



River Valley Current

February 28, 2017 No. 470

"Life is mostly froth and bubble, Two things stand like stone, Kindness in another's trouble, Courage in your own."
~Adam Lindsay Gordon

School Calendar

This Week

Wednesday, March 1

6th grade parent evening

Thursday, March 2

4th grade play 9:00 am

Friday, March 3

4th grade play 6:30 pm

Looking Ahead

Wednesday, March 8

School Tour 9:00 am
Parent Council Meeting - Homestead 2:00 pm
5th grade Parent Evening 7:00 pm

Saturday, March 11

2nd grade Workday

Tuesday, March 14

6th grade to Bryn Athyn Cathedral
Diversity Committee Meeting 6:30-8:00 pm

Saturday, March 18

All-School Open House 10:00 am

Monday, March 20

4th grade Parent Evening

Thursday & Friday, March 23 & 24

No School - Parent-Teacher Conferences

Friday, March 24

Middle School Dance

Monday, March 27

7th grade Parent Evening

Mon. March 27 - Wed March 29

4th grade to PEEC

How to Contact Us

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

Hoagie Deadline Tomorrow

If you would like to order Hoagies for your child on Thursdays, the deadline is tomorrow. Order form is at the end of the Current.

Parent Council Meeting

The next Parent Council meeting will be **Wednesday, March 8th**, 2 pm at the Homestead.

RVWS All School Open House Saturday, March 18th, 10 am

Invite a friend and come yourself! We are so excited about hosting this year's Open House using a whole new format.

Participants will see a performance by our 5 & 6th grade chorus, meet some of our wonderful alums, alumni & current parents as well as have ample time to converse with our grade school, early childhood and specialty teachers, view student work and see how our program fits together as a synergistic whole.

This is about outreach and it is also an opportunity to learn more about what comes next for your children as they move up through RVWS and beyond! Please RSVP so we can plan for our group. We will have childcare but are still working on the details. Please let us know if you are coming and have a need for childcare.

RSVP to the office, or info@rivervalleyschool.org

Operation Helping Hand Food Drive

Once again this year, RVWS is joining United Way of Bucks County in collecting food for local food banks.

Please bring non-perishable donations to the school lobby any time between now and

Wednesday, March 8th, 2017

Any questions? Contact Robbie or Genevieve

All non-perishable foods are accepted, but our local pantry really needs: *Fruit juice (100%), applesauce (no sugar added), canned fruit (no sugar added) breakfast cereal, canned chicken, canned salmon, canned tuna, canned vegetables (low sodium), soup, beans (dried or canned), canned pasta, oatmeal, rice, pasta*

No time to shop? No problem! Financial contributions are welcome. Just \$10 can feed a family of four. Checks should be made payable to United Way of Bucks County - memo line Operations Helping Hand

**Celebrate RENEWAL at the
2017 Golden Night Auction Gala
Saturday, April 1, 2017 - Nurture Nature Center, Easton, PA**

Click this link to purchase tickets and to see a sampling of items
<https://rvws.ejoinme.org/RVWSAuction>

See next page for more details.

Auction Item Donations

Are you or is someone you know an artisan willing to donate your craft to the Auction? Do you have a unique experience that would make a great auction item? We are also very grateful for donations of gift certificates for local dining, recreation, entertainment, shopping or personal care services.

Contact us at auction@rivervalleysschool.org

Deadline for donations to be delivered to the collection box in the lobby is Friday, March 10.

Help Us Bring New Faces to the Gala and Receive a Free Ticket!

Do you have friends, family or acquaintances that could help support our mission by attending the Gala? Sell three tickets to the April 1 Gala and receive one ticket free! Make it a double date with some neighbors, co-workers or relatives and share the joy of supporting our school with those similarly generous and fun-loving people in your life!

<https://rvws.ejoinme.org/RVWSAuction>

Volunteer

We have many important tasks needing volunteer support on Auction night. Can you help on our big night? We would be grateful. Contact us at auction@rivervalleysschool.org

The Auction Gala is one of the most anticipated school events of the year, fostering community building while raising funds that ensure the health of our school. You will find a diverse selection of quality items our guests have come to expect over the years such as handmade gifts, apparel and toys, artwork and the perennial favorite classroom items. Live music, dining, friendship and goodwill, though, are the real hallmarks of this outstanding event.

If you would like more information on any aspect of the annual auction, please contact auction@rivervalleysschool.org

From Administration

Congratulations

Warm congratulations to our music teacher, Carol Diven, and her daughter Rachel on the birth of Carol's first grandchild. Lyra Simone Lindsey was born at 9:41 PST on February 23rd. 7 lbs 6 oz 18.9 inches with tons of curly black hair.

YARD SIGNS?

The day of our annual all-school Open House is rapidly approaching (March 18th) and we would like your help promoting it in a new way. We are printing yard signs to announce it and would love to see them placed all around our far-flung 'sending district'.

If you are willing to have a sign in your yard, or if you have other locations for which you are willing to both place and remove a sign, please let us know. Just reply to this email with the location and number of signs you would like.

There will also be postcards and flyers to distribute for this event, which is another way to promote our Open House. If you are able to spread the word that way, we'll happily supply you with materials.

Thank you in advance for your help ensuring that River Valley continues to grow and thrive!

From the Faculty

What the Children are Learning:

First Grade – Language Arts

Second Grade – Math

Third Grade – Math

Fourth Grade – Class Play

Fifth Grade – Ancient Egypt

Sixth Grade – Middle Ages

Seventh Grade – Geography

Eighth Grade – Geography

From our Gardener

Dear Friends,

I am searching for the most local ORGANIC soil and or compost that is sold in bulk, by the yard for our school garden. Preferably with delivery. Please email me with any information that might help at mgoldstein@rivervalleysschool.org. Thank you!

From the Community

Rooster Looking for a Home

The Miles family is looking for someone to adopt a big, kindly rooster. (We have too many.) Please contact Jonny if you are interested. jonny@jonnymiles.com

BYRON KATIE WORKSHOP APRIL 7, 8, & 9th

There will be an introductory retreat in the work of Byron Katie, presented by Tania Tierro. The retreat will take place at the James-Lorah House in Doylestown, PA.

The work is a way to question the beliefs that underpin our stress. It's a simple, profound process of self-liberation and, consequently, self-realization. For the 2nd year, Lisa Naples, a local resident, is organizing this event. She can be reached for questions at 215-340-0964 or at lisanaplesceramics@gmail.com.

Cost for the workshop is as follows:

- Friday night only option: \$60
 - Full weekend retreat: \$275 with an early bird special of \$240 if registration takes place by March 8th
- Scholarships are available for those who otherwise cannot come.

Looking for a Dollhouse

If your family has a large wooden dollhouse that you are no longer using, we would love to buy it from you! Contact Sara, mother of Isaiah in Mrs. Atkinson's first grade. 908-323-9691 sarajoyfishkin@gmail.com

Footloose, the Musical at Kimberton WS

Kimberton Waldorf High School invites you to a performance of Footloose, the Musical. River Valley alumni Lauren Goodyear and Gabe Martinez will be playing the roles of Ariel Moore and Ren McCormick! We hope to see your familiar faces in the audience!

Footloose is teenage coming of age story set in the fictional town of Bomont. On its surface, this is a story about parents and teenagers, small town life, and young love. More deeply, it is a story about loss and grief, love and redemption. Our cast is very enthusiastic about this production. It is full of humor, fun, great depth of emotion, and lots of great music. Songs like *Footloose*, *Let's Hear It For the Boy*, and *Almost Paradise* became popular hits and still keep our toes tapping today!

Thursday, March 2nd, 7 pm, Friday March 3rd, 7:30 pm, Saturday, March 4th, 2 pm & 7:30 pm

Adults \$15, Seniors \$12, Students \$10

Kimberton Waldorf School, 410 West Seven Stars Road, Phoenixville, PA 19460, 610-933-3635 x111,

Lenape Chamber Ensemble Concert in the Round

For children ages 4-12, featuring music by Bach and Handel.

Saturday, March 4th, 10-11 am at Delaware Valley University Life Sciences Auditorium, 700 Butler Avenue at State Street and Rt. 611, Doylestown, PA 18901.

Children: \$2, Adults Free.

Lenape Chamber Ensemble

Friday, March 3, 8:15 pm, Upper Tincum Lutheran Church, 188 Upper Tincum Church Road, Upper Black Eddy, PA

Sunday, March 5th, 3 pm, Delaware Valley University Life Sciences Auditorium (See above for address.)

Music by Mozart, Prokofiev and Brahms

Adults \$18, Students and Seniors \$15, Children \$5

For information: 610-294-9361 or

www.lenapechamberensemble.org

Car for Sale

Due to our plans to move back to Europe, we are selling one of our cars, namely, a Volkswagen Jetta Hybrid from August 2013 with about 41,000 miles and in excellent conditions (no accident, no scratch). MPG 42 City, 48 Highway. if of interest, please contact Piergiorgio, Oscar's dad (Moon Room) at 646 830 9250 or pgv.pier@gmail.com

WANTED

I am looking for used plastic feed bags to upcycle into little bags. So, if anyone has large, plastic feed bags left over from their rabbits, chickens, or other critters, please save them for me. Thank you, Elizabeth McCracken (Aftercare teacher), juliam57@aim.com

6th Grade European Geography

As part of their study of European Geography, 6th graders created flags of their chosen country using traditional foods from that country. After this picture was taken, they feasted on their creations.



From: Psychology Today

Freedom to Learn

How to Ruin Children's Play: Supervise, Praise, Intervene
How to enjoy, not destroy, children's play.

By Peter Gray, PhD

My soul has been stirred by many of nature's wonders--by orange and yellow leaves sparkling in the autumn sun, by mallards landing softly on still waters at dusk, by clouds drifting by as I lay on my back gazing upward. But, of all of nature's scenes that I have enjoyed and pondered, none have enthralled me more than those of children playing--playing on their own, without adults guiding or interrupting them. Intervening in children's play seems to me to be like shooting those mallards that are landing on the water.

My words are poor substitutes for the actual scenes, but let me try to convey two examples that have moved me more than any poetry. There is nothing special about these examples; they are like play everywhere. What made them special to me is that I took the time just to watch and enjoy them, to look at them as some people listen to concerts or admire great paintings. I report on them here partly in an attempt to convey their beauty, but also to point out how adults might well have ruined them by supervising, praising, or in other ways intervening, as happens all too often today.

Both of these examples happen to have occurred at the church to which I belong. I present them in the present tense in the attempt to paint a verbal portrait.

(Continued on next page.)

Example 1: A game of keep-away

The Sunday service has ended. Bored by the adults' coffee hour, I go upstairs to the large open room where children sometimes play while they wait for their parents to finish socializing. Fourteen children--of both sexes and ranging from 3 to about 12 years old--are playing keep-away with an inflated ball, about twice the diameter of a basketball. Fourteen human bodies of greatly different sizes are moving rapidly about, each following a rather random path, at its own pace, with its own flair. Yet, somehow, all fourteen blend together, accented by the bright green ball, into a single fluid organism.

I feel that I am watching a beautifully choreographed dance, but there is no choreographer. Nobody dominates; nobody is left out; nobody bumps into anybody else; nobody complains; all of the shrieks are of joy. Every child who wants the ball receives it for a fair period of time. The older players dribble the ball as they run with it, daring the others to steal it; the younger ones just run with it until they pass it toward the outstretched arms of an eager teammate.

The 3-year-old runs joyfully in circles, his arms sometimes flailing above his head, showing no interest in the ball at all, just delighted to be out there running with these amazing older kids. Despite the differences in age, size, and ball-playing ability, all of the players are treated as equal--as equally worthy, equally deserving of having their needs met. The game goes on like this for the entire twenty minutes that I can stay and watch. As I watch I learn lessons of movement, rhythm, coordination, and unselfish self-expression, in which joy comes from anticipating and fulfilling the needs and desires of the others. I see democracy, in its most ideal form, in action.

The kids and I are lucky that no other adults are paying attention and that my attention is inconspicuous. I've often seen such games ruined by well-meaning adults who intervened--for the sake of safety, or because they believed that someone was being treated unfairly, or because they believed that they knew better than the children how to make the game fun for children. Attentive adults can ruin games even if they don't intend to intervene. Children perceive them as potential enforcers of safety, solvers of conflicts, and audiences for whining; and this perception invites the children to act unsafely, to squabble, and to whine. Play requires self-control, and the too-obvious presence of adults can lead children to relinquish their self-control.

Example 2: Making a Christmas Ornament

I am helping to manage the church's annual "Green Christmas" celebration, at which church members of all ages create earth-friendly decorations, wrapping papers, and gifts. I'm in charge of the natural ornaments table, which contains such materials as pinecones, milkweed pods, and seeds and shells of various colors and shapes. The table also contains hot glue guns, which people can use to fasten the natural materials together to form ornaments for their Christmas trees or statues for their tables. Most people are doing this rather quickly, eager to get something made and to move on to another table so they can complete the rounds. They make big, flashy ornaments, using many materials, but they put relatively little care into making them. As they work, they laugh and joke with others around them. Those people are not, in my view, playing; or, if they are playing, their play lies in their socializing, not in ornament making. They are making ornaments just because that is what they are supposed to do at this table. But one little boy, who appears to be about 4 or 5 years old, takes an entirely different approach.

He ignores the hustle and bustle around him and allows himself to become completely absorbed by his project. On his own, he decides to glue small, round white beans onto a large pinecone in such a way that each of the roughly 60 lobes of the pinecone will have exactly one bean precisely in its center. He doesn't announce this to anyone; he just starts doing it. His expression is one of intense concentration. Using the glue gun, very carefully with his little hands, he squeezes a single tiny drop of hot glue squarely onto the center of one of the pinecone lobes and then, before the glue hardens, places a bean ever so gently on the drop of glue. It takes him about half an hour to finish his task of gluing a bean onto every lobe. During this entire time he does not move from his work place. He does not say a word, and nobody--I am pleased to observe--says a word to him.

As I watch, a woman asks me if I think it is safe for such a little child to use a hot glue gun. I tell her that I have been watching him and he is being more careful than anyone else at the table. There is no need to caution him or to do the gluing for him. The former would interrupt his concentration and the latter would spoil his play completely. I am grateful that the boy's parents and all others who see him are wise enough to leave him alone at this activity.

(Continued on next page.)

Imagine all the ways that an over-involved adult could ruin his play. The adult could deprive him of the challenge by kindly doing all the difficult or "dangerous" parts for him, distract his concentration with unsolicited advice or cheerful chatter, hurry him along so he could get to other projects but have inadequate time for this one, or praise his work in ways that would shift his attention away from the process (which is most important to him) and toward the product (which is less important). Because nobody disturbs him, this boy experiences sublime solo immersion in artistic creation, and I experience the joy of watching him and learning from him. I learn lessons of self-determination, concentration, persistence, and painstaking craftsmanship.

Many years ago Lev Vygotsky, a Russian psychologist and a great observer of children's play, wrote that at play a child "behaves above his daily behavior... as though he were a head taller than himself." I would add that the same is true for adults. We are all at our best when we are playing. That is a theme of many of the essays that I have already presented in this blog, and it is a theme about which there is still much more to say. Let us learn to cherish play, in others as well as ourselves.

8th Grade Hoagie Lunch Fundraiser

Hello Wonderful Families!

Our fundraising for the Class of 2017 end-of-school trip continues!

This semester our 8th graders are (still) looking forward to serving your children

Hoagies on Thursdays!

Sign up for the second half of the semester!!

March 9 through May 25

Kid tested and kid approved!

Delicious hoagies & all natural fruit seltzer

Made to order, with love, right here in Grandy's Kitchen

Sign-up is for the second half of the semester (10 Thursdays)

\$52.50 for 10 weeks of hoagies only (\$5.25/hoagie)

\$62.50 for 10 weeks of hoagies and seltzer (\$5.25/hoagie + \$1/seltzer)

Please place your order form in the "8G Thursday Lunches" folder on the office door

Deadline for orders: Thursday, March 2

Please make checks payable to RVWS with "8G Lunches" in the memo.

8th grade thanks you for your support!

- 10 Hoagie Thursdays lunches (3/9- 5/25)
 - 10 weeks of hoagies only (\$52.50) or
 - 10 weeks of hoagies and seltzer (\$62.50)

My Special Hoagie (Please Circle Your Choices):

Turkey Only

Cheese Only
(provolone and cheddar)

Turkey & Cheese
(provolone)