

## School Calendar

### This Week

**Friday, Nov 10**

Lantern Walk – EC, Grades 1 & 2 4:45 pm

**Saturday, Nov 11**

RVWS Open House 10:00 am

### Looking Ahead

**Thursday, Nov 16**

EC Parent Enrichment Evening

**Monday-Tuesday, Nov 20-21**

Parent-Teacher Conferences – No School

**Wednesday-Thursday, Nov 22-24**

Thanksgiving Break – No School

**Friday, Dec 1**

Spiral of Light – in-school celebration

**Friday, Dec 8**

Early Dismissal – Winter Fair Set-up 1:00 pm

**Saturday, Dec 9**

Winter Fair 11:00 am-4:00 pm

### How to Contact Us

info@rivervalleyschool.org

lc@rivervalleyschool.org

bot@rivervalleyschool.org

pc@rivervalleyschool.org

## Martinmas Coat Drive

As part of River Valley's celebration of the legend of Saint Martin we will once again be sponsoring our Annual Martinmas Coat Drive. Please consider donating your gently used coats and jackets. Our art teacher Sharon Ferguson is organizing the drive through the not-for-profit organization, One Warm Coat.

The coats received will benefit Community Services for Children in Allentown.

New or gently used women's, men's and children's coats are all welcome.

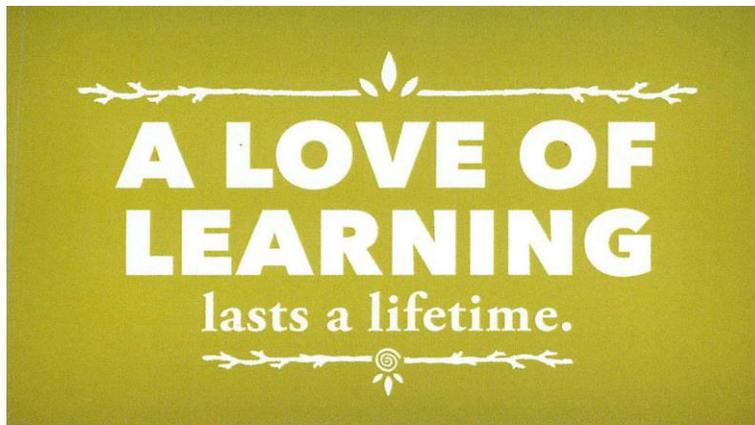
### Children's sizes 0-5 especially needed.

A drop box is located

in the school lobby **to receive your**

**generous donations until November 17th!**

Thank you Sharon for helping to create this wonderful way for RVWS to support to our greater community!



Curious about Waldorf education?  
Learn more from teachers, parents & staff at our

## OPEN HOUSE

November 11, 2017 | 10am



1395 Bridgeton Hill Road • Upper Black Eddy, PA 18972

610.982.5606 • [rivervalleyschool.org](http://rivervalleyschool.org)

## Lantern Walk – Friday, November 10<sup>th</sup>, 4:45 pm

On Friday, November 10<sup>th</sup>, Early Childhood, First and Second grade children will be celebrating Martinmas with an annual Lantern Walk.

Celebrating St. Martin's Day (Martinmas), or Laternelaufen, is a tradition preserved in Waldorf schools everywhere. Tied to the legend of St. Martin, a French soldier who gave half his coat to warm a beggar in need, the event includes walking through the school grounds along a path lit by luminaries, singing songs and carrying lanterns the children have made in school.

The Lantern Walk is hushed (aside from the singing), and reverent, but not at all somber. It is a beautiful procession of lights at dusk symbolizing the turn of the season and the carrying of inner light into the darker months of the year.

## From Administration

### **AFTERNOON GARDEN NEWS**

Afternoon Garden is the program at RVWS that allows nursery and kindergarten students (3-6 years old) to stay for the full school day, until 3:15pm. We are very pleased that we are adding a third AG section right after Thanksgiving. If you have been wishing for a spot, there will be space open each day Monday through Friday. Please use the registration forms attached to this week's Current or email [rmiller@rivervalleyschool.org](mailto:rmiller@rivervalleyschool.org), [trobinson@rivervalleyschool.org](mailto:trobinson@rivervalleyschool.org) or [cschretlen@rivervalleyschool.org](mailto:cschretlen@rivervalleyschool.org) to get started!

### **Back to the Future: Waldorf Education, Now More than Ever An Evening with Jack Petrash**

Waldorf School of Princeton, 1062 Cherry Hill Road, Princeton, Thursday., Nov. 16, 7 p.m.. Hagens Hall. Tickets: \$10 Online /\$15 at the Door

Waldorf Education has been around for nearly 100 years, which begs the question: "Do these educational principles still work?" Compared with mainstream classrooms' smart boards and laptops, beeswax, knitting, and handmade books may evoke another era; however, it is precisely because of our time-tested approach that Waldorf Education prepares students to be divergent thinkers who see more than one answer to a problem, and are capable of seeing the questions no one else is asking. And contemporary educators, neuroscientists, and economists are backing this perspective.

Jack Petrash has been a class teacher at the Washington Waldorf School for over thirty years. He has taken four classes on the extended journey from grade one to grade eight. Jack is also the founder and director of the Nova Institute, an organization that works to build a bridge between mainstream education and Waldorf Education. He is the author of *Understanding Waldorf Education: Teaching from the Inside Out* and his TEDx talk, "Preparing Children for the Journey," has been seen by many parents and teachers in Waldorf communities in North America. He is the author of *Covering Home: Lessons on Fathering from the Game of Baseball* and *Navigating the Terrain of Childhood: A Guide to Meaningful Parenting and Heartfelt Discipline*

### **The Parent Handbook is LIVE**

This year's RVWS Parent Handbook is now available on our website in the Parent Resources section. In case you don't have the password, it will be included in the email that accompanies the Current.

### **Open House Lawn Signs**

Open House lawn signs are available in the lobby. Take one home to let your neighbors know about our school! Postcards and flyers are also available if you would like to leave one at your local coffee shop, yoga studio, lunch spot, etc.

### **Fall High School Open Houses**

The following is a list of upcoming open houses hosted by schools where RVWS alums have enrolled after graduating.

#### **Kimberton Waldorf School**

Wednesday, November 8, 2017, 8:30 to 10:30am

Discover the High School: The High School at Kimberton provides a rich, rigorous, academic experience for students in grades 9 through 12. We will visit each grade during main lesson to experience a bit of our academically diverse high school curriculum. We will have an opportunity to hear about some of the unique experiences that our students participate in, including international exchange, outdoor education, social service, college counseling, vocational practicum and electives. Please contact [admissions@kimberton.org](mailto:admissions@kimberton.org)

#### **The Lotus School of Liberal Arts**

November 7, 2017 @ 5:30-7:30 pm (Re-scheduled)

Come visit our unique high school and see what a mindfulness-based education looks like.

So many of our clients and students have difficulty listening with kindness to those they disagree with. They even have difficulty listening to themselves! Find out how a brief and daily practice in yoga, martial arts, or mindfulness help all of us settle down and listen with an open mind and heart. In these contentious times, a little extra listening can make a big difference.

*The Lotus School of Liberal Arts invites you join in this interesting and important discussion with its principal, Peter Ryan, M.Sc, a longtime teacher and psychotherapist. Peter holds three black belts in Zen Sword and brings a wealth of practical skill to the challenges of working with young people.*

### **Waldorf in Puerto Rico: Escuela Micael**

AWSNA is asking each family in an accredited AWSNA school to give a small donation (\$10 or less) simply to help Escuela Micael keep its doors open and continue to offer Waldorf education until such time that their communities can stabilize. Imagine all the good...

<https://www.gofundme.com/shym9p-escuela-micael-hurricane-maria>

## **From LC**

### **After School and Weekend Excursions**

Occasionally River Valley sponsors or in some way supports a parent organized outing or club such as one-time excursions open to parents and children, or weekly clubs like Ski Club. We ask that each excursion or club proposal be brought to the Admin Team for review at least one month prior to the starting date.

Thank you!

## **From the Faculty**

### **What the Children are Learning:**

First Grade – Language Arts

Second Grade – Math

Third Grade – House Building

Fourth Grade – Local Geography

Fifth Grade – Geometry

Sixth Grade – Roman History

Seventh Grade – Chemistry

Eighth Grade – History

## **From Parent Council**

### **Winter Fair**

#### **River Valley's Parent Artisan Market**

At this year's Winter Fair we would like to host an artisan market featuring the parents and families of River Valley. If you are a crafter/artist with inventory or believe you would like to participate with 10+ items, please contact Ivy Berrocal at: 201-694-5166 [Karunagoddess@gmail.com](mailto:Karunagoddess@gmail.com)

#### **PARENT CHOIR!**

There's still time to join us and sing at Winter Fair!

To join the mailing list, please email Andy Wander ([andywander@yahoo.com](mailto:andywander@yahoo.com)). Questions? Look for Kira Willey ([kirawilley@rcn.com](mailto:kirawilley@rcn.com)).

Rehearsals:

Sunday, November 12, 3 PM

Friday, November 17, 6 PM

Sunday, December 3, 3 PM

Performance: Winter Fair, December 9, Time TBD

## **From the Community**

### **Unwanted Pumpkins Wanted**

The Murphy Farm will take any unwanted pumpkins or jack-o-lanterns off your hands. Their pigs and goats love them! Find Hilary at pick up or drop off or contact her at 908-674-0455 or

[hilarymurphyphotography@gmail.com](mailto:hilarymurphyphotography@gmail.com) to arrange pick up at the school.

### **Last chance for family photos!**

Hilary is offering half hour family photography sessions at her farm in Pittstown, NJ on Saturday, November 11. Times available between 12:30 and 3:30. Discounted rate for RVWS families! Guaranteed 10 high resolution images delivered within two weeks of your session via secure online gallery. \$140 per family (Regularly priced at \$150). Please email Hilary at [hilarymurphyphotography@gmail.com](mailto:hilarymurphyphotography@gmail.com) for booking! To learn more about Hilary and her photography services visit her website at

[www.hilarymurphyphotography.com](http://www.hilarymurphyphotography.com)

### **Essential Oil Class Friday, November 10th 9-10 am in the All Purpose Room**

Jamie Iapalucci, (Teddy Kent's mom. Grade 1) will be hosting an essential oils class on Friday morning November 10th after the grade school assembly. Jamie helped many River Valley teachers add oils, diffusers and plant-based Thieves oil cleaners to their classrooms this year and now she is offering an essential oils class to our community of parents.

The class will be an intimate gathering where you can see, smell and try Young Living Therapeutic Grade Essential Oils while learning how they will add to your family's natural wellness routines. Come learn all about Essential Oils, including how they work and how to easily and safely get started using them in your home for natural wellness and emotional support. Jamie is available at [naturalandglamorous@gmail.com](mailto:naturalandglamorous@gmail.com) if you should have any questions prior to the class.

Thank You!! Jamie at Natural & Glamorous

### **Thanksgiving Turkey Orders**

Our very own Joanna and Marc Michini (parents of Clover in 2<sup>nd</sup> grade), owners of Purely Farm are taking orders for natural, pasture-raised turkeys for Thanksgiving. To place your order, go to: <http://mailchi.mp/8d88a948c13a/order-your-thanksgiving-turkey-today?e=fd4c11af3d>.

### **Show Your Love for Frenchtown Park!**

The Borough of Frenchtown is asking its extended community - all who love and enjoy "creek" park - to consider making a donation towards our improvement project. The community has put together a wonderful design that updates our park and keeps some of our favorite older playground pieces. Thanks to a generous matching grant from the Fargo Family Foundation, your gift will be doubled. If we can raise \$7,500 by the end of October, they will give us \$7,500!

Can you make a gift today? Donations of all sizes are needed and appreciated. Gifts of \$1,000+ will receive a bench plaque. Just four benches remain for this special recognition for your family or loved one! Give online: <https://www.youcaring.com/boroughoffrenchtown-920009> Or send a check payable to "Borough of Frenchtown" with "Park Fundraiser" in the memo to: Borough of Frenchtown, 29 Second St, Frenchtown, NJ 08825 Questions? Contact Holly Low at [holly.k.low@gmail.com](mailto:holly.k.low@gmail.com) or 732-233-4136.

### **From the Artyard in Frenchtown**

#### **An Evening with Photojournalist, Cinematographer, and Survivor Jared Moossy.**

Saturday, Nov. 4th, 8:00 PM

Screening of his films Witness: Libya, A Lucky Man, and Chester, PA. Conversation with Moossy after the screenings

#### **Music Workshop in the Art of Improvisation with Karl Berger and Ingrid Sertso.** A hands-on two-day event.

Saturday, Nov 11<sup>th</sup> - Sunday, Nov 12<sup>th</sup>. Price: \$75 for both days (Price does not include meals )

#### **A Celebration of Cantastoria and Cranky by Artists and Musicians from all over the USA**

Friday, Nov 17th - 7:30 PM – An Entertaining Illustrated History of Cantastoria (Lecture)

Saturday, Nov 18th- 7:30 PM - A Raucous Evening of Banners and Cranks

Sunday, Nov 19th- 2:00 PM - Banners and Cranks for kids & their grown-ups.

For more information go to: [artyard.org](http://artyard.org).

Artyard, 62A Trenton Ave. Frenchtown, NJ 08825

### **2017-2018 HOLY NIGHTS JOURNALS AVAILABLE**

During this darkest time of the year, when the outer world appears to sleep, our inner life awakens. Working with the Holy Nights, or "Time Between the Years" as it is sometimes called, is a potent way to connect more deeply with your awakening True Self. We're pleased to let you know about a Holy Nights journal called the Sacred Nights of Winter. For those interested in deepening your soul life and opening to the grace and love available during the holiday season, this journal may be a very helpful tool. You'll receive a discount when you order by November 12th. [www.KimMarieCoaching.com/SacredNights](http://www.KimMarieCoaching.com/SacredNights) You may direct any questions about the journal to [Kim@KimMarieCoaching.com](mailto:Kim@KimMarieCoaching.com). We hope you find this resource helpful in bringing joy, peace and reflection to your Holy Nights and the holiday season.

## **The Lotus School of Liberal Arts Open House and a free workshop led by Dr. Nancy Lubow**

Tuesday, November 7, 5:30-7:30 pm

BRAINsmART Therapies Workshop - A 'cross modal' Creative Arts Problem-Solving Approach for Students and Educators

BRAINsmART is an arts-based approach to learning and healing the mind, emotions and body.

The principles of a cross modal creative arts approach are organized around the principle that 'creativity integrates the brain and heals the mind'. This workshop will help participants link the four different perceptual modalities: auditory, visual, kinesthetic and verbal to couple the learning experience with creative-receptive states of being. These skills are the tools students need to redirect scattered attention and chaotic emotions into the visual-spatial world of the right brain. This process not only improves attention and focus, but increases cognitive ability, emotion regulation, and distress tolerance.

## **Two European Tours with Waldorf/Anthroposophical Themes**

**Offered by Sarnia Guiton of Sophia Services**

### **In Search of Knights Templar in Portugal - 4/21-5/5**

The Knights Templar are well known for their activities in Jerusalem and the Holy Land in the Middle Ages following the First Crusade. Their demise in 1307 is also well known. What is not so well known is the belief that their activities in Portugal, working with Bernard of Clairvaux and Portuguese Templar Kings over several generations, formed a Kingdom of Conscience with laws that are echoed in Rudolf Steiner's Threefold Social Order.

### **In Search of the Future in Hungary, Romania & Bulgaria 7/28-8/20**

Anthroposophy was planted in these Eastern European countries early in the last century. Communism kept it underground prompting it to grow strong roots. At the end of that era, it grew strong and firm above ground and blossomed with joy that it could now be free. We have known none of that in the West. On this tour we will explore what has been happening anthroposophically in Eastern Europe in the last 25 years, and if we have anything to contribute or to bring back home from our experience.

For more information, see the school bulletin board.

From HuffPost via WaldorfEducation.org

## **Top 15 Things Your Middle School Kid Wishes You Knew**

By Rachel Vail

1. Respect me. I'm my own person, not just your kid. Sometimes I might have opinions that differ from yours. Sometimes I just want to be your baby. Respect me either way.
2. I still want to have fun with you, and feel like home is safe and happy. Smile at me.
3. I need to make some of my own choices, and maybe some of my own mistakes. Don't do my work for me or get me out of every jam. You don't need to be better than me at everything. Don't condescend; you don't need to impart your elderly wisdom on me if I have a problem. Please wait for me to ask for your help. If I don't ask for it, I might want to work it out for myself. Let me rant without offering advice. Sometimes that's all I really need, just to talk my way through something and for you to just listen to me.
4. Sometimes I'm going to be moody and annoyed and frustrated. You need to just let that happen (though you shouldn't let me be rude to you; that's weird and embarrassing). It might just be a mood or something might be going on that I'm not ready to talk about yet. If you hang around doing stuff near me and don't interrupt or try to solve it as soon as I start, I might feel comfortable talking with you about things.
5. Trust that I'll do my work. If I don't, you can help me manage my time, but wait until I'm not taking care of responsibilities to think I can't. Don't just assume I can't handle responsibility because of my age. Believe in me.
6. It feels really good when you ask me to teach you about what I'm learning or what I'm good at. You don't have to be awesome at computer programming to let me teach you some cool stuff, for instance. I have to be a beginner constantly. Show me it's OK to stay relaxed and present when you are struggling to learn something.

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7. I don't like the drama either, and it surprises me as much as it does you. You think it's rough having this alien lunatic in your house? Try having it in your body, and you can't even get away.

8. If you don't like my friends, it feels like you don't trust my judgment or like I am stupid about choosing friends. Or both. Ask me what I like about them, or what we have fun doing together, or just to tell you about a new friend. Stay open-minded. Still, if you think my friends are being bad to me, I need you on my side that much more.

9. Sometimes I am completely overwhelmed and need to zone out for a while. I am not becoming a slug and will not stay in my room staring at a screen for the rest of my life. Maybe just for the rest of the afternoon.

10. I will fight you every step of the way if you make me do stuff I don't want to do (get some exercise, do my homework, write a thank-you note, practice piano, apologize to my sister, take a shower, wear deodorant... so many things), but you should probably make me do them anyway. I know I will feel better if I sweat and shower each day, and develop my study skills, and show up tomorrow prepared, and, and, and. I know! But please don't overwhelm me. I might not be able to do what I should right away. I might need reminders, later, which will annoy me completely. Remind me anyway.

11. Explain why I'm being criticized or punished. It feels scary if I don't understand anything beyond that you are mad at me. And sometimes what I need more than a scolding is a hug or a cuddle. Especially when I am more porcupine than puppy.

12. I need to have private jokes with my friends and not explain them to you. It's how we bond. You don't need to be involved in every aspect of my life to still be loved and needed by me.

13. If my social life gets to be too much, I may need you to force a little vacation from it on me. But most of time what I need is to work through how to navigate life online and with peers. Now is my chance to learn how to deal, with your help. Just shutting it down keeps me from learning how to build my life online with scaffolding provided by you. Stay calm and cool, let me explain what's going on, and talk things through with me. Ask more, tell less.

14. Especially if I've been feeling stressed, maybe you could just hang out with me. Go to the park or get an ice cream or have a catch, whatever; it feels good to just do something together without discussing or solving or teaching anything.

15. I like it when you think I'm funny. Or interesting. Or awesome. I actually do care what you think about me. Please find something specific you actually like about me because sometimes I can't find anything in myself to like at all. I might roll my eyes, but your words and judgments do matter to me, and I will remember them, the good and the bad. I will keep them with me like treasures even when I lose my keys and wallet and ID. Which I probably will. More than once. Sorry.

And bonus extra important thing you should know: The fact that my opinions on this and anything else might change tomorrow does not mean I don't feel them fiercely today. Keep up. I love you. Remind me you still love me, too.

## 4 Things Worse Than Not Learning To Read In Kindergarten

By Gaye Groover Christmus

The year Sam started kindergarten, he turned 6 in October. He was one of the oldest children in his class, and he didn't know how to read. When he started first grade he was almost 7, and he still didn't know how to read. Fortunately for Sam, he entered first grade in 1999. And his teachers, Mrs. Gantt and Mrs. Floyd, didn't panic if a child didn't learn to read in kindergarten. In fact, they expected that most children would learn to read in first grade. (They also supported and encouraged children who learned to read easily in kindergarten, like Sam's brother Ben.)

If Sam had started first grade this year, however, he probably would have been labelled as "slow" or "behind." Because the new standard is that children should learn to read in kindergarten. Even though most educators know that many children aren't ready to learn to read until first grade. Even though countries like Finland educate kindergarteners by allowing them to play, not teaching them to academic skills. And even though the new standard causes teachers, parents and even children themselves to worry that something is "wrong" if children aren't reading when they arrive in the first grade classroom.

But guess what? Sam wasn't "slow" or "behind," and neither are most of the other children who don't read in kindergarten. Sam became a fair reader by the end of first grade, and a good reader by third grade. By the time he reached high school he was an honors student. And last weekend, he graduated from college - with a 3.93 grade point average.

So what happens when education standards require that children like Sam learn to read in kindergarten and that teachers like Mrs. Gantt and Mrs. Floyd had better make it happen? Many educators say the result is ineffective and counterproductive classroom practices. Which means that many children actually learn and retain less than they would in a developmentally-appropriate kindergarten classroom.

So here's my advice. (You can take it with a grain of salt if you like, because I'm not a teacher. But I am Sam's mom.) If your son or daughter doesn't learn to read in kindergarten, relax. Because many, many things are worse than not learning to read in kindergarten. Here are four of them:

### **Limited time for creative play.**

Young children learn by playing. They learn by digging and dancing and building and knocking things down, not by filling out piles of worksheets. And they learn by interacting with other children, solving problems, sharing and cooperating, not by drilling phonics. Mrs. Gantt and Mrs. Floyd created fabulous centers and units that allowed children to learn about everything from houses to trucks to pets to oceans. And they snuck in some reading and math skills that the children didn't even notice, because they were so busy playing and creating! Teachers today, however, often have to limit (or even eliminate) time for centers and units, because the academic requirements they are forced to meet don't allow time for creative learning.

### **Limited physical activity.**

Few things are more counterproductive than limiting recess and other types of physical play time for children. Children learn better when they move. Parents and teachers know this intuitively, but research also confirms it. Children who have more opportunities to run around and play have better thinking skills and increased brain activity. And don't assume that young children are naturally active and are getting all of the exercise they need; researchers have found that children as young as three and four are surprisingly inactive. Yet many schools are limiting or even eliminating recess, even for very young children.

### **Teaching that focuses on standards and testing.**

Teachers are increasingly under pressure to prepare their students to perform on standardized tests. This means that their focus is shifting from teaching children in ways that match their development and learning styles to "teaching to the test." As one teacher reported, "I have watched as my job requirements swung away from a focus on children, their individual learning styles, emotional needs, and their individual families, interests and strengths to a focus on testing, assessing and scoring young children..."

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This shift in focus means that teachers have less time to nurture and develop children as lifelong learners, because they're required to focus their efforts on standards that are unrealistic for many children.

### **Frustration and a sense of failure.**

Children know when they aren't meeting the expectations of teachers and other adults. What they don't know, however, is that those expectations often make no sense. And because they don't know that, they experience frustration and a sense of failure when they don't measure up. So the boy who thrived in his experiential preschool, but struggles in his academic -focused kindergarten may become frustrated to the point that he "hates school." And the girl who can't sit still for 30 minutes and fill out worksheets knows that she's disappointing her teacher, but doesn't know that the task isn't appropriate for her. Which means that many normal children are becoming frustrated - and are being labelled - by an entirely unrealistic system. As one report has bluntly stated, "Most children are eager to meet high expectations, but their tools and skills as learners as well as their enthusiasm for learning suffer when the demands are inappropriate."

If your child is in kindergarten or first grade and hasn't yet learned to read, don't panic. Talk with his or her doctor about any concerns you have, but recognize that he or she is probably developing normally. If your child's school is pushing academics in kindergarten in place of play-based learning, talk with the teacher. Chances are, she's frustrated and under enormous pressure to get her students ready to "perform." If you're stuck with a kindergarten curriculum that seems unrealistic to you and doesn't fit your child (and assuming that changing schools is not an option), let your child know that you're not worried about reading in kindergarten (or even early in first grade). Talk about people who learned to read later (like Sam!) and are doing just fine. Then do things that promote real learning, like reading books he or she enjoys, playing games, teaching useful skills and getting outside as often as possible to have fun, be active and learn together.