



# River Valley Current

March 3, 2015 No. 404

"Persons appear to us according to the light we throw upon them from our own minds."

- Laura Ingalls Wilder

## School Calendar

### This Week

**Thursday, Mar. 5**

5<sup>th</sup> grade Parent Meeting

**Saturday, Mar. 7**

RVWS Open House 10:00 am-12:30 pm

### Looking Ahead

**Monday, Mar. 9 – Friday, Mar. 13**

3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Farm Trip

**Saturday, Mar. 14**

2<sup>nd</sup> grade workday

**Wednesday, Mar. 18**

School Tour 9:00 am

**Thursday, Mar. 19**

MS Musical, "The Sound of Music" 7:00 pm

**Friday, Mar. 20**

MS Musical, "The Sound of Music" 7:00 pm

**Saturday, Mar. 21**

MS Musical, "The Sound of Music" 2:00 pm

**Thursday, Mar. 26 & Friday, Mar. 27**

No School – Parent Teacher Conferences

### How to Contact Us

[info@rivervalleyschool.org](mailto:info@rivervalleyschool.org)

[lc@rivervalleyschool.org](mailto:lc@rivervalleyschool.org)

[bot@rivervalleyschool.org](mailto:bot@rivervalleyschool.org)

[pc@rivervalleyschool.org](mailto:pc@rivervalleyschool.org)

### After-School Reminder

There will be no After-School Program on March 17, 18, & 19 due to Mr. Laker's schedule. This is not a change; the dates were not listed on the registration form.

### Save the Date Mayfaire – May 9<sup>th</sup>

On these cold winter days, remember, we'll be celebrating Mayfaire before you know it!

### The Auction is Coming Home. Save the Date- Saturday, May 30<sup>th</sup>

The Auction Committee is bringing the big event back to school and this year's Gala will be yet another fantastic night out!

## Join us for our Open House

**Saturday, March 7<sup>th</sup>, 10 am -12:30 pm**

Our Open House is for YOU, too! Come yourself - Invite a friend  
Free childcare is available - ages 3 and up, with advance registration.

Our Open House provides an unmatched opportunity to get a glimpse of how our teachers work with our students – and why Waldorf education is so powerful. Experience the wonder of some quintessential early childhood class activities - just as our nursery & kindergarten students do each week and learn how these activities serve to prepare them for grade school, and beyond!

Grade school teachers will provide a snapshot of Language Arts and Math - illustrating both the relevance of the curriculum in relation to child development, and the continuity of the curriculum throughout the elementary years. Core academic subjects at RVWS are enriched by a wealth of specialty classes - you will enjoy a presentation by our Handwork teacher, which will include an overview of specialty subjects and how they dovetail so beautifully with the academics.

Light refreshments will accompany time to chat with faculty and staff following the presentations.

Please register by calling 610-982-5606 or email:  
[info@rivervalleyschool.org](mailto:info@rivervalleyschool.org)

## United Way Food Drive

Once again this year we will be participating in the United Way Food Drive during which all of the schools in our area collect food for their local food banks.

**Food will be picked up on the morning of Wednesday, March 11<sup>th</sup>.**

Please bring your donations to school before then and put them in the boxes in the lobby.

Food Guide (Please check expiration date before donation):

Preschool: Canned Soup, Macaroni & Cheese

Kindergarten: Canned Vegetables, Cereal

1st Grade: Cereal, Nonperishable Milk Products

2nd Grade: Canned Fruit, Tomato Products

3rd Grade: Peanut Butter, Jelly, Canned Meat

4th Grade: Canned Fruit, Juice, Cereal

5th Grade: Spaghetti Sauce, Canned Tomatoes

6th Grade: Tuna, Canned Meat, Stew, Rice

7th Grade: Soup, Rice, Macaroni, Cereal

8th Grade: Canned Meat, Tuna, Pasta & Sauce

**These are just guidelines, if you have other items to donate we will gratefully accept them!**

## Summer Camp Registration Has Begun!

If you register before March 25<sup>th</sup>, you will receive a discount.  
A brochure with more details and registration forms are attached to this week's Current.

## From Administration

### **New! 3-day Mixed-age Early Childhood class to begin April 15, 2015**

It is so exciting to see this class filling up with a great mix of children from new Garden Gate graduates to kindergarten-ready young ones. What a rich class experience they will have! 12 children is the most we can accommodate, and right now only a few spots remain, so if you or someone you know is interested – now is the time. This class is also a nice way for children to get familiar with RVWS and with some other students before jumping in, in September.

Amanda Blanco will lead the class through a morning of interactive play, both indoors and out, as well as special activities such as crafts, watercolor painting, circle activities, singing and story time in the thoughtfully simple classroom environment. Large and small motor skills and receptive language skills, social awareness, love for the natural world, self-care are some of what is developed as the children play and work with one another under the respectful guidance of their teacher. Children must be at least 2 years, 9 months of age and reliably toilet-trained.

Class will meet Wednesday, Thursday and Friday from 8:30am until 1:00pm. Children 3 and older may be able to extend their day until 3:15pm with our Afternoon Garden program (as space allows).

Please contact Cindy Schretlen with any questions, or to receive an application. 610-982-5606 x 203  
admissions@rivervalley.school.org

### **AFTERNOON GARDEN**

Afternoon Garden (1:00 – 3:15pm) for early childhood students is a busy place this year! Tuesdays and Thursdays have a few spaces open, but from now, through the end of March the rest of the week is full. If you would like to reserve a spot, please call, or contact Cindy Schretlen [cschretlen@rivervalley.school.org](mailto:cschretlen@rivervalley.school.org) by email to check availability.

### **Lost and Found is Overflowing**

The Lost and Found will be emptied at the end of this week. Please take what is yours on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday. On Friday, take what you can use and leftovers will be donated at the end of the day on Friday.

### **Thank you**

Thank you Grace and Shep Morgan for housing our teachers in New York City this weekend. We had a large delegation of faculty and staff for the ASWNA Conference and that would not have been possible without your generosity. We loved the Larchmont. It is a lovely hotel, well located and reasonably priced and we recommend it to anyone headed to New York!

Thank you Mary Beth Healy for your continued office support. We greatly appreciate all of your help.

### **Immediate Opening for Development Coordinator (Part-time)**

River Valley Waldorf School is accepting applications to fill a part-time Development Coordinator position. Responsibilities include leading and managing all fundraising activities, including the annual appeal and the yearly auction event. This person will work closely with the Board and Administrator to develop both short and long term organizational fundraising strategies for the school. This person will coordinate all efforts of the Development Committee and report to the Board on a monthly basis. The Development Coordinator manages the tracking of all contributions, sending of thank you letters and creating a simple annual report. This position will be approximately 10 hours per week.

#### **Qualifications:**

- A good understanding of the benefits of Waldorf education
- Bachelor's degree and three years' experience in annual fundraising and some experience in raising major gifts or high-end annual appeal gifts
- Solid communication skills, including writing, editing and proofreading
- Ability to manage multiple projects, priorities and deadlines
- Ability to work collaboratively and creatively with parent volunteers
- Proficiency with eTapestry or other fundraising software is desirable

Interested applicants should submit cover letter, resume and three references to: [bwolff@rivervalley.school.org](mailto:bwolff@rivervalley.school.org)

## From the Faculty

### WHAT ARE THE CHILDREN LEARNING?

First Grade: Language Arts

Second Grade: Arithmetic

Third Grade: Language Arts/Farming

Fourth Grade: Language Arts/Science/Study of Animals

Fifth Grade: North American History and Geography

Sixth Grade: History/Rome/Middle Ages

Seventh Grade: Drama

Eighth Grade: Drama

### Circus Club is Going on the Road

For the next 3 Saturdays (3/7, 3/14, & 3/21), the RVWS Circus Club will meet in Hopewell, NJ from 10:30 am-12 pm. The middle school play has taken over the All-Purpose Room so we are temporarily re-locating. All skill levels are welcome. Fee: by donation. Call Mr. Friedman (610-847-8749) for more details.

## From the Leadership Council

### What LC is Working On

Input from community on the grade school movement curriculum

Teacher evaluations with TDC

Faculty hiring for next year with the faculty

Program development with EC

Remember, we have open hours every Friday from 3:30-4. Please stop by if you have any questions or concerns.

## Alumni News

### Former River Valley Students are Performing Everywhere!

It's that time of year! Music and fun to get us through these cold, sun deprived days.

#### At Kimberton Waldorf School

Lauren Goodyear (RVWS Class of 2014) will be performing in the Kimberton musical, "Joseph and the Technicolor Dream Coat." She would love to see some RVWS friends in the audience. Dates are: Thurs, March 5th, 7pm, Friday, March 6th, 7:30pm, Saturday, March 7th, 2pm and 7:30pm. Tickets sold general admission at the door. \$15 adult, \$10 student and \$12 senior.

#### Delaware Regional High School

Greta Bernhardt (Class of 2012) will be performing in the musical "Anything Goes" at Delaware Valley Regional High School, Frenchtown NJ on March 5-6 & 7 at 7:00pm!

#### At Palisades High School

River Valley isn't the only school in our area performing "The Sound of Music." At Palisades HS, Tobey Riffle (Class of 2011), will be portraying Captain Von Trapp! Performances are on March 13, 14 at 7 p.m. and March 15 @ 2 p.m.

## Class Fundraisers

### RVWS Seasonal Cookbook and Local Directory

As a fundraiser for their farm trip, the rising 3rd grade plans to publish a cookbook. In addition to recipes, it will also have seasonal games, crafts, and activities, as well as an area directory. Recipes have been submitted from faculty, alumnae and the rising 3rd grade, and we would love for every family to be represented to make this book truly inclusive of our whole, wonderful school. Please consider submitting your child's/family's favorite recipe. If your children would enjoy submitting an accompanying illustration, we hope to include those as well on their recipe page.

This book will also feature an area directory of recommended summer camps, museums, seasonal outdoor destinations, craft stores, health practitioners, etc. We hope that this will make our book a useful resource to families, especially those new to RVWS.

See attachment for more details, and please respond by Friday March 13th. If you have any questions, feel free to contact Jean Tuma or Tracy Fly. Thank you for your consideration!

### **8<sup>th</sup> Grade Class Fundraiser**

8th Grade is so very grateful for all the support you've lent to our class trip -- from buying sweatshirts (contact Miss Hummel if you haven't purchased yours yet!) to eating heartily at Winter Fair. We thank you also for ordering samosas every week and for stocking up on them on the first Monday of each month. (If you haven't tried them yet, we urge you to do so--it's not too late to email Renell with a bulk order and have an easy meal at the ready!)

As we approach our fundraising goal, we are continuing our snack (and coffee!) sales in the lobby every Monday and Wednesday. Isn't it nice to know that you can send your child in with a couple of bucks to pick up a healthy snack to drop in their lunch box on their way into school? Our popular morning snack offerings currently include:

- Organic Popcorn with butter and salt \$1.50 (quart bag)
- Cheese Cubes \$1.50
- Organic non-GMO Corn Chips & Salsa \$1.75
- Homemade Beef Jerky \$2.00

In the afternoons we offer sweet breads, warm, ready-to-eat baby burritos, hot dogs kebabs (intriguing, no?), and other inspired, nutritious creations by Grandy.

## **From the Community**

### **Purely Farm is back again this Friday, March 6<sup>th</sup> offering pork, turkey and eggs!**

Joanna and Marc Michini of Purely Farm, parents of Clover in the Star Room, have a long history of providing the best meats in the area. Their farm critters thrive on life out on pasture and a diet supplemented by mineral rich, organic grains that are locally grown and GMO free.

Purely Farm has the perfect foods to warm up your kitchen as King Winter continues his frosty reign over the land. Brown one of their pork loins or a turkey thigh and roast with an assortment of your favorite root vegetables. Make your favorite bean or split pea soup with a meaty smoked ham hock; nitrate-free as always. Choose from 7 different varieties of sausage and feature with pasta or rice for a quick weeknight dinner. Consider our stunning bone-in pork chops if you feel daring enough to suit up and venture out to your grill. Please take time to review the attached price lists and stop by Friday morning to purchase your meat and eggs! Contact Marc or Joanna with any questions at [purelyfarm@gmail.com](mailto:purelyfarm@gmail.com) or 215-317-0889.

### **Seeking Childcare**

RVWS family is looking for a creative and caring soul to watch our 23 month old daughter, Valentina on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays, from 8:30am to 2:30pm. Driving would be ideal. If you need to bring your child that may work out. Valentina is a funny, chatty and very friendly little girl. We live in Plumstead Twp, near the Gardenville Hotel @ 413. Please reach us at 917-670-9976 (Tom) or 917-297-2733 (Dayana). Thank you!

### **Upcoming Opportunities from Saharra White-Wolf**

Saharra White-Wolf invites you on March 13<sup>th</sup> to a Shamanic Drum Journey at Wellness Rock, 28 Center Street, Clinton, NJ at 7:30 pm. Reiki level 1 and level 2 class March 14-15 at 5 Cynthia Court, Annandale, NJ. Call Saharra at 973-902-5737 or email [saharrawhitewolf@gmail.com](mailto:saharrawhitewolf@gmail.com).

Learn to Create Harmony Within Yourself LEI program, based on indigenous ways, 1 year course begins March 21<sup>st</sup>. For more information contact Saharra.

### **Maple Syrup from Tap to Bottle**

Saturday, March 21 - 11 am  
The Sugar Shack, Headquarters Road  
By popular demand, Craig Schneiderwind will be back to demonstrate the maple syrup making process. Tasting and hands-on opportunities for the kids! Email Bill Cahill [cahill@ptd.net](mailto:cahill@ptd.net) for directions and to sign up. Sponsored by the Tinicum Conservancy

### **KIRA WILLEY & FRIENDS CHILDREN'S BENEFIT CONCERT**

Join Kira and her full band for a blowout CD Release party! This can't-be-missed family event includes backup singers Maggie Arnold, Sawyer Wesp, and Tristan Willey, as well as our own Alison Gillespie, joining Kira on fiddle to back up a troupe of Irish stepdancers!

The show is a benefit for Donegan Elementary on Bethlehem's South Side, which has lost state funding for its incredibly valuable after-hours programs for kids who really, really need them.

Key Wilde opens! Video premiere! Kids' choral performances! Plus yummy snacks, raffles for great prizes, and crafts for sale.

Saturday, March 14, 3 PM, Zoellner Arts Center, Bethlehem. Tickets: \$10/child, \$15/adult. Group discount: \$8 per ticket for five or more. Going fast at [zoellnerartscenter.org](http://zoellnerartscenter.org)!

### **Alternative High School Opportunity**

Bucks Learning Cooperative is holding an information session for families interested in knowing more about BLC's innovative approach to learning. BLC helps high school-age teens live and learn without school by creating a personalized education based on their interests, goals and abilities. All are welcome to meet and chat with mentors and parents about using BLC to provide an alternative to high school.

When: Thursday, March 5th

Time: 7pm

Location: Middletown Friends Meeting House, 453 W. Maple Ave. Langhorne, PA 19047

### **The Partnership Course**

This is a breakthrough personal development course that explores the nature of reality through partnerships. It is designed to provide you with success in the areas of life that matter the most: Health, Wealth, Attainment, Communication & Relationships.

Ask yourself, "What if I had the power of partnerships available in my life?"

WHAT: A TEN-WEEK COURSE THAT MEETS 7PM, WEDNESDAY

WHERE: 110 Harrison St, 2nd Floor, Frenchtown, New Jersey 08825

WHEN: 7PM - 9:00PM

COST: \$200.00

INSTRUCTOR: DR. SETH A. GROSSMAN

HOW TO REGISTER: EMAIL: CPSGROSSMAN@AOL.COM

PLEASE ASK FOR COURSE BROCHURE & SCHEDULE

THE COURSE WILL BEGIN IN MARCH 2015

### **Items for Sale**

The Divens are moving and downsizing and have some lovely furniture for sale including a Twin Captain's Bed with Firm Mattress, 2 sets of sheets, and Rolling Drawers; several bookshelves; a stereo cabinet; a stereo system with speakers; armoires; a rocking chair; a papasan chair; and a stand alone freezer. If any of this sounds of interest please contact Mrs. Diven in the music room or at (530) 209-2711.

### **Ready to activate your brain/body connection?**

Dayana Henwood, GCFP, (mom of Sofia, Moon Room) is inviting you to discover the benefits of the Feldenkrais Method® at her new space in Pipersville (shared with Golden Cabinet acupuncture).

The Feldenkrais Method® is a remarkable approach to human movement, learning, and change, recognized for its strategies to improve posture, flexibility, coordination, athletic, and artistic ability, and to help those with chronic pain, restricted movement, and tension.

Neurobiologists are making new discoveries about "neuroplasticity," or how our brain changes as it learns. As featured by bestselling author Norman Doidge, M.D. in his new book *The Brain's Way of Healing*, the Feldenkrais Method® is a low stress, safe and effective way to apply neuroplasticity and provide new hope for a wide range of people, from those suffering from autism, stroke, Parkinson's disease, balance problems, or scoliosis, to those looking to improve their yoga and exercise or find more comfort while typing, driving or sitting. Experience a cutting-edge approach to health and wellness in a private and safe environment.

Please mention RVWS when booking your first appointment to receive a complimentary \$20 off. More information at [www.dayanahenwood.com](http://www.dayanahenwood.com) or 917-297-2733

### **Concert in the Round**

Saturday, March 7, 10 -11 am, for children ages 4-12  
Lenape Chamber Ensemble

Featuring music by Schumann, Tovey, and Dvorak for Flute, Violins, Viola, Cello and Piano.

Refreshments and Instrument Demonstrations too!

Delaware Valley College Life Sciences Auditorium on East Butler Avenue at State Street exit off Route 611.

Children \$2, Adults free!

For more information call 610-294-9361. A non-profit organization supported by the Philadelphia Cultural Alliance

### **Real Girls Dance Party Charity Challenge**

March 8 in Frenchtown, 2 to 6 p.m.....there will be a quick book share, a talk about giving to charity, a topic talk on Taking Up Space as females in a culture that encourages us to disappear, and a two-hour dance marathon challenge. Pledges are coming in, and every girl who dances the full two hours will raise funds for charity, just by dancing! If you would like to attend or to pledge, even 25 cents per dancer, we would be so grateful. Contact Catherine for information: 908-328-4460 or better, [catherinelent@embarqmail.com](mailto:catherinelent@embarqmail.com).

The Real Girls is a group started in June of 2014 for 12-17 year-old girls. The RG are organized by Catherine Lent (mom of 7th grade's Stella Lentsmith), and they meet monthly during the school year in Frenchtown. The RG welcome all girls of all walks of life and are not associated with any organization, religion, or other group. The RG goal is to give girls a wider social network, a forum for safe and open discussion of teen issues, encouragement and friendship, and a place to have fun, make art, push their own boundaries, do some good, and learn more about themselves and their world...including ways to counter negative stereotypes about girls in real ways. We would be happy to add you to our Parent, Girl, or Supporter email lists or see you on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/RealGirlsFrenchtown>.

## Yoga Loka

### SHAKE IT OFF! WITH T.R.E

Learn how to release your trauma, drama and stress

TRE® (Tension, Stress & Trauma Release Exercise) is an innovative series of exercises that assist the body in releasing deep muscular patterns of stress, tension and trauma. Created by Dr. David Berceci, PhD, TRE® safely activates a natural reflex mechanism of shaking or vibrating that releases muscular tension and calms down the nervous system. When this muscular shaking/vibrating mechanism is activated in a safe and controlled environment, the body is able to return to a state of balance. After doing TRE®, many people report feelings of peace and well-being. This is a self-regulating process- the tremors can be immediately stopped by simply straightening the legs or rolling onto their side if one becomes uncomfortable. Amariyothi will assist you in this process. When you are comfortable doing so, you can practice it at home on your own, without having to rely on a therapist to continue your healing process. However, working in a group is a very powerful experience, so come to as many sessions as you can!

No previous experience in anything necessary!

March sessions: Friday, 3/6- 6:00-7:00 pm; Wednesday, 3/18- 11:00-12:00

\$15. Space is limited

### Back Care series

2 sessions, beginning 3/15, 3/22

### Men's Yoga with Ken Doyle

4 sessions, beginning 3/8

### Family Yoga

3/20 - All ages welcome

Visit the website to register and for more information

[www.Yoga-Loka.com](http://www.Yoga-Loka.com)

## Do you or someone you know have an iPod you are not using anymore?

Lloyd & Lydia George of the 4th Grade are working on a charity/community service project. They are collecting gently used iPods of any year, any model (including Shuffles) to benefit Music and Memory. This is a program that distributes them to Alzheimer's/dementia facilities in order help patients remember music from their younger years. Studies have shown that listening to music helps with brain activity. We will also collect iTunes gift cards. You can learn more about this program at <http://www.musicandmemory.org>. Chargers appreciated, but not necessary. You can keep your earbuds as the organization will provide sturdy headphones.

There will be a collection basket to receive the iPods (which will be emptied at the end of each day). If you have any questions, please email Lisa George at [allothersnj@yahoo.com](mailto:allothersnj@yahoo.com).

## Breema Bodywork

Matthew Tousignant, M.A., CMT (father of Isaiah, Moon Room) is offering \$40 Introductory Breema Bodywork sessions for the month of February.

Breema bodywork catalyzes the body's self-healing processes, promoting a higher level of physical flexibility, increased vitality, mental clarity, and emotional balance. Breema uses rhythmic movements, dynamic stretches, tapping, and tension-releasing postures to dissolve stress, create structural realignment, eliminate chronic pain and restore a natural state of harmony and balance. Receiving Breema bodywork loosens identification with conditioned, self-limiting patterns and opens the possibility of having new thoughts, feelings, and movements. Support yourself to enter the aliveness of the present moment! Breema sessions take place on a padded floor with the practitioner and recipient comfortably dressed.

For more information contact Matthew: 267.864.8608

[matthewtousignant@hotmail.com](mailto:matthewtousignant@hotmail.com)

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

## Get a HANDLE® on Learning Disabilities: Root Causes and Effective Treatment

HANDLE Introductory Course Levels I&II

March 6 6-9:30 pm & March 7-8, 9-5, 2015

A 12-hour workshop for Parents and Professionals

- Understand what behaviors can reveal about neurological irregularities using the HANDLE paradigm
- Recognize subtle signs of stress and learn how to use Gentle Enhancement® to prevent crises and foster resilience
- Learn activities that enhance focus, reduce stress, and support learning

For more information: [www.handlebythebay.com](http://www.handlebythebay.com)

To Register: <http://tinyurl.com/HANDLE-workshop>

Contact: Nancy Dill Miller,

[nancy@parzivalacademy.org](mailto:nancy@parzivalacademy.org) 610-574-7626

Location: Kimberton Waldorf School, 410 W Seven Stars Rd, Kimberton

*About the Instructors:*

*Nancy Dill Miller is a HANDLE Screener and founder of Parzival Academy.*

*Dror Schneider is a HANDLE Practitioner and Instructor and mother of a young man with ASD.*

[On Parenting](#) – from the Washington Post

## **Why schools are failing our boys**

By Jennifer Fink

February 19

My 8-year-old son has been struggling in school. Again.

Re-entry after winter break has not been easy for him. The rules and restrictions of school – Sit Still. Be Quiet. Do What You Are Told, Nothing More, Nothing Less. – have been grating on him, and it shows. His teacher recently emailed me; she'd noticed a change in his behavior (more belligerent, less likely to cooperate) and wanted to know if there was anything going on at home.

My guess, I said, was that he was upset about having to be back in school after break. I was right.

The lack of movement and rigid restrictions associated with modern schooling are killing my son's soul.

Does that sound dramatic to you? Perhaps. After all, most of us go through school and somehow survive more or less intact. But if you really think about it, you might remember what you hated about school. You might remember that it took you years after school to rediscover your own soul and passions, and the courage to pursue them.

The stress of school, of trying to fit into an environment that asks him to suppress the best parts of himself, recently had my son in tears. Again.

He hasn't been allowed outside at school all week; it's too cold. Yet this son has spent happy hours outside at home this week, all bundled up, moving snow with the toy snowplow, creating "snowmobile trails" in our yard with his sled and shoveling both our walk and our neighbors. Because he wants to.

This morning, as always, my son was up and dressed before the rest of the household; he likes time to play Minecraft before school starts. But he also cleaned the dirty glass on the woodstove, started the fire and brought wood into the house. Because he wants to.

And it hit me this morning: He would have done great in Little House on the Prairie time.

We're reading Laura Ingalls Wilder's [The Long Winter](#), one of the books in the Little House series, aloud right now. Back then, boys (and girls) primarily learned by doing. Kids between the ages of 5 and 18 weren't corralled into schools and kept apart from real life; out of necessity, boys worked on the farms and girls helped in the house. Entire families worked together to survive, and along the way, boys and girls learned how to function in the real world.

That's the kind of learning my son craves.

Kids haven't changed much over the past 150 years; our society has. So while my son still needs movement, still craves real-world learning, physical labor and ways to contribute to his family and his world, he's expected to spend most of his time in a desk, in a classroom, with 20-some other kids his age. He's not allowed to go outside at school when it's too cold or wet; he's expected to sit quietly in the library or auditorium during recess time. He's allowed few opportunities for "real" work; today, when you hand an 8-year-old a saw or allow him to start a fire, people look at you askance.

One hundred and fifty years ago, my son would have been considered a model boy. Today, more often than not, he's considered a troublemaker due to his failure (or inability?) to conform to the expectations of the modern educational system.

I understand that society today is much different than society in the 1800s. Most of that change is good; I applaud antibiotics and equality. I'm a big fan of the internet and indoor plumbing. But at the same time, I think our current approach to education fails to honor the needs of children, especially the needs of our boys.

Boys today aren't fundamentally different than the boys of 150 years ago. Yet today, they're confined to classrooms, expected to remain still for the majority of the day, and barely allowed to tackle meaningful labor or the real world until they reach the magical age of 18. Is it any wonder our boys are struggling?

(Continued on the next page.)

Statistically speaking, boys now lag behind girls on every single academic measure; they also get in trouble and drop out of school much more frequently than girls. There are fewer boys in college than girls, and far more lost 20-something boys than 20-something girls.

Our boys are not the ones who are failing; we are the ones failing our boys.

My son's struggles break my heart. I worry that they'll break his spirit next. For now, I wipe his tears, e-mail his teacher, allow him outside every chance I get and share his story, because I want other parents of boys to know they are not alone. I want them to know that the problem is not their son, but rather a system that is failing far too many boys.

*Jennifer L.W. Fink is a [freelance writer](#) and mother of four boys. She's also the creator of [BuildingBoys.net](#). This article appeared in the *Washington Post*. Read it at the source [here](#).*

### Submission Form – Rising 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Fundraiser

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**Kindly respond by Friday March 13th** via email ([tumas@rcn.com](mailto:tumas@rcn.com)) or return form to folder on table outside Mrs. Atkinson's classroom. If there are any questions, please get in touch with Tracy Fly or Jean Tuma.

**I.** Please consider sharing a favorite seasonal recipe in any of the following categories: breakfast, lunch, dinner, snacks, deserts, beverages (e.g. smoothies, teas). Feel free to include gluten-free, vegan, dairy-free, raw, quick and easy dishes, potluck favorites, etc.

\* Recipes in electronic format (e.g. word document, url/web address) would be greatly preferred, but if it's easier to bring a bookmarked cookbook or magazine to school, we can make a photocopy and return the publication to you. Please make sure your name is clearly marked.

\* If your child/children would be interested in creating an illustration to accompany their recipe, we will try to have it printed on their recipe page.

**II. Recommendations for area directory** (within 1 hour drive from the school, share as many as you can). Please include town/city. Add additional sheets if necessary.

Favorite activity for each season or general (e.g. parks, bike rentals, where to go tubing in summer, pumpkin picking or hiking in fall, berry farms, museums, local sites, etc): \_\_\_\_\_

Recommended summer camps: \_\_\_\_\_

Favorite arts/crafts/fabric/yarn store: \_\_\_\_\_

Farmers' markets (what makes your favorite stand out?): \_\_\_\_\_

Coffee/tea shops: \_\_\_\_\_

Healthy restaurants: \_\_\_\_\_

Health food stores (include town): \_\_\_\_\_

Instrument rentals: \_\_\_\_\_

Clothing stores (eg resale, specialty, etc): \_\_\_\_\_

Health providers (dentist, doctor, acupuncture, chiropractor, nutritionist, etc): \_\_\_\_\_

Online resources (clothes, gear, arts and crafts, etc): \_\_\_\_\_