



River Valley Current

November 15, 2016 No. 460

As freely as the firmament embraces the world, / or the sun pours forth impartially his beams, / so mercy must encircle both friend and foe.
-Johann Christoph Friedrich von Schiller

School Calendar

This Week

Tuesday, November 15

8th grade to the Franklin Institute

Thursday, November 17

Board Meeting

6:30 pm

Looking Ahead

Monday & Tuesday, November 21 & 22

No School – Parent-Teacher Conferences

Wednesday-Friday, November 23-25

No School – Thanksgiving Break

Wednesday, November 30

7th/8th grade Class Meeting

Friday, December 2

Spiral of Light – in-school celebration

Wednesday, December 7

School Tour

9:00-11:00 am

Friday, December 9

Early Dismissal – Winter Fair set-up

1:00 pm

Saturday, December 10

Winter Fair

How to Contact Us

info@rivervalleyschool.org

lc@rivervalleyschool.org

bot@rivervalleyschool.org

pc@rivervalleyschool.org

December Lunch Menu

The December lunch menu is attached to this week's Current. Forms are due November 30th.

Spiral of Light Crystals

If you have large beautiful crystals you would lend us to make the Spiral of Light sparkle, please label them and leave them in the faculty room by Thurs., Dec. 1st. They will be there available for pick-up again on Mon., Dec. 5th.
Thank you!

The Early Childhood Parent Enrichment Evening scheduled for this Thursday has been cancelled.

It will be re-scheduled in January.

Martinmas Coat Drive Ends Friday Morning

As part of River Valley's celebration of the legend of Saint Martin who tore his coat in half to share with a beggar, we are once again sponsoring our Annual Martinmas Coat Drive. Please consider donating your gently used coats and jackets.

New or gently used women's, men's and children's coats – **especially sizes 0-5T** - are welcome and needed! There is a drop box in the school lobby to receive your generous donations!
Coats will be picked up Friday morning, December 18th.

Our music teacher Carol Diven is organizing the drive through the not-for-profit organization, One Warm Coat. The coats received will benefit Community Services for Children in Quakertown (<http://www.cscinc.org>). Thank you Carol for once again creating this wonderful way for RVWS to support to our greater community!

Winter Fair!!

Saturday, December 10th, 11-4

Winter Fair is a beautiful festival celebrating the coming of King Winter. It is a time of magic and celebration for children of all ages - a time to get together with friends and loved ones before the deep freeze and great snows of King Winter set in and we turn towards the coziness and warmth of our hearth and homes.

The success of the festival depends on the creativity and cooperation of River Valley's parent body. Each class hosts an activity and works to make the magic of Winter Fair happen for our children.

Secret Garden is one of the most magical places at the festival and one the children look forward to with anticipation. Many count on this beautifully prepared activity for the gifts they present their loved ones. **Each family at RVWS is asked to make 20 Secret Garden items** to aid this feeling of awe and wonder. These items can be small and homemade. A list of potential items can be found in the Parent Handbook. **There is a box in the lobby to collect your items.**

In addition, parents are asked to bake one batch of gingerbread cookies for our Gingerbread Tea House, which greets our children with warm tea and a sweet snack after visiting King Winter. Recipe and instructions will be forthcoming.

Please contact this year's Winter Fair committee with any questions you may have.

Brenda Schaufele, Stephanie Smith, Paul Smith and Ron Ferguson.

From Administration

Sibling Love Fund for Hannah & Ish 10K Walk & Benefit

Sunday, November 27, 2016, 10 a.m. (stay tuned for Frenchtown-area starting point)

Join the Real Girls: Walk with us! Run with us! Work a Cheer Station! Help with registration!

Register your intention to walk OR help OR both -

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSf6076DNqXKLZXPvykA_WtUPI0GTf9Ui7cKk4dLmpRjkIVG_Q/viewform?c=0&w=1

and here is the link to donate directly and comment what walker gets credit for your gift!:

<https://www.youcaring.com/hannahblancoandishmaelhaarz-680650>

Info, pledge forms & more: catherinelent@embarqmail.com. A flyer for the event is attached to this week's Current.

The background: Hannah was 14 and Ish was 4 in August when their mom Amanda passed at age 35. Hannah moved to Philly... Ishmael went to Michigan. The Real Girls want to help them to stay connected by creating a fund dedicated to nourishing their relationship: airfare, trips, packages...

We are using hashtags to create albums of images...if you post pics of yourself (with or without Amanda, Hannah, Ishmael, or any combo) with intention to walk or volunteer or help, use them! #HuggingHannah #RememberingAmanda #SquishingIshy. The Real Girls are an all-volunteer, award-winning, unaffiliated group that meets periodically in Frenchtown NJ for the nourishment & betterment of 12-18-year-old girls.

DID YOU KNOW??

River Valley offers a lovely parent/child class especially for infants? Cricket on the Hearth is geared especially for newborns to pre-walkers together with their parent or caregiver. A short session is beginning December 9th and finishes the end of January. Class will meet 6 times (due to holiday break), so it's the perfect opportunity to see what it's like!

Cricket on the Hearth meets Fridays from 9 until 10:30am in the Sun Room and is led by Early Childhood Teacher, Molly MacDonald. This class would be a lovely shower, or new baby gift! See Molly, or Cindy Schretlen with any questions. A registration form is attached to this week's CURRENT.

After-school Capoeira at River Valley for Grade 5-8

River Valley Waldorf School is planning to host a new after school program, Capoeira, 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. I encourage you to visit Gata's website <http://www.newhopecapoeira.com/> and get acquainted with Gata's background and Capoeira in general.

Classes will be offered every Monday from 3:30 to 4:30 pm for students in 5th grade and up and will begin as soon as we have 12 students enrolled. (We have 7 so far.) The cost will be \$15 per class. We will begin with a 4-week trial period. Registration forms are attached to this week's Current. If you have any questions, please contact Euclides at: esantiago@rivervalley.school.org

Thank You

Thank you to Beverly Sessegolo for the beautiful chalk board announcement for the Holiday Bazaar.

Thank you to Charlie Kelly for designing and fine-tuning a complicated spreadsheet to keep track of all of our attendance information. You made our new attendance policy much easier to implement.

Thank you to all of the volunteers that made the Holiday Bazaar a resounding success: Rich Kroth, Zoe Bonham and friends, Mathius Wind, Lynn Vazquez, Lynne Allbaugh, Sawyer Wesp, McCasilin Miles, Robbie Miller, Clare Wargaski-Brunell, Reeve and Emmett Kelly, Ron Ferguson, Kristyn and Anika Lederer, Katherine and Rod Shilling, Steve Stave, Pam Reiss and Mark Stave, and Mike Spencer.

From Stephanie Spencer, Development Coordinator

Waldorf School of Princeton Welcomes Kim John Payne

Loving Limits in a Digital Age: Not Anti-Screen but Pro-Connection to Nature and People

On Monday, November 28, 7 p.m. Waldorf School of Princeton is delighted to host Kim John Payne, author of *Simplicity Parenting* and *The Soul of Discipline*, for a public lecture that resonates this season and all year round!

"Loving Limits in a Digital Age: Not Anti-Screen but Pro-Connection to Nature and People" offers parents resources for navigating some of the greatest challenges facing our society today: How to maintain loving limits, warm, firm and calm discipline and strong family connections in a world where increasingly "screens are supreme." How to build focus, grit and good judgment so that our kids do not become overwhelmed with media-driven images but can shape their own self-esteem, hopes and dreams. How to encourage respect when negative images of adults pervade pop culture. Fitting in with friends ("Won't my kids be disadvantaged if I limit screen media?"). Aloneness vs. Loneliness: Helping kids know the difference. The alluring world of no boundaries that screen use develops and how this makes discipline difficult. A consultant and trainer to over 110 U.S. independent and public schools, Kim John Payne, M.ED, has been a school counselor, adult educator, researcher, education and a private family counselor for thirty years.

Tickets are \$10 online / \$15 at the door; sales begin Tuesday, October 11, through Eventbrite.

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

High School Open Houses

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

The Lotus School of Liberal Arts, Grade 9 – 12

Open House November 18, 1-5 pm - 85 Sherman Rd, Ottsville, PA

Meet the teachers and experience first hand what a holistic and mindful high school education looks like. All are welcome! RSVP to info@lotusla.org

Lehigh Valley Charter High School for the Arts Open House: Tuesday, Jan. 5 at 5:45 pm. The program begins promptly at 6:30 pm.

Mercersburg Academy Admission Office cordially invites you to attend our Open House event on Monday, December 12 from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

From the Faculty

What the Children are Learning:

First Grade – Language Arts

Second Grade – Math

Third Grade – Math

Fourth Grade – Local Geography

Fifth Grade – Botany

Sixth Grade – Geometry

Seventh Grade – Creative Writing

Eighth Grade – Meteorology

Music Conferences

Dear Parents,

If you would like to have a conference with Carol Diven, our music teacher, please contact her at cdiven@rivervalleyschool.org to arrange a mutually convenient time.

From Parent Council

November PC Meeting Minutes

Parent Council minutes from the meeting on November 9th are attached to this week's Current. There will be no meeting in December.

Silent Angels

The Parent Council calls all angels to restore one of the most meaningful River Valley Waldorf School traditions that has gone by the wayside in recent years. Consider joining this committee of angels. As a part of this committee, you will be assigned, anonymously to a faculty member. Your responsibility is to honor and nourish this faculty member on a monthly basis in some small way. Past angels have left a juice, a candle, a dinner etc with the faculty member's name and a tag "love, your silent angel." River Valley Waldorf School parents love our faculty and know that the role of a teacher is immense and greatly appreciated.

If you are interested in becoming a Silent Angel, please email pc@rivervalleyschool.org 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!

Love and Gratitude, Anonymous Silent Angel Coordinators of PC

From the Diversity Committee

A Request

The Diversity Committee and the Early Childhood teachers seek a handy parent who would like to design and build a bookshelf for our new early childhood diversity lending library. This lending library will feature children's books that highlight diversity in all its forms, as well as books for parents who want to learn more about teaching love and tolerance to our future generations. Please contact Holly Low at holly.k.low@gmail.com if you're interested.

From the Community

At Yoga Loka

Thanksgiving Day Fundraiser

Asana, Poetry and Music with Bonnie Pariser and Warren Cooper

Come spend Thanksgiving morning expressing your gratitude through movement and mindfulness. All proceeds go directly to the Frenchtown Food Bank. \$20 suggested donation.

Thursday November 24th, 9:00-11:00 am. RSVP required, space is limited.

Yoga Lounge

Now that the weather is getting chilly come in early for a cup of hot tea and warm conversation. Yoga Loka is opening its doors early for the community to gather and come together. For over a decade Yoga Loka has been the place where neighbors exchange ideas and thoughts, where advice is sought and given, and where life-long friendships have been created. We are nurturing that tradition with an official gathering time before selected classes. Come by early- before you need to run off to start the errands or the work day, or come in right after you drop the kids off at school.

The small room will be open for peaceful meditation or contemplation. The large room will be available for pre-class savasana, and the comfy couch will be yours to sit on and enjoy a hot beverage from our selection of teas and spices and to connect with like-minded people.

8:35 am Wednesdays and Fridays

***For a limited time we are offering River Valley families a 20% discount on class blocks. Use code RV2016 if booking online or at the studio. Discount applies to all classes on the schedule except workshops.

www.Yoga-loka.com

Lotus School of Liberal Arts

Please join us for our morning meditation series 7am to 8am, each Tuesday Nov 8 through Dec 20. All styles welcome. If you are new to meditation, our instructors will guide you. Suggested donation, \$10.00. Contributions of any size are appreciated. Proceeds go to The Lotus School of Liberal Arts. We are honored to have Felicia Ruth joining us. <https://www.facebook.com/felicialight.ed/>

The Nutcracker

Come see an amazing performance and help raise money for our school!

Eden, Daphne and Coco Stuart will be dancing in Budzynski Ballet Company's full production of The Nutcracker at Central Bucks High School South, December 10th and 11th at 12PM or 4PM. Buy tickets at Budzynskiballet.org and enter "River Valley Waldorf School" in the the comments section and \$5 will be donated back to the school for each ticket. And...Tony Stuart is in it too!

Whimsical Rhyming Picture Books by two Steiner Alumni

Steiner parent and Early Childhood teacher collaborate on children's picture books in rhyme. Matt McFlack and His Flyaway Kite is a children's story written in rhyme about a young boy who buys a kite, loses it and then spends the entire day trying to retrieve it. Dance of the Seasons is a lyrical romp in rhyme through the seasons of the year. An ideal holiday gift for new readers! Ideal holiday gifts for young readers. Available on Amazon.com or at KyraRobinov.com.

HELPING HANDS FOR HIRE

Do you need a hand with something?

I enjoy the following:

Cleaning ("green"); sorting and organizing (even the messes!); Care-taking: land, home, people, animals; companionship; nourishing cooking/meal preparation; shopping; gardening and yard work (hand-based); personal assistant/helper; event preparation; and, I'm up for trying something not on this list too.

Available on an as-needed basis many weekdays 9:30-2:30. Sliding scale (pay what you can) or baseline hourly rate. Email bowersbetara@gmail.com Phone/Text: 908-674-2772 (Tara Bowers, mother of Alice, grade 3)

Riegelsville Library Upcoming Events

Story Times are weekly on Tuesday @ 10:30 AM and Thursday @ 1:30 PM.

Get into the holiday spirit at the Riegelsville Library!

Make and decorate a mini-gingerbread house or mini-tree!

Saturday, December 10, 11am – 1pm

All materials provided by the library.

Riegelsville Public Library, 615 Easton Road, Riegelsville, PA

Puppet Shows at the Riegelsville Library

A Celebration of Being Thankful

November 15th & 17th

Winter Wonderland

December 27th

Puppet shows will be held instead of story time on these dates. Shows will be held at 10:30am on Tuesday and 1:30pm on Thursday. No registration required, free to attend.

Eyes of the Wild and Wallaby Tales Traveling Zoo

Tuesday, December 29th at 11am

Riegelsville Borough Community Room

Join us for a free program to learn about Chinchillas, Artic Fox and more during this exciting and educational show featuring LIVE wildlife!

For more than a decade, Eyes of the Wild has operated as a wildlife rescue and educational facility. ***Live animals will be present. If you are allergic to animal fur or hair, please take appropriate precautions. Absolutely no food or drink may be present during the program.*

For info call: 610-749-2357 www.riegelsvillelibrary.com

Purely Farm's Thanksgiving Turkey

Purely Farm is taking reservations for their famed Thanksgiving Turkeys. These wonderful birds are raised by the Michini Family themselves and offer legendary flavor and an exciting alternative to the antibiotic pumped, factory farmed conventional turkeys that are sadly pushed onto so many Americans' tables. Purely Turkey is organically fed, pasture-raised, and amazingly fresh. All turkeys will be processed less than a week before Thanksgiving and available for pick up at 4 convenient locations as well as on their farm in Ottsville. Get your order in while supplies last!

In addition to whole turkeys Purely Farm will also offer a variety of turkey cuts that can either add a little extra meat to your meal or help feed a smaller gathering. As always Purely Farm will also have a full spread of their yummy pasture-raised meats, turkey bone broth and pork and lamb sausages available when you purchase your turkey. One stop shopping of pasture-raised meats at it's best, let Purely Farm help make this Thanksgiving Feast a truly memorable meal!

To order call: 215-317-0889 or email purelyfarm@gmail.com

Student Pottery Sale at Kissimmee River Pottery

Don't miss a chance to shop for unique and beautiful hand-made pottery. Just in time for the Holidays. Great Pottery - Great Prices!!!

Reception: Friday, Dec. 2nd 6-9 pm Sale: December 3-4 10 am - 5 pm

Upcoming Events: Registration for the Winter session opens November 7th. Sign up online and come join the fun!! - 908-237-0671 riverpots@earthlink.net <http://www.riverpots.com>

7th Grade Field Trip to Magic Gardens in Philadelphia

As part of their Wish, Wonder and Surprise creative writing block, the 7th grade visited the Magic Gardens, an art installation created by Philadelphia artist, Isaiah Zagar.





From The Guardian

Academic Subjects Alone Won't Set Every Child Up for Life

By John Newbiggin

It's no surprise that Nicky Morgan is in favor of the English baccalaureate. But what is genuinely puzzling is her assertion that "evidence shows" that sticking to "these core academic subject... sets every child up for life." Even if what she really meant was that it sets every child up for a job, there's not much "evidence" to sustain the proposition. In fact, it all points the other way.

OK – a good fistful of the English Baccalaureate (EBacc) five should set you up for A-levels, and a good fistful of A-levels might set you up for a good university, and a good degree might – just might – set you up for a job that uses a tiny bit of what you've spent 10 years learning (if it's not mostly redundant by then). But what successful employers, big and small, hi-tech and no-tech, are crying out for are recruits who are innovative and creative, who can think laterally, communicate clearly and work as part of a team. These are all abilities that are most effectively developed for children through the arts and music.

But these subjects aren't included in the EBacc measure – they're not "academic" enough.

In the future being adaptable, able to learn how to learn, rather than learn how to remember, will be the only way of staying afloat in a swirling labor market. But it seems we've decided the future isn't happening.

Instead, in desperation, the government is going to cling ever more tightly to the old certainties of pointless rote-learning of a few chosen subjects that are deemed – in Nicky Morgan's word – to be "hard," on the basis that if they're hard, they must be good. Why?

What's really hard is being creative – and that's going to get a lot harder in a global economy that is itself becoming more creative – and more competitive. That's why the Chinese government has made it a central part of their strategy to "move from made in China to designed in China". They see where the real money lies along the value chain.

At the moment they're knocking out millions of iPhones in Shenzhen and earning a meager 4% of the phone's retail cost while Apple retains 60% for imagining it and designing it back in Seattle. Steve Jobs, the founder of Apple, was fond of saying that his success was due to the fact that he didn't hire computer geeks, he hired artists, musicians and poets who were fascinated by technology. No accident that Apple's success is substantially due to the genius of a design graduate of the Royal College of Art. But here in the UK, the number of students doing design and technology at GCSE has declined by 50% – that's 50% in just over 10 years. And the figures for arts, drama and music, though not quite as shocking, are all pretty dire – and all going the wrong way. No EBacc GCSEs in that lot – they're not "hard" enough.

Here's another thing. In the course of an exhaustive analysis of some hundreds of entrepreneurial digital businesses in and around Brighton last year by the Arts and Humanities Research Council, it was discovered that the companies where there was a real balance between employees with an arts background and employees with a technology background, the businesses were growing at three times the rate of companies that failed to achieve a similar balance. What a surprise.

But forget about jobs and the economy. The real evidence, and all of us know it, is that the way children get set up for life is by having balance, variety and stimulus in their lives and in their education – well-rounded to use a very traditional phrase.

That can't be achieved by consigning the arts to being a nice addition to a system of exam-focused academic rote-learning. In what politicians love to tell us is the most creative nation on Earth, we need to have creativity at the center, and celebrate the fact. Lining up little empty vessels in emulation of Mr Gradgrind won't do it for our kids, won't do it for the vibrancy of our communities and certainly won't do it for the future of the economy. Time to do some re-sits, Mrs Morgan.