grade

May 14 - Early Childhood

From the Board of Trustees

Last Week for IAT Review

Please email your response to the questions below by the end of this week (January 8th) to parent and Board of Trustees member Jef Betz at jefbetz@gmail.com. The Board and the Interim Administration Team will appreciate your input.

- Do you feel the parent community's needs have been adequately met by the administrative (i.e, non-faculty) staff during the first half of the school year?
- Is there anything specific you'd like to see improved in how the school administration supports the parent community?

A summary of all responses, in addition to input from the Faculty and Leadership Council, will be considered by the IAT as it finalizes a proposal to the Board early next semester. We hope you will all take advantage of this opportunity to help shape the direction of the River Valley Waldorf School. If you have any questions about this process, please feel free to contact Jef Betz at jefbetz@gmail.com.

Class Fundraisers

RVWS Hats

The first order of RVWS hats sold in a flash. 8th grade parents would be happy to order more, but there is a minimum required for the order. If you would like to buy a hat (or hats) please email Josh Holtz at: josh@cecassociates.biz and let him know. If he receives requests for 48 hats, the order will be placed. Please respond to Josh immediately if you are interested.

Planning your child's birthday party?

Let the energetic, fun-loving eighth graders help — and help them raise the funds they need for their class trip! We'll make your child's party one they won't soon forget! Now booking dates for October, November, and December— Limited dates available so email Renell Carpenter (renell@rcn.com) or Kira Willey (kira@kira.net) to reserve your party now!

From the Community

Purely Farm will be Back on Friday

Purely Farm's pork, turkey and eggs will once again be available for purchase at River Valley. This Friday morning, January 8th you can stock up after dropping off the kids! The farmers will be set up outside the front entrance between 8 to 9 am, so take a moment and check out what's on hand, ask questions and grab something to help ease the family through these cold winter months. Joanna and Marc Michini of Purely Farm, parents of Clover in the Sun Room, have a long history of providing the best meats in the area. Their farm critters thrive on life out on pasture and a diet supplemented by mineral rich, organic grains that are locally grown and GMO free. Joanna and Marc will be at RVWS monthly with your orders all ready to take home--saving you shopping time and providing you with quality and wholesome, naturally pasture-raised meats. Equally, if you'd rather organize a buying club in your own town, they will drop at a central location. If this appeals, please contact them at purelyfarm@gmail.com. Please email them also for advance information about availability. See attached price lists for current offerings from Purely Farm.

Knife Sharpening

I am McCaslin Miles, an RVWS student. I will sharpen all of your blades – hatchets, chef knives, pocket and hunting knives and many more. (The only knives I cannot sharpen are Asian style, 15-degree cooking knives; sorry).

Prices are \$5 per knife, \$4 for four or more knives, \$3 per knife for repeat customers. Satisfaction guaranteed. Email me at: edgesharp2003@gmail.com

Muck and Gold

Third grade parents, Chris Bodwitch and Scott Glallagher, have started their new (re)learning lab to offer unique classes, workshops and performances rooted in experimentation, collaboration and self-discovery.

Please visit muckandgold.com to learn more about them and register for classes beginning January 20th

Protecting Our Children

Joining Together to Prevent Substance Abuse in Our Community

Monday, February 1, 2016 | 7:00 pm

Palisades High School Audion

35 Church Hill Road | Kintnersville

Palisades School District's PACT Coaliton has partnered with St. Luke's University Health Network and Penn Foundaton to offer education, awareness, and prevention strategies to address substance abuse in our community.

Presenters

Dr. Keith Baker, Emergency Medicine Resident at St. Luke's University Health Network. Dr. Baker will speak about synthetic drugs, including signs and symptoms of someone who is under the influence as well as prevention strategies.

Gordon Hornig, MSW, LSW, Coordinator of Penn Foundation's Mobile Engagement Services. Gordon will speak about underage drinking and the abuse of prescription painkillers and heroin.

Ottsville Traditional Arts Center Events

Every Wednesday

Open Jam with Richard Finch

6:00-8:00 pm • \$5 suggested donation

More at ottsvilletradarts.weebly.com • 250 Durham Rd. Ottsville Pa.

Santa Lucia



From The Guardian

Why Depriving Your Kids of Toys is a Great Idea

By Madeleine Somerville

My five siblings and I grew up in a cruel wasteland of deprivation that included whole-wheat cereals, secondhand clothing and shared rooms. To add insult to injury, we didn't even have a TV to distract us from our hardship.

My parents weren't poor, so as a child I simply assumed they had a sadistic streak. Looking back now, as a wise old 31-year-old, I get it. And not only do I get it, I've come to realize that depriving your children is wildly underrated.

The road to this realization was long. In my mid-20s, I realized that, although reusing and recycling had become popular, the concept of reducing was being left in the dust, largely because no one could figure out how to make money off of it. I began buying less, making more, and taking a critical look at how much I consumed. As I delved further and further into the bizarre world of bamboo-fibers and up-cycling, my austere childhood took on an entirely different slant. I realized with a shock that my parents were cool: they had been mindful about our planet and its resources since the 1970s.

It wasn't a great surprise then, that when I became pregnant with my daughter Olive, I vowed to carry on this family tradition of neglect.

The reasons, in my mind, were simple. Consuming for consumption's sake is an epidemic – especially when it comes to kids. The moment we see that second line on the pregnancy test, the shopping begins. This relentless pursuit is expensive, stressful, takes a devastating toll on the environment, and has become so commonplace that we barely blink when someone suggests a \$30 plastic teething toy as a “must-have” item.

I'm now a single mom and because I make most of the day-to-day decisions in my daughter's life, my demented ideas encounter virtually no opposition. I've become drunk with power. Yet, while focusing on experiences as opposed to material items has been a positive choice, I sometimes have doubts. I see Olive delight over battery-operated guitars and plastic dolls at friends' houses, and I feel sharp pangs of guilt. I look at her room, all of her toys contained in one meager basket, and I feel an uncomfortable nagging feeling settle into the pit of my stomach. I don't want her to miss out, I don't want to be the mean mom, and what's more, I don't want her to look back at her childhood and see lack, instead of love.

Some drown their mom-guilt with wine, I like to bury it under reams of cold, hard research. So I started digging, and what I discovered is great news not only for the piles of plastic toys slowly suffocating in our landfills, but for our kids, too. In a study designed to identify and prevent addictive patterns in adults, two German researchers (they would be German) somehow convinced a nursery school to remove all toys from the classroom for three months.

Remarkably, the scenario didn't devolve into Lord of the Flies acted out in miniature. Instead, teachers reported that while on the first day the children seemed bewildered and confused, by the end of the third month they were engaged in wildly imaginative play, able to concentrate better and communicate more effectively.

Similarly, a study by American childhood developmental researchers reported that when children under five have too many toys, they can't concentrate on one thing long enough to actually learn from it, instead they feel compelled to rummage through and touch everything without ever fully immersing themselves in any one activity.

It's not just science that recommends you say yes to less; your wallet and the natural world outside your door agree. The average American household has over \$15,000 in credit card debt and Americans generate 254m tons of trash a year. Those in the UK don't fare much better, with an average household consumer debt of £6,454, and 100m tons of waste.

I don't think it's much of a stretch to infer that at least a small portion of that is from all of the paraphernalia we buy for our kids. It's tough on our pocketbooks and it's tragic for the landfills.

If you're feeling ambitious, try to use shopping as a way to try out a new, scaled-back approach: as you shop, try to evaluate whether what you're buying is a want, or a need. Will it add to your child's life or distract from it?

It's time to rethink deprivation as a parenting strategy. Living with less, it turns out, means more. More money in our savings account, more space on our shelves, and best of all, more communication, imagination and concentration from our kids.

If all else fails, I comfort myself with the idea of Olive on a therapist's couch in 15 years. “I wasn't allowed to have balloons at my birthday parties,” she'll gasp, through thick sobs, “Because they were plastic.” Sadistic indeed.

PIZZA DAY – ROUND 2!!

RVWS 3rd graders will be offering pizza and organic lemonade, starting THIS Friday, January 8th until June 3rd.

We are proud to announce the pizza ordered will be from Galasso's.

We are unable to offer a gluten free option at this time.

Please return to the front office by Thursday, January 7th with payment to RVWS.

This payment is for the second half of 18 weeks.

This is part of an annual fundraiser for our trip to Hawthorne Valley Farm in March 2016.

Thank you for your support!

Sincerely, Mrs. Atkinson's 3rd Grade Class!

Child's Name: _____

Grade and Teachers name: _____

_____ 1 slice & lemonade: \$63.00

_____ 2 slices & lemonade: \$103.50

_____ 1 slice/no lemonade: \$40.50

_____ 2 slices/no lemonade: \$81.00

_____ Lemonade Only: \$22.50

Last day for Pizza will be Friday June 3rd

Questions please contact Kymm Phibbs at 267-337-0636

Pizza will be delivered to each classroom as ordered.

The children will be distributing the pizza and lemonade.

Many thanks again for sharing in this fundraiser, the children are having a wonderful time being involved.