

School Calendar

This Week

Tuesday, February 13

Parent Council Meeting - Homestead 2:00 pm
Eyes on the Prize Screening 7:00-9:00 pm

Thursday, February 15

Grade School Ice Skating Party

Friday, February 16

No School - Faculty In-Service
Ski Club 4:00-10:00 pm

Looking Ahead

Monday-Friday, February 19-23

No School - Winter Break

Monday, February 26

School Resumes

Monday-Friday, March 5-9

Third Grade Farm Trip to Hawthorne Valley

Monday, March 5

Social Inclusion Study Group 3:30-4:30 pm

Saturday, March 10

1st & 2nd Grade Workday

Wednesday, March 14

Parent Council Mtg. (Place TBD) 6:30-8:00 pm

Saturday, March 24

RVWS Gala Auction

How to Contact Us

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

AUCTION ITEMS NEEDED

Our 22nd Annual Auction Gala
on Saturday, March 24, 2018 at ArtYard in Frenchtown, NJ
with catering provided by The Lovin' Oven!

The Auction Committee is seeking donations for this critical fundraising event. Are you an artist? Are you a potter, wood, metal or stone crafts person? The auction committee is asking for donations of hand-crafted items from the community.

We are also looking for unique experiences. Examples of a unique experience to donate would be a themed dinner, cooking or canning lessons, an outdoor excursion or guided tour of your favorite museum. Do you provide personal services or do you know someone who does? We are seeking gift certificate donations of services such as massage, acupuncture or music lessons.

If you have an item or experience to donate please contact the Auction Committee at auction@rivervalleyschool.org. Deadline for accepting donations is 3/2/18.

Many thanks!!
Ron Ferguson, Trustee

Grade School Ice Skating Trip

On Thursday, February 15th, the grade school will have their annual Ice Skating Party. This is a field trip for grade school students only. We ask families who have early childhood children to please send them to school as usual and not bring them on the ice skating trip.

There are many reasons for this. Most importantly, it is not safe for little children to be skating in between older, faster, more experienced skaters. Also, it is not fair to early childhood children who don't get to go, while some of their friends are off skating and they are not invited. Thank you for your cooperation.

In an effort to avoid hurt feelings and hurt bodies and to give the younger ones something to look forward to when they are in the grade school, we ask that only grade school children come to the skating rink on Thursday.

Parent Council Meeting Today

Tuesday, Feb. 13th 2-3 at the Homestead

Eyes on the Prize Screening - TONIGHT Tuesday, February 13th, 7 - 9 PM

Come see the first portion of the award-winning documentary, *Eyes on the Prize*, which "brilliantly illuminates the struggle for racial equality and social justice" in the United States between 1954 and 1965. All are welcome.

Field Trip Driver Requirements

Anyone driving RVWS students who are not their own children on a field trip (including ice-skating) need to have a copy of their Driver's License and Proof of Insurance card on file in the office.

Once it's on file, we'll keep it for the remainder of the school year. The file is shredded at the end of the year, so new copies will need to be provided each school year.

From Administration

WEBSITE DIRECTORY

As many of you know, there is a link to the School Directory on River Valley's website (Life at River Valley>Parent Resources). For some time now, that link has been inactive. We thought it would only be 'down' a short time, but it has become a longer time – so we'd like to let you know why it is not available.

When the new Alumni & Student Babysitter list was posted on the website, we placed it on the Parent Resources page, password protected, just as the Directory has been for several years. We found that it was still possible to bring up the Babysitter list up from very targeted Google searches so we immediately took it down. While we were unable to find the Directory with targeted searches, we were uncomfortable leaving it in the same place with the same potential vulnerability. RVWS' website is in the midst of some updates and part of that process includes better security for our Parent Resources items.

Until then, please contact Tiffany (trobenson@rivervalley.school.org) if you would like a PDF of the Directory.

AFTERNOON GARDEN UPDATE

We are able to offer an additional section of Afternoon Garden on Tuesdays, beginning this week. We are unable to add a section on Mondays at this time. Afternoon Garden is the program for River Valley's EC classes that extends the day from 1 pm until 3:15 pm. If you would like to add Tuesday to your child's Afternoon Garden schedule, please see Cindy, Robbie or Tiffany.

Cindy Schretlen
Director of Admissions & School Life

INTENTION FORMS

If you haven't returned an Intention Form yet, please do so now as the deadline has passed. The data we gather is extremely helpful as school leadership plans for the upcoming school year.

TUITION ASSISTANCE

If you intend to request tuition assistance for the 2018-19 school year, you can begin your Parent Financial Statement online now. You will need to submit a copy of your 2017 income tax returns (and 2016 if you did not previously) as well as have your PFS complete by 2/28/2018. Please plan accordingly! Late submissions will not be considered until after the first cohort of requests is processed. If you have questions or concerns about Tuition Assistance or the due date, please speak with Cindy Schretlen.

Box Tops Reminder

For those of you who are collecting Box Tops for Education for River Valley, please bring in the ones you have by the end of February. March is our next opportunity to submit them for a donation. Thank you.

RVWS IS HIRING: PART TIME POSITIONS

Early Childhood

RVWS is looking for a part-time care-giver for **Afternoon Garden**, our extended day program for young children. Hours are from 12:45pm until 3:45pm. Monday through Friday is desired. Can be shared 2-days & 3-days if necessary. Waldorf training and/or experience preferred.

We also would like to add an additional day or two to the **Garden Gate** program and need someone to lead them. Garden Gate is River Valley's parent-child class for children under 3 years old. Lifeways or Waldorf Early Childhood training is preferred. Tuesday and/or Friday 8:30am until 12:30pm are available. Interest in exploring a Saturday class is a plus!

For either position, please email a letter of interest, a short bio and resume to info@rivervalley.school.org. Clearances are required for all employees.

Grade School

We are also looking for an enthusiastic, **Gardening teacher** to work with our first through fifth grades beginning in July, 2018. Between now and the end of this school year there is opportunity to observe and/or assist our current teacher which would provide a new hire an invaluable opportunity to prepare for the following school year.

This position requires knowledge of child development, Waldorf curriculum, as well as biodynamic and organic gardening. This is a part time teaching position of eight classroom hours per week, as well as additional weekly gardening hours for maintenance, planning, planting and harvesting crops. Interested parties are encouraged to send in a letter of introduction, a resumes, and references to Robbie Miller info@rivervalley.school.org.

Parent Stage 2017 DVDs Available

Did you miss Parent Stage last year? Were you in Parent Stage last year? Did you enjoy Parent Stage last year? If your answer to one of these questions is yes, then you may want to buy a DVD of the show. The cost is \$20 for a DVD or \$25 for a Blu-ray. If you would like to purchase one, please let Robbie or Tiffany know.

VITA offers Free Tax Preparation Help

With the holidays just behind us, can tax season be far away? Thanks to the many dedicated volunteers in the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance program (VITA), BCOC is once again offering free assistance to low-income families in need of help to prepare their tax forms. All volunteers have been trained and certified by the IRS.

For many low-income families, the cost of having their taxes prepared creates an additional financial burden; or, they try and do them on their own and miss deductions they are entitled to receive. In the over 10 years since this BCOC program began, we have prepared over 10,000 tax forms. Money saved through refunds, credits, and preparation-fee savings, totaling over \$20 million, stayed in Bucks County's economy as most clients spend returns on essentials such as food, school supplies, and other household bills.

If you or someone you know can be helped by this program, go to:

<http://files.constantcontact.com/c704303c601/53b2fbef-1637-491d-a2f0-158e0436d837.pdf> to be linked to a flyer with locations, hours of operation, and other details. We also ask you to please post this information around the community where those in need might see it. Thanks for your help in spreading the word about this free service.

A sincere thank-you to the Bucks County Foundation, KeyBank Foundation, and the First National Bank & Trust Co. of Newtown, for their generous support of VITA.

Thank you

Hearty thanks to all of the middle school students, teachers and parents who made *Peter Pan* so much fun for all of us.

From the Faculty

What the Children are Learning:

First Grade – Arithmetic

Second Grade – Drama

Third Grade – Math/Measurement

Fourth Grade – Math

Fifth Grade – Class Play

Sixth Grade – Middle Ages

Seventh Grade – Physics

Eighth Grade – History

From Parent Council

Mayfaire Committee Needs Members

Parent Council is looking for committee members for our annual spring festival; Mayfaire. Experienced past chairs will mentor the group. Festival committees are a wonderful way to meet other parents and make festival fun happen for the children. Please email pc@rivervalleysschool.org if you think you may be interested.

From the Community

PROVENCE FRENCH SUMMERSCHOOL 2018

For young students from around the world who want to improve their French and spend a lovely holiday with us here in Provence, in the South of France.

Our program lasts two weeks and is designed for students aged 15 to 18.

Students stay with local French families, enjoy French lessons in our Steiner-Waldorf school every morning, and spend afternoons together in creative workshops and cultural outings.

More details (including a downloadable registration form) are to be found at:

<http://www.ecole-steiner-avignon.org/summerschool/lycee-dete/>

EASTON | FEB 23
OUT LOUD | 5-9 PM

SING OUT

..... FOR
THIRD STREET ALLIANCE
FOR WOMEN & CHILDREN
41 N. 3RD STREET | EASTON, PA

PLEASE
BRING AN ITEM FROM THEIR WISH LIST:

thirstreetalliance.org/wish-lists

ANYONE 12 AND OVER IS
INVITED TO SHOW UP,
LEARN A SONG AND
PERFORM IT AS
PART OF A
CHOIR.

DJ ARM 18
5:00PM

CHOIR
6:30PM

POP-UP
CHOIR
SHOW UP. SING OUT.
DO GOOD.

POP-UP
CHOIR
.COM

CHOIR DIRECTOR KIRA WILLEY

EVENT IN
SUPPORT OF



Threshold Equestrian

Jen Diedrich, mom of Addison (6th grade) and lifelong equestrian, has open sessions for private riding lessons. Ages 5+, beginner, intermediate and advanced. After school pick up and weekend times available.

Quiet and private facility with both indoor and outdoor arenas, three quarter mile track and groomed trails plus well schooled ponies and horses. Lessons, camps and local horse shows all with an emphasis on safety and fun. All aspects covered, horsemanship, grooming, tacking and everyday care. Call Jen anytime for more information. (215)603-9999

New Hope Family Looking for a Mother's Helper

Anne Stanmyer, a former Waldorf teacher, is looking for a mother's helper for her daughter's two (soon to be three) children who live in New Hope. If you or anyone you know is interested, please email Anne at: amstanmyer@gmail.com.

Solebury School Presents: The Mystery of Edwin Drood

This year's Solebury School musical will feature RVWS alumni: Safwa Ozair, Teva Rose Skovronek, Ava Smith, Dominique Wander and Katherine Warner. Performances will be on Thur 2/22, and Fri, 2/23 at 7:30 pm, Sat, 2/24 at 2 pm and 7:30 pm and Sun, Feb 2/25 at 3 pm. Tickets cost \$10 for adults and \$5 for students.

Solebury's Barn Theatre is located at 6832 Phillip's Mill Road, New Hope, PA. To purchase tickets use this link: <https://solebury-school.ticketleap.com/the-mystery-of-edwin-drood/>

Upcoming Films at Artyard in Frenchtown

Wednesday, 2/14, 7:30 pm – **The Umbrellas of Cherbourg** (starring Catherine Deneuve)

Saturday, 2/17, 7:30 pm – **Ball of Fire** (directed by Howard Hawks)

Wednesday, 2/21, 7:30 pm – **Chico and Rita**

Saturday, 2/24, 4 & 8 pm – **2018 Oscar nominated short films**

Wednesday, 2/28, 7:30 pm – **The Seduction of Mimi**

For more information about these films, look on the school bulletin board or go to Artyard.org

Artyard is excited to present our next exhibition, Truppe Fledermaus & the Carnival at the End of the World, with works by the collaborative artist duo Kahn & Selesnick.

This exhibition features the recreation of the famous Truppe Fledermaus's Memory Theatre of 1932 with its full complement of Batfolk, Greenmen, Rope-Slingers, and Death-Dancers in all their carnivalesque glory. An immersive, intricate and rich world made from photographs, painting, sculpture, costumes, props, decks of cards, augury, ceremony and general madness, the exhibition includes works from three series that are chapters from Kahn & Selesnick's current story: Eisbergfreistadt, 100 Views of the Drowning World, and Madame Lulu's Book of Fate.

The exhibition will continue through April 8th. For more information about our upcoming events, film screenings, and performances, visit our website at www.artyard.org. Artyard, 62A Trenton Avenue, Frenchtown, NJ, 908-996-5018,

Camp Glen Brook

Do you know a 3rd – 10th grader looking for a Waldorf-inspired summer camp? At Camp Glen Brook we offer special sessions for first time campers in grades 3 & 4. What set's us apart? We are a small camp with a family feel and wholesome farm-to-table food. Outdoor Leadership Program for 9th & 10th graders. Camp Glen Brook is owned and operated by the Waldorf School of Garden City, NY. www.glenbrook.org

From: Teacher.org

The Benefits Of Learning a New Language and Being Bilingual

By Kylie Hall

If you're like most people, your experience with learning a second language came in high school. You took French or Spanish because it was required of you. You learned a few random phrases like, "Where is the library?" and, "I don't speak French."

Once you were done with the class, you didn't put much more thought to the language. After just a few months, you forgot almost everything you knew. But what most people fail to realize is that learning a different language, no matter your age, is a key component to personal growth. Why? Is it really that important to be able to speak fluently in a second language? Does it really add that much to your life?

Yes.

Benefits Of Learning A New Language

Starting Early Is Best. To grow the most, it helps to start learning at a young age. It's easier and simpler to learn something new when you're young, but the idea that this is based solely on the physical aspects of your age is a complete fallacy. In reality, unless you suffer from some neurological malady, your brain hasn't been turned into mush the minute you hit maturity. It has, nonetheless, become not only mired in its precepts and conceptions (closed to a certain degree to change) but also lost the joy of learning as a fun experience. In other words, a teen who is learning Japanese because he wants to better understand anime and Dragonball is more likely to grasp a concept faster than a father of two with mortgage payments and a car that keeps breaking down at the worst times.

When you're young, learning can be a fun experience. As you get older, it tends to be something you have to force yourself to do. But it's not just about the joy of learning. When you're young, learning a second language has distinct advantages. Of course, this doesn't mean the only time to learn a language is when you're young. It simply gives you an advantage to start young. Learn how to become an ESL teacher and find a TESOL masters program.

Little To No Accent

Until you're around 8 (or shortly before puberty), your brain is a sponge not just for knowledge, but for sound. You have a natural aptitude for distinguishing and learning sounds, more focused on the melody and pronunciation than the meaning. This ability to focus solely on that aspects is critical to developing a speech pattern devoid of an accent.

It Helps With Brain Growth

Studies have demonstrated that people who are bilingual are better at multitasking and attention focusing. Consider how being bilingual works itself out in daily life. While speaking the second language, you must also translate the words in your head. This requires a tremendous amount of focus. Brain scans have also shown that bilingual individuals have more gray matter in regions of the brain linked to executive functions. Finally, research has shown that these new pathways can develop early in a person's development, ultimately increasing their cognitive abilities later in life.

It Can Improve Academics

Bilingual students - a fact that hundreds of studies have shown - are more likely to excel in school than others.

As NPR notes:

"In studies covering six states and 37 districts, they have found that, compared with students in English-only classrooms or in one-way immersion, dual-language students have somewhat higher test scores and also seem to be happier in school. Attendance is better, behavioral problems fewer, parent involvement higher."

(Continued on the next page.)

If Strengthens Native Language Abilities

"Those who know nothing of foreign languages know nothing of their own." - Goethe

People who arduously study a different language start to better understand their own native dialect. They begin to perform better in expressing thoughts in their own tongue. Studying a second language has also been shown to give a people a greater appreciation for the written word. When you consider how much this matters in the information age, it's hard to overestimate the value of this.

Increased Empathy

Truly learning another language requires a person to delve deep into that particular culture. In your quest to understand their tongue you are also grasping their ways. Learning a second language allows you to see things through the eyes of others. You begin to understand the way language shapes the way they think, which in turn allows you to feel more empathy for them. And by having empathy for those faraway, you are also cultivating empathy for those closest to you.

Again, to quote NPR:

"Young children being raised bilingual have to follow social cues to figure out which language to use with which person and in what setting. As a result, says [researcher] Sorace, bilingual children as young as age 3 have demonstrated a head start on tests of perspective-taking and theory of mind - both of which are fundamental social and emotional skills."

Increased Out Of The Box Thinking

With automation becoming a prevalent part of society, creativity is a key component to better employment and opportunities. Computers and robots lack the necessary AI to think creatively, which is how you can set yourself apart. Imagination is the essential difference between the Terminators and the human resistance. Learning a language helps you experience the world through different lenses and approach problems in ways you may not normally consider.

Neurological Benefits Of A Second Language

It's time to examine the scientific and neurological implications of learning a new language. We've already touched a few, but so far our journey has mostly focused on the psychological implications of the exercise. But there are also distinct neurological implications of learning a second language.

Protection Against Cognitive Decline and Dementia

Learning a new language has immense positive long range implications. Researchers have found that using two languages seems to have a direct effect on age-related dementia. Patients with Alzheimer's have a lower rate of brain atrophy if they are fluent in at least two languages. Learning a new language certainly does not make you immune to the ravages of a neurological disorder, condition or problem. It can, nonetheless, help in staving off the advance of such diseases.

And learning a second language, no matter the subject's age, can actually prevent delay the onset dementia and Alzheimer's by 5 years. This is significantly better than Alzheimer drugs which only delay symptoms for 6-12 months.

Increased Overall Cognitive Performance

People who have mastered or are learning a new language exhibit the following traits: higher general intelligence, better decision making, improved strategic planning, ability to delay gratification, pursuit of long-term goals, multi-tier prioritizing, lateral thinking, better focus, and improved concentration.

Strengthened Neural Pathways

Any sort of workout ultimately helps to expand a certain muscle group. The brain is a giant muscle of sorts, brimming with neurons. Learning a second language is like an intense workout for the brain. To a certain degree, your neural pathways are refreshed and fortified by learning something new. When you focus on a second language, it strengthens you the neural pathways in your brain. As such, a person who learns a new language will exhibit higher levels of memorization, the innate ability to switch between tasks, and a flexible and adaptable mind.

(Continued on next page.)

Increased Brain Size

The size of your brain's language center and the hippocampus (areas responsible for forming and retrieving memories) will grow when you learn a second language. MRIs in a Swedish Study studied a number of military recruits learning a new language. The study revealed that the hippocampus actually increases in size after a week or so of studying a new language.

Employment Advantages Of A Second Language

People who speak multiple languages are considered prize employees. Why? Because businesses thrive on the diversity of ideas. And nowadays, work environments are valuing multiculturalism above degrees and diplomas. Additionally, the global marketplace is constantly expanding. All of this makes employees with a second language increasingly valuable.

Two-thirds of 572 international executives say their teams' multicultural nature actually increases their organizations' profit and general innovation. In businesses and high ranking organizations, CEOs and Human Resource managers tend adhere to a school of thought called "Linguistic Determinism". Basically, this theory states that the structure of our language influences the way we see and act in the world around us. In this sense, speakers of different languages display different mental models and semantic associations. This has shown that mixed language groups have a propensity to finding innovative and unique solutions for all types of problems.

Additionally, a corporation's desire to acquire as many polyglots as possible (aside from adding individuals who can interact with other potential clients and markets) is that they are inclined to make more rational decisions. They have a greater and emotional understanding than monolinguals. Bilinguals have a higher probability of comprehending, on an objective level, the true values of risk and benefits that ultimately shape any decision, in turn balancing them out in their favor.

Still another trait that influences multinational corporations' desire for bilinguals is that they tend to have increased verbal and spatial abilities. Structural changes in the network and brain connections increase their capacity to process information. In team building exercises, multilingual individuals are able to promote cognitive diversity. Their brains have been shaped with the ability to grasp bigger concepts, alien designs, and oddball suggestions that they then transform into a practical solution for any type of predicament facing them or their bosses.

In Conclusion...

No matter what your age, learning a second language is massively beneficial. It can physically increase your brain by strengthening neural pathways. It can increase your ability comprehend difficult or outside of the box suggestions. And, perhaps most importantly, it can give you a deeper sense of empathy for others.

Nelson Mandela said:

"If you talk to a man in a language he understands, that goes to his head. If you talk to him in his own language, that goes to his heart."

We wholeheartedly agree.