

## School Calendar

### This Week

**Wednesday, September 11<sup>th</sup>**

6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> grade Parent Evening

6:30 pm

### Upcoming Events

**Friday, September 27<sup>th</sup>**

Michaelmas In-school Celebration

**Tuesday, October 1<sup>st</sup>**

Rosh Hashanah – School is closed

**Wednesday, October 9<sup>th</sup>**

Yom Kippur – School is closed, Faculty in-service

### How to Contact Us

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lc@rivervalleyschool.org

bot@rivervalleyschool.org

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## River Valley Waldorf School Welcomes the Class of 2017



RVWS Class of 2017 at the Rose Ceremony with their 8<sup>th</sup> grade buddies.

Thank you Tiffany Robinson and Kristian Summerer for sharing your photographic talents. More pictures inside.

## Aftercare Update

As of this week, Aftercare will take place every day (Monday-Friday) after school from 3:20-5:30 pm. The sign-up sheet is on the bulletin board opposite the office and there are 10 spaces available each day. Once 10 children are signed up, Aftercare is full for that day and other arrangements need to be made for your child.

## RVWS Waldorf/Steiner Study Group

Beginning September 18<sup>th</sup>, a casual study group will meet every Wednesday from 3:30-4:30. Led by Gabrielle Nembhard (Grade 3 teacher), each week will focus on a different excerpt from a book or lecture related to Waldorf education. The group will warm up with an activity or artistic work, read together, and then discuss.

Feel free to come only once, occasionally, or every week, and invite your friends--this is open to anyone and everyone as long as they are adults (babes in arms are welcome).

## The Committee for Social Justice

Join us for this year's first Social Justice Committee meeting on Thursday, October 3 at 6:30pm-7:30pm. We will be meeting on the first Thursday of every month in the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade classroom.

This will be a workshop-like meeting with engaging discussion as we work together to shift our school culture toward a more inclusive and just world. Open to all!

## Substitute Teachers Needed

River Valley is looking for substitute teachers for the 2019-2020 school year. Early Childhood substitutes must have experience with young children. In the Grade School, teacher training and/or teaching experience are preferred. If you or someone you know is interested, send a letter, resume, and references to: lc@rivervalleyschool.org or call (610) 982-5606 for more information.

## From Administration

### Lunch Program Update

River Valley's hot lunch program begins again this week. We welcome Chef Reinier back to the kitchen, serving up delicious, nutritious, wholesome, and as local-and-organic-as-possible hot lunches for our students. Monday's lunch, succotash pasta, included beans from River Valley's school garden and red bell peppers courtesy of the Brunell family's abundant garden!

Chef Reinier sources ingredients from local farmers and food producers as much as he can. The hot lunch program also includes as many organic ingredients as possible- all while staying within a per lunch budget of \$6. Chef Reinier has brought his own style and changes to the lunch program in the past year, and River Valley is proud of some of the accomplishments of the kitchen:

- We have eliminated single-use plates, bowls, and cutlery. All serve-ware is now reusable, a change made possible by the addition of a dishwasher in the kitchen for fast sanitizing.
- Food waste is minimized in preparation. Chef Reinier uses every bit of fresh food that he can in preparation. All compostable waste goes to the school compost. \*\*If you or someone you know would like post-meal waste to feed farm animals, please let us know. It is our goal to have zero food waste in the lunch program.\*\*
- Chef Reinier has introduced dishes that follow the seasons and honor the holiday celebrations of various cultures. Last year, the children were treated to a variety of hand-made dumplings in honor of Chinese New Year. Around the time of the Jewish holidays, Chef Reinier perfected his versions of potato latkes with homemade apple sauce, and matzo ball soup.

If you have an offering from your own abundant garden, please stop in to chat with Reinier. Perhaps your own family's fruits and veggies will make an appearance on the menu! Reinier also takes special requests- if you want a particular soup, or tray of mac n cheese for home, just ask. Be sure to check out the chalkboard outside the kitchen to see snack options in the afternoon, and what local ingredient appeared for lunch that day!

### Box Tops

RVWS collects Box Tops for Education which can be found on many of the products you buy at your grocery store. We have a basket in the lobby where you can deposit your box tops or they now allow you to scan your receipt instead of cutting boxtops. Check it out: <https://www.boxtops4education.com/>

### Foundation Program in Anthroposophy Spirit in Service of Life

Weekend program - basic books, art, community  
Beginning now at Waldorf School of Princeton. For more information contact:  
[foundation@princetonwaldorf.org](mailto:foundation@princetonwaldorf.org).

### Network for Good Donations

Over the summer, River Valley received a check from the Network for Good for \$76.26. Donations come via Facebook. Thank you to all who donated.

### CHIP Covers PA Kids for Vision, Dental, and Vaccines

CHIP is short for the Children's Health Insurance Program, Pennsylvania's program to provide health insurance to uninsured children and teens who are not eligible for or enrolled in Medical Assistance.

There are a lot of reasons kids might not have health insurance — a parent might have lost a job, parents don't have health insurance at work, or maybe other options are just too expensive. Whatever the reason, CHIP may be able to help. No family makes too much to qualify for CHIP.

CHIP covers more than just routine doctor's visits. Families rely on CHIP for dental coverage, vision coverage, and vaccinations every day.

(Continued on next page.)

## CHIP Covers PA Kids for Vision, Dental, and Vaccines (Continued)

*Dental Coverage can include:*

Diagnostic service, Restorative services, Endodontics, Periodontics, Prosthodontics, Oral surgery, Orthodontics (noncosmetic), Emergency, preventative, and routine care

*Vision Coverage can include:*

Routine eye exams, Prescription lenses and contacts, Dilution, Diagnostic services

*Immunization Coverage can include:*

Pediatric immunizations outlined by the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP), Influenza vaccines

What vaccinations are required to attend Pennsylvania schools? Find out here.

Visit [CHIPcoversPAkids.com](http://CHIPcoversPAkids.com) for more information on services and to apply online.

## From The Faculty

### What the Children are Learning:

First Grade – Form Drawing

Second Grade – Form Drawing

Third Grade – Language Arts

Fourth Grade – Local History & Geography

Fifth Grade – Botany

Sixth Grade – Geometry

Seventh Grade – Algebra

Eighth Grade – World Geography

### Looking for Old Towels and Washcloths

Tina Quintana, our handwork teacher, is looking for some OLD towels and washcloths. They can be torn and well worn. Please drop them off at the front desk or in the new handwork room.

### Study Group for Current and Future Middle School Parents

Parents of students in grades 5-8 are warmly welcomed to join in study of the book *Tending the Spark: Lighting the Future for Middle School Students* by Betty Staley. Rachel Howard, 7th grade teacher, will lead the study and discussion as we celebrate this incredible period in our children's lives and all the changes that come along with it. Dates: 6:30 on the second Thursday of each month, starting October 10th. If you are interested, purchase a copy of the book and email Rachel at [rhoward@rivervalleysschool.org](mailto:rhoward@rivervalleysschool.org).

## From The Board

### A Message From the Board

It is with great pride and excitement that we welcome back the RVWS families old and new. There have been many changes over the spring and summer months, new windows & lights, new floors and a beautiful new building on our grounds to name a few. All of this is made possible by the generosity of the River Valley community. The tireless efforts of past and present staff, faculty, board members and generous donors who continue to support the growth of River Valley is alive in our new environment.

Special thanks to Reeve Kelly and Patrick Janssen for their endless time and energy devoted to our building project throughout the summer and, as it continues through completion. Also thanks to the faculty who had extra work in store for them after the renovations, to sweep away dust, scrub desks and organize their classrooms in time for the arrival of students. It is lovely to feel our community reforming itself in our newly renovated space. What a wonderful start to the school year we have had.

As a reminder, all Board meetings are open to the public and begin at 6:30 pm.

Please note our **Annual Community Board Meeting will be held on Thursday, November 14th** with light refreshments. More details to come and we hope you will join us as we review our growth and our future for the community.

*"Good governance...is relational, responsive and self aware. It strengthens relationships and a sense of community, building connection and trust."* -- Michael Soule

## From the Community

### High-Quality Discount Woolens from A Toy Garden!

A Toy Garden, owned and operated by Erika and Pete Gustavson (parents of Adeline, grade 5 and Freya, grade 2), would like to offer River Valley families 15% off pre-orders of Engel of Germany's Organic 100% Merino Wool and Wool/Silk long johns. The high-quality woolens are available for babies and children, and are just what your little ones (and bigger ones) need to keep them warm and toasty through the cold winter months.

Use the attached order form to indicate quantities, and return with payment to the front desk. Orders will be delivered to the school in October when the shipment arrives.

Any questions, please contact A Toy Garden at 267-377-9448, or email them at [shopkeeper@atoygarden.com](mailto:shopkeeper@atoygarden.com).

### Sunbridge Institute Introductory Experiences

October 16, 2019 (Wednesday morning) - OPEN DAY Exploring Waldorf Education, Teaching, and Teacher Education

With Linda Ogden-Wolgemuth, PhD, and the staff of Sunbridge Institute

January 24-25, 2020 (Friday evening and Saturday full day) - EXPERIENTIAL WORKSHOP

Waldorf Weekend: Foundations and Fundamentals of Waldorf Education

Lead Instructor: Linda Ogden-Wolgemuth, PhD, of Sunbridge Institute

February 12, 2020 (Wednesday morning) - OPEN DAY Exploring Waldorf Education, Teaching, and Teacher Education

With Linda Ogden-Wolgemuth, PhD, and the staff of Sunbridge Institute

### Muck and Gold presents:

*From Nothing to Something Spooky!*

A Thursday Afternoon Theater workshop for ages 9-15, Starts Sept. 19 and culminates with a Halloween show, Oct. 26.

*Collective Effervescence* - A super fun class for Adults! 1 Sunday/month - first one is Sunday, Sept. 22 and free! Both take place in our home studio in Stockton, NJ For details and registration - [www.muckandgold.com](http://www.muckandgold.com)

### House for sale in UBE

Perfect location for RVWS families! 2 miles from school, tucked onto a quiet private lane (no traffic) with easy canal path access. Just under 1 acre including stream and organic veg garden. Backs on two acres of woods. 3 bedrooms, small in-law suite/home office, sheds. Call Alison 646-942-3451

### Artyard

New Exhibition:

**Janet Ruttenberg: Beholder**

September 14 – December 29, 2019

Curated by Elsa Mora and Charles Stuckey

Opening Night Reception – Saturday, September 14, 6-8 pm

#### Upcoming Events:

Saturday, September 21, 7 pm – **The Tango Lesson**, a film by Sally Potter

Saturday, September 28, 7 pm – **Pop Up Choir with Kira Willey** to benefit KIND (Kids In Need of Defense)

Saturday, October 5, 6 pm – **We are the River**, Baker & Tarpaga Dance Project

Saturday, October 19, 7:30 pm – **Radioactive: Stories from Beyond the Wall**, a film by Maria Gaspar who will host a Q & A after the film.

Sunday, October 27, 3 pm – **Silenced Voices**, a Concordia Chamber Music Program

Saturday, November 2, 7 pm – **Poetry Reading** with Toi Derricotte and Hayden Saunier

Saturday, November 9 – **Songwriting Rodeo** with Kira Willey, Eve Sheldon, Noah Jarrett – Collaborative Songwriting Session #1 – 10-10:45 am, Session #2 – 11:45-12:30 pm – Public Performance, 7:30 pm

Saturday, November 23, 7:30 pm – Filmyard screening of **Spettacolo**

Saturday, December 14, 4-6 pm – **Holiday Lantern Walk & Pop Up Choir** – 4-5 Rehearsal, 5-6 Caroling with Paper Lanterns on the Towpath in Frenchtown, Benefitting Rolling Harvest.

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

Gallery hours: Wednesday Through Sunday, 11:00 AM – 5:00 PM

Address: 62A Trenton Ave. Frenchtown, NJ 08825



## The Rose Ceremony







From Waldorf Today

## **The Right Brain Develops First: Why Play is the Foundation for Academic Learning**

By Vince Gowmon

Did you know that the right brain develops first? It does so by the time children are 3-4 years of age. The left brain, on the other hand, doesn't fully come online until children are approximately seven years old; hence the first seven years being recognized as such a critical period in child development.

"Logic will get you from A to B. Imagination will take you everywhere." Albert Einstein

The left brain's functionality is one of language, numeracy, literacy, analysis and time. It is the logical, calculating, planning, busy-bee part of us that keeps us anchored in the pragmatic world, and in past and future. The right brain, on the other hand, is responsible for empathy, intuition, imagination and creativity. It is where we wonder, dream, connect and come alive. Through the right brain we dwell in the space of no-time, in being absolutely present. While the left brain is more interested in outcomes or product, the right brain cares much more about process—the journey is what matters, not the destination.

But there is one more vital piece to understand: The right brain connects us to our boundless sense of being. Being is primary; hence the right brain developing first; hence, human being, not human doing. The left brain is far more interested in doing. Young right-brain dominant children, by contrast, are quite content being.

Understanding this we can better appreciate why play is so important in child learning and development, and why we need to be extra careful with the amount and timing of academic agendas created for children; with how much we emphasize product—what kids have accomplished at school—versus process—who they are becoming and what they feel in their explorations. That the right brain develops first is pertinent information for those in the field of education, as well as parents, regarding what is developmentally appropriate. Pushing literacy and numeracy on children before age seven may just be harmful to their little, developing brains. Without the capacity to use their academic minds in the ways that are being asked can cause children to gain what's called "learned stupidity." They believe themselves to be incapable and lose their natural desire to learn.

The push for academia on children is a symptom of a society that is left brain dominant, or forgetful of the wonderful playground that is the right brain. It's an indicator that we feel safer within the literalness, control and certainty of the left brain, far more than in the unquantifiable and mysterious nature the right brain connects us to.

You cannot measure the qualitative aspects of imagination, empathy and intuition; but, of course, you can measure the aforementioned practical detail-oriented functions associated with the left brain. Yet the more we push those things that can be measured onto children, the more they will grow up feeling like they don't measure up!

Let's remember that life is less about the tools the left brain excels in and what we accomplish in this world. Rather, life is about being present and connecting with those you love, or those you don't even know as children do so freely:

"Walking to the library this morning, I passed on the sidewalk a little child, maybe two years old and his mother", wrote a friend of mine. "As I neared, the child looked at me, his eyes so alive and present, and when I said 'Hi', he stooped and picked up a soggy leaf from the ground and handed it to me. Oh, the abundance and beauty of this world!"

This is the gift of the right brain. While the left brain sunders life into pieces, the right brain unites. This is why babies sense no distinction between themselves and their environment. All is one!

These wise little teachers remind us, courtesy of their right brain, that life is about enjoying the little things, about enchantment and surprise; it's about being present with another, offering them your gentle ear, hearing between the lines, not just what is being said, which is what logic grasps. With the help of the right brain we touch the hidden places in our heart and in the hearts of others, those secret dimensions that give meaning to life.

The right brain is indeed the playground, or at least, it connects us to it. Let children dwell in this most natural state through their unstructured play, and all its derivatives such as doodling, curiosity, wonder and imagination. People who have a healthy right brain can better use their left brain tools in positive ways. That is the purpose of the left-logical brain: to serve the right brain—doing serves being. Being is the soil from which all our plans, details and actions must flower if we are to experience personal fulfillment and truly contribute to the world.

*"The intuitive mind is a sacred gift and the rational mind is a faithful servant. We have created a society that honors the servant and has forgotten the gift."* ~ Albert Einstein