

"There are two ways of spreading light; to be the candle or the mirror that reflects it." ~ Edith Wharton

School Calendar

This Week

Friday, December 14
Holiday Candlelight Concert 6:30 pm

Looking Ahead

Thursday, December 20
Shepherds Play 7:00 pm

Friday, December 21
Shepherds Play 11:30 am
Early Dismissal 1:00 pm

Monday-Friday, December 24-January 4
Holiday Break – No School

Monday, January 7
School Resumes

How to Contact Us

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

School Pictures are Available!

Hopefully by now you've had a chance to see the portraits hanging in the school lobby. You can purchase your child's portrait and class picture by visiting: <https://hsmphotography.smugmug.com/Other/RVWS-School-Portraits-Class-Pictures-2018/>. The password for this protected gallery is: rvws2018

Please order by December 15th! Hilary will be donating a portion of the order proceeds to the school's Annual Fund and will include a digital image of your child's individual portrait for sharing online with your friends and family when you order by December 15th.

Schedule for Friday, December 21st

On Friday, December 21st, the last day of school before our Holiday Break, the Shepherds Play will begin at 11:30 am and there will be an early dismissal at 1pm. There will be no buses taking children home that day and no Aftercare. Buses will operate only in the morning to bring children to school.

Holiday Candlelight Concert This Friday

Friday, December 14th, 6:30 pm

Grades 4-8 will present a concert of Holiday music for all to enjoy.

Families of younger grades and early childhood children are invited to come share in the festivities.

Students in grades 4 and up are asked to arrive in their classrooms at 6 pm dressed in Concert Attire (see the Parent Handbook for details).



The Oberufer Shepherds Play

Performed by Faculty and Parents of
River Valley Waldorf School

Two Performances:

Thursday, December 20th, 2018, 7 PM

Friday, December 21st, 2018, 11:30 AM

Winter-Spring After-School Program Registration

It's time to register for Mr. Laker's After-School Program that starts in January and runs until the end of April. You will find a registration form at the back of this week's Current.

From Administration

Handwork Teacher News

In what seems the blink of an eye, the departure of our dear Ms. Till is only days away. We are excited for her to be embarking on this new adventure and are sending her off with all our love and best wishes. We trust she will stay in touch and hope she will visit whenever she's able.

With the next breath, we are also excited to introduce you to Tina Quintana who will join the faculty in the New Year. Mrs. Quintana visited RVWS in the fall to observe and teach. She is a very experienced Handwork teacher who will travel from Marietta, PA to River Valley, bringing along her own tiny house!

From Mrs. Quintana: 'I am looking forward to sharing my love of handwork with the children and their families in the River Valley Waldorf School community. My love for Waldorf education and teaching handwork began well over twenty years ago. In addition to teaching in the classroom, I am honored to serve the greater Waldorf community as a faculty member in the Applied Arts handwork teacher training program. When not teaching, I can be found working in my garden with my husband German, exploring coffee shops with my daughter Lynnea or working on projects in my studio.'

Please be sure to say hello and make Tina feel welcome when we return to school in January!

RVWS Committee for Social Justice

The newly rechristened RVWS Committee for Social Justice is hosting an evening of potluck and conversation about anti-racism. Join us at the Meshkov/Breslin household (779 Cafferty Road, Upper Black Eddy, PA) on January 12th from 6:30 to 8:00 PM.

We will be facilitating a discussion on themes raised in Robin DiAngelo's groundbreaking book, *White Fragility*. Come with an open mind, and be prepared to hear hard truths about the role of white people in America today.

Small Apartment? Place for a Tiny House?

Tina Quintana, our new handwork teacher, is looking for either a small apartment or a place to hook up her tiny house. She would like to park the tiny house on wooded property, or behind a garage, barn, house etc. where she could plug into electricity and a water hose.

If you know of such a place, please let Reeve, Robbie or Tiffany know.

Thank yous

Thank you, Jody Williams (father of Brooke in 7th grade), for the beautiful bench you made for our lobby out of recycled wood some of which came from an old school house. Our bus riders love it and all of us truly appreciate your workmanship and your generosity.

An enormous thank you to our amazing parent body for the beautiful Winter Fair you created this weekend. Special thanks go to our Winter Fair chairs, Jamie Iapaluuci and Rebecca DiCandia; our intrepid Parent Council chairs Liz Davachi and Lorrisa Lock, Ivy Giacchino-Berrolcal organizer of the Artisan Market; all of our class coordinators and everyone who set-up, cleaned-up, signed up for shifts, baked, cooked, made pocket fairy items and made other contributions large and small. We couldn't have done it without you.

Thank you to the parents and graduates who were on the panel for our Open House and to the teachers and staff who were there with their expertise and support. We appreciate your enthusiasm and willingness to participate in this important event.

From The Faculty

What the Children are Learning:

First Grade – Language Arts

Second Grade – Math

Third Grade – Arithmetic

Fourth Grade – Norse Myths

Fifth Grade – Math

Sixth Grade – Astronomy

Seventh Grade – History/Age of Discovery

Eighth Grade – Physics

From The Board



Have you Heard the Buzz?

The 100 days leading up to the auction, we will be celebrating 100 Days of Waldorf in honor of the Waldorf Centennial Celebration – highlighting all the reasons we love Waldorf Education and RVWS. Our messaging will be posted on Facebook, Instagram and on the front desk in the lobby. Please help us build the excitement about Waldorf Education and our River Valley School community by sharing our daily messages. For each “share” you will be entered in our auction raffle basket.

Inspired to share your love for RVWS?

Drop us a note at auction@rivervalleyschool.org

Tickets available online at: <https://rvws.ejoinme.org/auction>

From Development

Annual Appeal Update

Thank you for your continued commitment and generosity to RVWS! We have received \$22,087 in pledges/donations to the Annual Appeal. If you have not yet contributed, please help us reach our goal of \$40,000 and 100% participation. To donate now, go to <https://squareup.com/store/rivervalleywaldorfschool>

Class Fundraisers

Pizza has been extended by 2 weeks!

Due to the absence of pizza on our snow day in November and the upcoming Shepherd's Play, we have extended the pizza fun for this semester. The two dates added are: February 1 and February 8. Many thanks from Mrs. Atkinson's Third Grade.

8th Grade Class Fundraising

The 8th grade students will have a table in the lobby on Monday, Wednesday and Friday afternoons where you can sign up for these services to help raise money for their 8th grade trip.

- Baked goods for sale on Fridays or pre-order holiday breads and pies and cookies.
- Hire an 8th grader for babysitting!
- Hire an 8th grader - or two - for odd jobs - leaf raking, cleaning a closet, assisting with a party!

Thank you,
RVWS 8th grade class

From the Community

Holiday Shopping at A Toy Garden

A Toy Garden, the RVWS family-owned online Waldorf store, is your source for toys, books, woolens, art supplies, stocking stuffers, and all other holiday needs!

River Valley families take 10% off everything in the store with coupon code "RVWS," and shipping charges will be refunded for all local orders picked up at the school!

Visit us today at atoygarden.com!

Code Blue Shelter

If you're 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 8:15 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—call 267.450.5191 to request a ride:

- Turkey Hill @ Ottsville/Harrow 7:45 PM
- Perkasio Square Shopping Center 7.45 PM

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)

Deck the halls with holiday carolers! Fa la la la la...

Having a Christmas or holiday party, or know someone who is? Spread the holiday spirit with THE COUNTRY CAROLERS, accapella vocal trio, available now for bookings in your area! Allow these three lovely ladies, Eve Sheldon, Kira Willey and Gina Ricci to spread some holiday cheer and fill your event, restaurant, store or meeting with the harmonious musical sounds of the season. Contact Gina at ginaricci@live.com for bookings and more info!



Come join the fun at OTAC this Fall at Ottsville Traditional Arts Center 250 Durham Road Ottsville

Join us for holiday cheer and an open mic featuring Richard Finch's Rat Reunion and Kira Wiley & the Pop-Up Choir. Sign up at the door! Young performers will have early sign-ups if needed.

Saturday December 15th 7-10pm • \$5.00 per person, Under 12 free!

Please bring a little something for the food pantry

Double the fun that afternoon with caroling in Frenchtown and Ottsville!!! Check out the Pop-Up Choir 4-6pm in Frenchtown Art Yard. For more info and tickets contact artyard.org

OPEN MIC NIGHTS

Warm, fuzzy and friendly space to step out, reach up and share what you've got or what you're working on! Open Mic sign up list plus a featured performer/musician set . Coffee House will feature 2 or more performer/musician sets plus Open Mic sign up. Sea Shanties and sing along with Grace! ***Early sign up for kids!!! OTAC is a Great Space and has the most appreciative audience

OTAC Wednesday Jam and Songs 6:00-8:00 and Open Mic Nights - \$5 per person

For updates & further details check out ottsvilletradarts.weebly.com Facebook page
Questions, interest in a fundraiser, event, performance, workshop, etc. contact Grace Morgan
gracefulm@aol.com

Ottsville Traditional Arts Center is a multi generational and varied community that provides service through what we all have to share

Artyard

Pop-up Choir Holiday Paper Lantern Caroling in Frenchtown

Saturday, December 15, 4-6 pm

Starting at 4 PM at ArtYard, Kira Wiley, Eve Sheldon and Noah Jarrett will teach simple, fun arrangements of familiar holiday classics as well as festive pop tunes. After rehearsing, the group will walk on the towpath—carrying beautiful paper lanterns—to lovely Bridge Street in Frenchtown, and go a-caroling! Shops will be open late, for holiday shopping and dining after we wrap up at 6 PM. There's no admission fee for this event. We hope you'll join us!

The Unlikely Whole – September 15-December 30 – Curated by Lucinda Warchol

ArtYard is pleased to present The Unlikely Whole, an exhibition featuring the works of Mariel Capanna, Amie Cunat, Osamu Kobayashi, Amy Pleasant, Kenny Rivero, and Rudy Shepherd. The selected works explore the landscape, the body, memory, and identity as sites of disassembly and reconstruction. Through methods of fragmentation, translation, and repetition, these artists both challenge and reimagine our conception of the whole.

Poetry Confessionals – on view until December 30th

Currently on view in our project gallery are ArtYard's Poetry Confessionals which – besides playfully inverting the term confessional poetry – are spaces where a person can sit down and tell a story to a live poet who is listening on the other side, and who will make of your struggles, sorrows, and memories a little poem. Stop by our gallery to test the Confessionals out yourself or to enter our drawing for a free live session with a poet! Confessionals are open for use during our normal gallery hours.

The Creative Commons: Progressive Studio Practice - January 12 – April 15

Opening on Saturday, January 12, 2019, 6:00 - 8:00 PM

ArtYard is pleased to announce our upcoming exhibition, The Creative Commons: Progressive Studio Practice from the Creative Growth Art Center, LAND Gallery, and the Center for Creative Works. This exhibition will feature the works from three non-profit studios influenced by the work of Creative Growth founders Florence and Elias Katz, whose radical approach to art making and inclusion for adults with developmental disabilities launched acclaimed careers and occasioned a sea change in conceptions of contemporary art.

Friday, January 25, 7:00 PM

Come to ArtYard to learn how to **make your own crankie device** from cardboard, wood, or reclaimed junk with Mike Tyksinski and Eric Fiorito.

January 31- February 3rd, 2019

Poetryyard's Intensive Residential Workshop with Ross Gay

A rare opportunity for a small group of only five participants to work closely with a nationally known poet in a workshop-style format.

Gallery Hours: Wednesday – Sunday, 11:00 AM - 5:00 PM.

To learn more about these events, please visit our website www.artyard.org

ArtYard, 62A Trenton Avenue, Frenchtown, NJ 08825

Alumni News

Featured Alumnus - Jackson Harvi

RVWS Class of 2010, George School Class of 2014, Penn State University Class of 2018, Bachelor of Science- Biology with a minor in Marine Science

Achievements: Penn State Crew Team, researching deep sea coral and its potential to resist our warming oceans. One of the most challenging, yet rewarding experiences I've had in the past 5 years has been as a member of the Penn State Crew Team. Rowing pushed me to my absolute limits both physically and mentally, but racing in regattas all over the northeast and meeting some of my closest friends made it all worthwhile.

Internships: Research assistant with Coordinated Health

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Volunteerism: Tutor and classroom assistant for the adult literacy program at ProJeCt in Easton, as well as serving on the RVWS Strategic Planning Committee

Other interests: Working with my hands and creating furniture in the wood shop

Future Plans? Preparing to apply to medical school in May with a possible focus on orthopedic surgery, which I believe is driven by my love of working with my hands

Most treasured memory of RVWS? My fondest RVWS memory is the Middle School production of the Narnia musical. I remember both my peers and teachers working very hard to perfect the sets, costumes and musical score and I believe everyone's hard work paid off. It was an extremely gratifying and rewarding collaborative middle school experience!

How has your experience at RVWS shaped who you are today? I have come to realize that my Waldorf education at RVWS created the foundation for who I am, which I am very grateful for. I believe my interest in cooking, furniture making and exercise can all be attributed to having the opportunity to create and work with my hands at such a young age. The importance of acceptance and inclusion that the Waldorf curriculum emphasizes was also very influential in shaping who I perceive myself to be today.

Parting thoughts? It is always so nice to come back to the school and see the smiling, familiar faces of the teachers and faculty that taught me nearly a decade ago!

From Parent Tool Kit via Waldorftoday.com

Debunking the Belief That Sitting Equals Learning

By Rae Pica

With another school year beginning, children all over the country are entering classrooms where they'll be expected to sit for long minutes and hours at a stretch and absorb information through their eyes, their ears, and the seat of their pants. But is that really the best way for your child to learn? Is it even fair to ask young kids, who by nature's design are the most energetic among us, to stay still for what must seem like an eternity?

Whether we're talking about preschool, elementary through secondary school, college, or even adult learners, schools – and policymakers – have for too long accepted the belief that learning best occurs while students are seated (and quiet, of course). The theory may have been understandable back when they didn't have the research to prove otherwise. But today we do and it's important that you know about it.

Today we have research showing that the more senses used in the learning process the higher the percentage of retention. That means that if your child has the chance to experience a concept by seeing it, hearing it, and perhaps also touching it, that concept will have much greater relevance to your child and will stay with her much longer than if she's simply reading or being told about it. As an example, brain-based learning expert Eric Jensen asks, if you hadn't ridden a bike in five years, would you still be able to do it? And, if you hadn't heard the name of capital of Peru for five years, would you still remember what it was? The answer to the bike challenge is probably yes, but the answer to the Peru capital question (Lima) is probably no. Yet, despite the wisdom in this, many schools still insist on pumping data through the eyes or ears only and expect students to retain it anyway.

Additionally, we have research showing that the brain is far more active during physical activity than while one is seated. Eric Jensen has told me, "The brain is constantly responding to environmental input. Compared to a baseline of sitting in a chair, walking, moving and active learning bumps up blood flow and key chemicals for focus and long-term memory (norepinephrine) as well as for effort and mood (dopamine)." Yet schools and policymakers cling to the belief that the body has nothing to do with how the brain functions.

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Finally – and this is the big one, from my perspective – we have research demonstrating that sitting in a chair increases fatigue and reduces concentration (our bodies are designed to move, not sit). Yet policymakers and schools implement policies (more testing; no recess; even fewer bathroom breaks) that require students to do more sitting. What sense can that possibly make?

Think back to a day when you were forced to sit for endless minutes and hours at a conference, in a meeting, or perhaps on a plane. Did you find yourself exhausted at the end of that day? Were you perplexed as to the reason, since all you did was sit? Well, given the research, exhaustion is a completely understandable outcome.

In a BAM Radio segment on the subject of sitting in the classroom, pediatric occupational therapist Christy Isbell proclaimed: “Who’s to say we have to sit down to learn? Why can’t we stand to learn? Why can’t we lay on the floor on our tummies to learn? Why can’t we sit in the rocking chair to learn? There are lots of other simple movement strategies. Just changing the position can make a big difference.” Indeed!

Fortunately there are teachers – and even some schools – that allow students to sit on exercise balls or to work at tables or standing desks, or to get up and move around when they feel the need. And the results have been more than encouraging.

In one study, researchers equipped four first-grade classrooms in Texas with standing desks. What they found was that, even though the desks were equipped with stools of the appropriate height for sitting, 70 percent of the students never used their stools, and the other 30 percent stood the majority of the time. Moreover, the researchers discovered that standing increased attention, alertness, engagement, and on-task behavior among the students – a dream come true for any teacher!

Not long ago I tweeted the image of two brain scans published by the University of Illinois’ Dr. Chuck Hillman. One scan showed the brain after sitting quietly and the other following a 20-minute walk. The difference was remarkable, with the latter far more “lit up” than the former. The tweet took off. I absolutely adored the response of one teacher, Dee Kalman, who said the images offered scientific proof for her teaching mantra: “When the bum is numb, the mind is dumb.”

I couldn’t have said it better myself. So, what’s a parent to do? My advice:

- Given what you now know, try not to worry or feel bad if a teacher mentions your child’s inability to sit still. It is unnatural and unhealthy for children to sit for lengthy periods – and it certainly isn’t conducive to learning. (Personally, I’d be more worried about a child – typically a girl – whose desire to please causes a high level of compliance and an abnormal level of stillness.)

- If your child is struggling as a result of being forced to sit still, gather as much research as possible before talking with the teacher about alternate possibilities (for example, brain breaks, students being allowed to stand or move as needed, sitting on a bouncy ball). Remember that the research applies to the vast majority of children so you’re not asking for special consideration for your child only.

- Take inspiration from the Starretts, who raised money to bring standing desks to their daughter’s fourth-grade classroom – and later to the whole elementary school.

- If your child’s is one of the 40% of U.S. elementary schools that have eliminated recess, fight to have it returned! Children’s brains and bodies require frequent breaks (more on this in a future post). You can learn more about becoming a recess advocate at the website of the American Association for the Child’s Right to Play (www.ipausa.org).

- Counterbalance time spent sitting in school with time spent moving at home! Limit screen time – television and digital devices – and encourage your child to go out to play. Children encouraged to play outside and get active are more likely to do so. If they need additional encouragement, go outside and play with them!

**2018-19 After-school Program
Winter-Spring Registration Form**

Our 2018-19 Winter-Spring After-school Program will begin on January 8th. Josh Laker will be back to challenge and entertain RVWS grade school children. Below is a description of activities that will be held on each day.

Classes will be held on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays from January 8th through April 25th. Dates are listed next to each class because the program will not be held during vacations, assembly days and early dismissals. **Please note that there will not be afterschool program for the week of March 4th-8th.** The cost is \$20 per class with a \$10 materials fee for the session.

Tuesday – Sports and Running Games (recommended 5th grade and up)

January 8, 15, 22, 29, February 5, 12, 26, March 12, 19, 26, April 2, 9, 23 – NO CLASS 3/5

Total – 13 classes = \$270

Any and all sports, indoor and out, four square, battleship, shark attack, capture the flag, flag tag, handball, wall ball (big and small), indoor Olympics, obstacle courses, etc.

Wednesday – Games, Drama, Challenges and Puzzles, Outdoors

January 23, 30, February 6, 13, 27, March 13, 20, 27, April 3, 10, 24 – NO CLASS 1/9, 1/16, 3/6

Total – 11 classes = \$230

Park bench, improv, hunter, skits, storytelling, treasure and scavenger hunts, kick the can, Frisbee golf, simple ball games, group challenges, nature art, cooperation puzzles, hand and nature crafts if desired, etc.

Thursday – Cooking

January 10, 17, 24, February 7, 14, 28, March 14, 21, April 11, 25 – NO CLASS 1/31, 3/7, 4/4

Total - 10 = \$210

Baking many different kinds of bread, pickling, desserts, bagels, pizza, sushi, etc. These are just some of the things that were and could be done again, it will be tailored to students' desires.

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Child's Name _____ Child's Teacher _____

Parent's Name _____

Parent's Phone Home: _____ Work: _____ Cell: _____

I would like to register my child for the following After School Program(s):

- | | | | | |
|--------------------------|--------|-----------|---|------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Tues. | 3:30-5:30 | Sports and Running Games (G5 & up) | <u>\$270.00</u> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Wed. | 3:30-5:30 | Games, Drama, Challenges | <u>\$230.00</u> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Thurs. | 3:30-5:30 | Cooking and Crafts | <u>\$210.00</u> |

NOTE: Materials fees are included in the prices.

TOTAL: _____

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.