

## School Calendar

### This Week

**Wednesday, September 25**

7<sup>th</sup> Grade Class Trip to Delaware

**Wednesday-Friday, September 25-27**

5<sup>th</sup> Grade to Camp Onas

**Thursday, September 26**

Board of Trustees Meeting

6:30 pm

**Friday, September 27**

Michaelmas In-school Celebration

9:00 am

### Upcoming Events

**Tuesday, October 1**

Rosh Hashanah – SCHOOL IS CLOSED

**Thursday, October 3**

7<sup>th</sup> Grade Class Trip to Renaissance Faire

Committee for Social Justice Meeting 6:30-7:30 pm

**Saturday & Sunday, October 5 & 6**

8<sup>th</sup> Grade Yard Sale at the Brunell's yard

**Tuesday, October 8**

1<sup>st</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Class Trip to Solebury Orchards

**Wednesday, October 9**

Yom Kippur – School is closed, Faculty in-service

### How to Contact Us

info@rivervalleyschool.org

lc@rivervalleyschool.org

bot@rivervalleyschool.org

pc@rivervalleyschool.org

### Pizza Fridays Begin This Week

It's time once again for Pizza on Fridays. An order form is on the last page of this week's Current. Pizza sales will benefit the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade Farm Trip. Please put your order in the folder on the office door by Monday, September 23<sup>rd</sup> along with payment. Extra forms can be found there.

### Lunch Forms

October Lunch Forms are attached to this week's Current. Orders are due on Friday, September 27<sup>th</sup>.

## Michaelmas

September 29<sup>th</sup>, midway between the northern hemisphere's summer and winter solstices, the ancient festival of Michaelmas is celebrated. As summer's warmth fades and the cool crispness of autumn falls upon us, mother nature's fruits and vegetables ripen for harvesting. Her gifts help sustain us through the dark, cold days of winter and remind us to summon our own gifts and inner strength to help balance our internal light with the darkness of the season.

Stories of good versus evil or light versus dark are often told to illuminate the balance of light and dark that we all must strive towards mastering. Stories of the Archangel Michael exist in Judaic, Islamic and Christian traditions. Michael is often portrayed as an angel warrior, astride his powerful steed carrying a sword of light. In some ancient stories Michael subdues the fearsome dragon thereby guiding and inspiring us all to take courage against the darkness.

A celebration of strength and courage, of facing dragons both internal and external, Michaelmas is a great time to ponder our own inner dragons and to cultivate the courage and strength necessary for self-development.

In our school, Michaelmas is brought to the Early Childhood in the most appropriate way for the children - through themes of strength and courage woven into their daily activities.

In the Grade School these themes are brought to life with an in-school Michaelmas celebration. This year, our celebration will be on Friday, September 27<sup>th</sup> at 9 am. Parents are welcome to attend, but please remember that this celebration is intended for children of grade school age. The looks of wonder on the faces of our first graders will show us that it is well worth the wait!

## 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!

## Join us today for our

### First Parent Council Meeting of the Year! 2 pm at the Homestead General Store.

Come see what it's all about.  
Everyone is welcome to this commitment free gathering!

## From Administration

### Outreach News

River Valley will be having a table at the following events, parents are welcome to come say hi or stay to help talk to prospective parents about our school:

Williams Township Fest O' Fall - Sept 28 - 3pm

Perkasie Fall Fest - Oct 6 - 1pm

Alexandria Autumn Fest - Oct 12 - Noon

Quakertown Alive - Oct 19 - 10am

Is there a festival or event in your town that RVWS should attend? If so, please let Erica Nichols know: [enichols@rivervalleyschool.org](mailto:enichols@rivervalleyschool.org)

### 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](mailto:lc@rivervalleyschool.org) or call (610) 982-5606 for more information.

### From the Anthroposophical Society

*Our highest endeavor must be to develop free human beings who are able of themselves to impart purpose and direction to their lives. The need for imagination, a sense of truth, and a feeling of responsibility—these three forces are the very nerve of education.* - Rudolf Steiner

We are celebrating 100 years of Waldorf Education--and we have exciting news! This year, the ASA produced a beautiful video, [The Wellspring Of Waldorf](#), for teachers, parents, administrators, board members and anyone interested in Waldorf education and its connection to anthroposophy. You are invited to watch it and share. [This one hour video](#), with experts Liz Beaven, Ed.D and Melanie Reiser, Ph.D includes eight short segments:

- Origins of Waldorf Education
- Anthroposophical View of the Human Being
- Evolution of Human Consciousness
- Human Development
- Innerwork of the Teacher
- Freedom and Responsibility of the Teacher
- Pedagogical Practices
- Waldorf School Culture

Be sure to check out the beautiful supporting materials that can be shared with board members, parents, teachers, and homeschool families. In fact, some folks are using the video and materials as a group study.

Along with this [link to the video](#) there is [a special invitation for teachers, parents, administrators and board members](#) to join the Anthroposophical Society in America. Why? Because the ASA can help them connect with and deepen their spiritual lives through our enriching educational webinars, podcast, and events.

Teachers are busy, and we've created our accessible online offerings and podcast just for them! [Our webinars](#) include topics that apply to modern life like meditation, the festivals, healthy aging, and star wisdom. Tune in to hear informative interviews about trauma, education, poetry, and more on our podcast, [The Anthroposopher](#). [Click here for our special Waldorf 100 membership offer](#) and receive two free webinars just for educators! [Access the Wellspring of Waldorf video and resource guide at this link](#). Please share widely with your friends and feel free to spread the word by [posting this link](#) on social media.

Happy Waldorf 100!

### More Opportunities to Learn About Waldorf Education

#### RVWS Waldorf/Steiner Study Group

Beginning September 18th, 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).

(continued next page)

## 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).

## 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: the second Thursday of each month at 6:30 pm, starting October 10th. If you are interested, purchase a copy of the book and email Rachel at [rhoward@rivervalleysschool.org](mailto:rhoward@rivervalleysschool.org).

## 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

## 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/Camp Onas

Sixth Grade – Rome

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 to be used for felting. They can be torn and well worn. Please drop them off at the front desk or in the new handwork room.

## From Parent Council

### Providing Meals for Faculty Meetings

This year Parent Council is asking families to help provide food for our faculty during their Thursday faculty meetings. We have decided to organize the effort by asking each grade to be responsible for a particular month:

8<sup>th</sup> Grade – September, 7<sup>th</sup> Grade – October, 6<sup>th</sup> Grade – November, 5<sup>th</sup> Grade – December,

4<sup>th</sup> Grade – January, 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade – February, 2<sup>nd</sup> & 1<sup>st</sup> Grade – March & April, Early Childhood – May & June.

The idea is a simple one; think soups, salads, chili, casserole or crock pot meal that could be set up directly after pick up on Thursday and cleaned up on Friday morning at drop off. Feel free to work together with a friend.

If you are able to participate, please note the following food "guidelines":

\*We will be feeding 15-20 people

\*There are gluten free and dairy free folks

\*There are vegetarians

\*Please remember we are a nut free school.

To sign-up please go to:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/20F054CACA82AA1FB6-faculty1>

## 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).

### Join CHOIR & CO. at ArtYard!

Saturday, September 28, 7 PM

Come sing George Michael's "Freedom" with us this Saturday, September 28 at ArtYard! We'll learn a simple, fun arrangement together and then live stream our performance! Choir & Co. (formerly Pop-Up Choir) is led by Kira Willey, Eve Sheldon, and Noah Jarrett. All are welcome—there's no singing experience required, REALLY.

Free admission. Suggested donations will benefit Kids In Need Of Defense, a non-profit that works to ensure that no child appears in immigration court alone.

### St. Luke's UCC Rummage and Bake Sale

Thursday, October 3<sup>rd</sup>, 9 am-8 pm; Friday October 4<sup>th</sup>, 10 am-7 pm; Saturday, October 5<sup>th</sup> – Bag Sale All Day 9 am-2 pm. Lunch available.

*Sale will take place at the building located at the intersection of Routes 412 & 611 in Ottsville.*

Donated items welcome. Please drop off items on the porch at the schoolhouse of St. Luke's UCC Church on Durham Road. No computers, fax machines, printers, TVs, CRT's, car seats, mattresses, encyclopedias, used paint cans, or items needing repair please.

For info call: 215-206-3277/3307 or 610-847-2633.

### MOONSHINE & MILLET at IRONBOUND!

Sunday, October 27, 3 PM

Your favorite River Valley band is playing at Ironbound's beautiful outdoor Tasting Room! Come taste the hard ciders, have some locally sourced great food, and of course - do some dancing!

Ironbound Hard Cider, 360 County Rd 579, Asbury, NJ (Just 15 minutes from school!)

### Morning Drop-off Assistance

Selwin, Megan, and Vernon Briggs are looking for someone who could occasionally be available to get Vernon (age 4 - Acorn Room) ready for school in the mornings and drop him off. Mornings vary throughout the year, but we would be able to give at least two weeks notice for a request. Time for arrival also varies, but could be anywhere from 6:45 - 7:30 am. Morning drop off rate is negotiable. If interested, please contact Megan Briggs at [meganbarnesbriggs@gmail.com](mailto:meganbarnesbriggs@gmail.com).

### House for Rent in Riegelsville

Newly renovated house available, 15 minutes from RVWS. 3 bedrooms, 1 1/2 bathrooms, W/D, lots new. Call Ani 908.797.2579

### 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)

### Apartment Needed

In search of a 1 or 2 bedroom apartment rental for two seniors with immaculate credit. Minimal stairs, \$1200/month max, the closer to Frenchtown the better. Please contact Gina via text or email: 805-570-7943, [ginaricci@live.com](mailto:ginaricci@live.com). Thanks in advance for any leads!

### 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

### Upcoming Events:

Saturday, September 28, 7 pm – **Choir & Co. 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

From the New York Times

## Now Some Families Are Hiring Coaches to Help Them Raise Phone-Free Children

Screen consultants are here to help you remember life before smartphones and tablets. (Spoiler: get a dog!)

By Nellie Bowles

Parents around the country, alarmed by the steady patter of studies around screen time, are trying to turn back time to the era before smartphones. But it's not easy to remember what exactly things were like before smartphones. So they're hiring professionals.

A new screen-free parenting coach economy has sprung up to serve the demand. Screen consultants come into homes, schools, churches and synagogues to remind parents how people parented before.

Rhonda Moskowitz is a parenting coach in Columbus, Ohio. She has a master's degree in K-12 learning and behavior disabilities, and over 30 years experience in schools and private practice. She barely needs any of this training now. "I try to really meet the parents where they are, and now often it is very simple: 'Do you have a plain old piece of material that can be used as a cape?'" said Ms. Moskowitz. "'Great!'"

"'Is there a ball somewhere? Throw the ball,'" she said. "'Kick the ball.'"

Among affluent parents, fear of phones is rampant, and it's easy to see why. The wild look their kids have when they try to pry them off Fortnite is alarming. Most parents suspect dinnertime probably shouldn't be spent on Instagram. The YouTube recommendation engine seems like it could make a young radical out of anyone. Now, major media outlets are telling them their children might grow smartphone-related skull horns. (That, at least, you don't have to worry about: no such horns have yet been attributed to phones.)

No one knows what screens will make of society, good or bad. This worldwide experiment of giving everyone an exciting piece of hand-held technology is still new.

(Continued on the next page.)

Gloria DeGaetano was a private coach working in Seattle to wean families off screens when she noticed the demand was higher than she could handle on her own. She launched the Parent Coaching Institute, a network of 500 coaches and a training program. Her coaches in small cities and rural areas charge \$80 an hour. In larger cities, rates range from \$125 to \$250. Parents typically sign up for eight to 12 sessions.

"If you mess with Mother Nature, it messes with you," Ms. DeGaetano said of her philosophy. "You can't be a machine. We're thinking like machines because we live in this mechanistic milieu. You can't grow children optimally from principles in a mechanistic mind-set."

Screen "addiction" is the top issue parents hope she can cure. Her prescriptions are often absurdly basic. "Movement," Ms. DeGaetano said. "Is there enough running around that will help them see their autonomy? Is there a jungle gym or a jumping rope?"

Nearby, Emily Cherkin was teaching middle school in Seattle when she noticed families around her panicked over screens and coming to her for advice. She took surveys of middle school students and teachers in the area. "I realized I really have a market here," she said. "There's a need."

She quit teaching and opened two small businesses. There's her intervention work as the Screentime Consultant — and now there's a co-working space attached to a play space for kids needing "Screentime-Alternative" activities. (That's playing with blocks and painting.)

In Chicago, Cara Pollard, a parent coach, noticed most adults have gotten so used to entertaining themselves with phones, they forgot that they actually grew up without them. Clients were coming to her confused about what to do all afternoon with their kids to replace tablets. She has her clients do a remembering exercise.

"I say, 'Just try to remember what you did as a kid,'" Ms. Pollard said. "And it's so hard, and they're very uncomfortable, but they just need to remember." They will come back with memories of painting or looking at the moon. "They report back like it's a miracle," Ms. Pollard said.

### **The No-Phone Pledge**

A movement reminiscent of the "virginity pledge" — a vogue in the late '90s in which young people promised to wait until marriage to have sex — is bubbling up across the country.

In this 21st-century version, a group of parents band together and make public promises to withhold smartphones from their children until eighth grade. From Austin, there is the Wait Until 8th pledge. Now there are local groups cropping up like Concord Promise in Concord, Mass. Parents can gather for phone-free camaraderie in the Turning Life On support community.

Parents who make these pledges work to promote the idea of healthy adult phone use, and promise complete abstinence until eighth grade or even later.

Susannah Baxley's daughter is in fifth grade. "I have told her she can have access to social media when she goes to college," said Ms. Baxley, who is now organizing a phone-delay pledge in Norwell, Mass. So far, she has about 50 parents signed on.

### **Do parents need the peer pressure of promises, and coaches telling them how to parent?**

"It's not that challenging, be attentive to your phone use, notice the ways it interferes with being present," said Erica Reischer, a psychologist and parent coach in San Francisco. "There's this commercialization of everything that can be commercialized, including this now."

To Dr. Reischer, the new consultant boom and screen addiction are part of the same problem. "It's part of the mind-set that gets us stuck on our phones in the first place — the optimization efficiency mind-set," Dr. Reischer said. "We want answers served up to us — 'Just tell me what to do, and I'll do it.'" But what seems self-evident can be hard to remember, and hard to stick with.

"Yes, it's just hearing something that's so blatantly obvious, but I couldn't see it," said Julie Wasserstrom, a 43-year-old mother of two in Bexley, Ohio. She hired Ms. Moskowitz and found the advice useful.

(Continued on next page.)

"She just said things like, 'Are you telling your kids, 'No screens at the table — but your phone is on your lap?'" Ms. Wasserstrom said. "When we were growing up, we didn't have these, so our parents couldn't role model appropriate behaviors to us, and we have to learn what is appropriate so we can role model that for them."

Ms. Wasserstrom compared screens to a knife or a hot stove. "You won't send your kid into the kitchen with a hot stove without giving them instructions or just hand them a knife," Ms. Wasserstrom said. "You have to be a role model on safe ways to use a knife."

### **Have You Considered Cats?**

Richard Halpern, a former school counselor turned parenting coach based in Portland, Ore., noticed that screen and phone issues were the number one concern people had when they called him.

By the time parents got to him, they were often so frustrated they wanted to just unplug and get rid of everything, but Mr. Halpern says he cautions restraint. "I recommend a whole life approach," he said. "This is not a one and done. It's a lifestyle change."

And for Mr. Halpern, that lifestyle change is often for parents to find a nonhuman animal, and for children to spend time with it and study its behavior. "I tell a lot of parents to get a dog," Mr. Halpern said. "Or I say, 'Show a screen to your cat.' They don't care. They're fully present. They're living. That's a great role model."

He tells children and adults alike to imagine what a dog would look like using a smartphone. "I'll say, 'What if you were looking at your dog and your dog was on a phone? That wouldn't be as fun, would it?'"

## PIZZA FRIDAYS!

The 3<sup>rd</sup> grade will once again offer pizza and organic lemonade for lunch on Fridays, starting September 27, 2019, to raise money for the Farm Trip.

Please return this form and payment (made out to RVWS)  
by **Monday, September 23, 2019**  
to the folder on the office door labeled "pizza".

Pizza will be provided by Pizza Bella in Revere.  
It will be delivered to your child's classroom by the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade each Friday.

This payment includes 14 weeks of pizza: 09/27, 10/04, 10/11, 10/18, 10/25, 11/01, 11/08, 11/15, 11/22, 12/06, 12/13, 12/20, 01/10, and 01/17

Child's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Grade and Teachers Name: \_\_\_\_\_

_____	1 slice & lemonade:	\$47.00
_____	2 slices & lemonade:	\$80.00
_____	1 slice/no lemonade:	\$32.00
_____	2 slices/no lemonade:	\$64.00
_____	Lemonade Only:	\$15.00

Questions? Please contact Kristyn Lederer at [1134zar@gmail.com](mailto:1134zar@gmail.com)

**Thank you for your support!**