

School Calendar

This Week

Friday, December 13

Early Dismissal – Winter Fair set-up 1:00 pm

Saturday, December 14

Winter Fair 11:00 am-3:00 pm

Upcoming Events

Thursday, December 19

Shepherds Play 7:30 pm

Friday, December 20

Community First Friday 8:20 am
Shepherds Play 11:30 am
Early Dismissal 1:00 pm

Friday, December 23 – Friday, January 3

School Closed – Holiday Break

Monday, January 6

School Resumes

How to Contact Us

info@rivervalleysschool.org
lc@rivervalleysschool.org
bot@rivervalleysschool.org
pc@rivervalleysschool.org

Friday Happenings

Our First Community First Friday

Join us at drop off for coffee, tea, a snack and conversation with a member of Administration for camaraderie and open discussion.

Dismissal Information

There will be **no buses** home on Friday. The school districts will not pick up for an early dismissal. There will also be **no Aftercare** because of Winter Fair Set-up. Please pick up your children at 1 pm or make arrangements for them.

Babysitting Available by Girl Scouts During Winter Fair Set up.

See From the Community for details.

Deadline to reserve is December 11th



Celebrate the whimsy of the holiday season at River Valley Waldorf School's most magical festival of the year.

Featuring activities & crafts for all ages, food & desserts, live music, an artisan market and King Winter, himself!

And before Winter Fair, join us for our

OPEN HOUSE | 10AM - 11AM

(Nursery, pre-k, kindergarten & grades 1-8)

Learn about our programs, meet teachers, alumni and parents past & present.

RSVP to 610-982-5606 or info@rivervalleysschool.org



The Oberufer Shepherds Play



Performed by faculty, parents and alumni of
River Valley Waldorf School

Two Performances:

Thursday, December 19th, 7:30 PM

Friday, December 20th, 11:30 AM

Winter Fair Secret Garden Items

We are expecting 20 Secret Garden items from every family. Soon there will be a box in the lobby to collect your items. We're gearing toward gifts for the whole family this year so when you make your items don't forget mom and dad.

Artisan Market for Winter Fair

Calling all artisans! We are curating our artisan market for this year's Winter Fair. If you'd like a spot for holiday selling, please email Ivy at karunagoddess@gmail.com

Let the 8th grade make your Secret Garden items for you!

Each RVWS family is asked to provide 20 items for the Secret Garden. For just \$20 the 8th grade will make the treasures for this Winter Fair activity. Sign up in the lobby. Proceeds will go toward the end of year class trip. if you can't make it to school to order your items then you can email Clare Brunell: clare.28@live.com and sign up.

From Administration

School Portraits

Order before December 15th,
the school will receive 10% & you will receive
a low resolution file suitable for digital sharing.

Visit the website below to order

<https://tiffanyrobinsonphotography1.shootproof.com/gallery/rvwsportraits2019>

PW: rvws2019



Toys, Puzzles and Games Needed for Aftercare

Do you have any toys, wooden puzzles, checkers, Chinese checkers, pick up sticks or board games that your children have outgrown? If so, the children who stay for Aftercare would enjoy playing with them. Please bring them to school and give them to Tiffany or Robbie. Thank you.

Upper Bucks Code Blue Shelter

If you're lacking inside shelter in Upper Bucks County during periods of extreme, life-threatening weather (temperature of 26 degrees or below) between Nov. 15 and Apr. 15, your friends and neighbors are ready at the Quakertown Masonic Lodge (501 W. Broad St. Quakertown, PA 18951) from 8:15pm – 7:00am the following morning. We'll have a hot meal and breakfast for you as well as shelter. Car rides will be provided from the following stops, when requested:

Turkey Hill @ Ottsville/Harrow – 7:45pm Perkasio Square Shopping Center – 8:00pm

Call 267.450.5191 to request a ride. To find out if the shelter is open, contact Code Blue Status Line 267.450.5191 after 1:00pm.

DO GOOD WITH BURRITOS



Join us at our restaurant for a fundraiser to support River Valley Waldorf School. Just come in to the Chipotle at **569 N. Main Street** in Doylestown on **Saturday, January 4th** from **4:00 pm to 8:00 pm**. Bring in this flyer, show it on your smartphone or tell the cashier you're supporting the cause to make sure that 33% of the proceeds will be donated to River Valley Waldorf School.



Online orders will not be included in the fundraiser total. To ensure your purchase is counted in the fundraiser, be sure to order and pay in-restaurant. Gift card purchases during fundraisers do not count towards total donated sales, but purchases made with an existing gift card will count.

Learning Opportunities for Parents

Waldorf/Steiner Study Group

Every Wednesday

3:30-4:30 pm – 3rd grade classroom

Middle School Study Group

2nd Thursday of each month

6:30 pm – 7th grade classroom

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.

Community First Fridays

The Admissions office will be hosting Community First Fridays on the first available Friday of the month. Parents will be greeted with coffee, tea, a snack and a member of the Administration for camaraderie and open discussion. Some weeks a member of the Board or Parent Council will attend.

Please join us on the following dates:

Dec 13, Jan 10, Feb 7, Mar 6, April 3, May 8, Jun 5

From The Faculty

What the Children are Learning:

First Grade – Language Arts

Second Grade – Language Arts

Third Grade – Language Arts

Fourth Grade – Humans & Animals

Fifth Grade – North American Geography

Sixth Grade – History/Fall of the Roman Civilization

Seventh Grade – Physics

Eighth Grade – Geometry

From the Community

Babysitting During Winter Fair Set-up

Girl Scouts Troop 21321 will be offering babysitting for families who are helping to set up for Winter Fair. They are doing this as a fundraiser for the Girls Scouts who are raising money to go to Savannah, Georgia in June of 2020. The cost is \$5 per hour. Babysitting will start at 1 pm and end promptly at 5, on December 13th at the Presbyterian Church of Milford. (The church has another event on that day.) A nutritious snack, games and a craft will be provided.

RVWS students will need transportation from parents/friends. Parents who are interested please **email no later than December 11th**, as we need a headcount for supplies and snack. The email is gstroom21321@gmail.com or call Lizette 908-892-4220

Car Seat Needed

Do you have an extra car booster seat that your child has outgrown? Our family needs an extra for our seven-year-old. Call or text Brooke at 215-500-5769.

Rabbit Looking for a Home

Dewey, a four-year-old Flemish Cross male rabbit, is looking for a home. His current owner saved him and then realized she was terribly allergic to him once they got home. She would love to find him a great home. He comes with his cage and treats, food, etc. Thanks for sharing the info!! Please text or call Tracy Fly at 908-442-2113 if you are interested or you know someone who is. Thank you!

Pretty Good Keyboardist

David Bader is looking for a pretty good keyboardist to play with his band at Parent Stage this year. Contact David@thelab.net

Upcoming Events at Yoga Loka

Monday, December 16 - Restorative Yoga and Yoga Nidra - 6:30-7:30 pm - \$15

Winter Solstice Special Session - Saturday, December 21 - 4:00-6:00 pm. Time for slowing down, drawing in and nourishing the self with yoga by candlelight and sweet, gentle live music. All levels welcome. Please register early to reserve your spot. www.yoga-loka.com

Wednesday, January 1 - New Year's Day Practice - 11 am-1 pm - pre-register by 12/24 for \$25; \$30 after. registration required by 12/28.

Events at the Riegelsville Library

Story Time in the Banko Children's Room

Dec. 10, 17

During story time we read books, conduct age-appropriate science experiments and explore music and art. Story time is designed for children 0-5 years, but all children are welcome to attend with a parent or guardian.

Questions? Call the library at 610-749-2357.

A Question about Last Year's Parent Stage

Chris Bodwitch is wondering whether anyone taped her act at last year's Parent Stage. Even short clips taken on a phone would be appreciated. If so, please send the file to: info@muckandgold.com.

Sunbridge Institute Opportunities

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

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.

For more information go to: www.sunbridge.edu

Eggs for Sale

The Gustavsons are selling fresh eggs from their homegrown, free-range, antibiotic-free, happy and healthy hens. Great tasting, and in a variety of colors! \$4 per dozen, delivered to school by request. Email shopkeeper@atoygarden.com or text to 267.377.9448 to arrange drop-off.

Artyard

Current Exhibition:

Janet Ruttenberg: Beholder

September 14 – December 29, 2019

Upcoming Events:

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.

Back by popular demand - Wednesday, December 11th, 7-8:30 pm - 24 Hours of Reality: Truth in Action

Join concerned citizens all over the world to learn about the climate crisis and what you can do to stop it. Margaret Waldock, Frenchtown resident and Climate Reality Leader, will bring this conversation home. 24 Hours of Reality: Truth in Action is a chance for all of our friends, neighbors and colleagues in the River Valley to learn the truth of what's happening to our planet and communities and how together we can take action to overcome this existential threat.

Just by joining the conversation you can make an impact: Thanks to our friends at OneTreePlanted.org, a tree will be planted on behalf of every audience member who attends.

This event is presented by the River Valley Climate Collective and is being hosted by ArtYard.

*This will be the exact same presentation that we hosted on November 20th. We are offering it again due to its high demand and a desire to share its important message with more people.

**Given the nature of the content, adults and mature teenagers are welcome but it is advised that children under 15 not attend.

(Continued on next page.)

Upcoming Exhibitions:

Paper Weight: Works on Paper by Elsa Mora

January 18 – April 12, 2020

Opening Saturday, January 18, 6-8 pm

An exhibition of Mora's exquisite meditations on consciousness constructed solely of paper and glue.

Mora's 2D and 3D pieces presented in this exhibition are inspired by the cognitive faculties that form the mind: consciousness, perception, thinking, judgment, language, and memory...Thematically, Mora is interested in studying the intricacies of the human brain, the wonders that it can produce, as well as its potential for destruction and chaos. Her work as a whole reflects on universal issues of identity, connectivity, and survival.

Rugland: Wall Tapestries from the Center for Creative Works

January 18 – April 12, 2020

Opening Saturday, January 18, 6-8 pm

RUGLAND is a group exhibition of punch-tufted rugs made by artists from the Center for Creative Works, a progressive art studio located in Wynnewood, PA. The pieces were produced in conjunction with a workshop led by the textile artist and designer, Tim Eades, in August of 2019.

For more information go to: www.artyard.org

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

Address: 62A Trenton Ave. Frenchtown, NJ 08825

From labblog.uofmhealth.org (University of Michigan health)

Gamified Childhood: Are Digital Devices Replacing Traditional Playtime?

Digital play versus free play: Mott expert address the differences and the potential impact on child development at American Academy of Pediatrics session.

Blocks, books and bikes used to be the staples of childhood.

But as more kids grow up with a seemingly endless menu of virtual activities offered through digital media, child development experts worry about the wane of traditional playtime.

One pediatrician at the University of Michigan's C.S. Mott Children's Hospital, who is addressing the topic at the national American Academy of Pediatrics meeting in New Orleans, has even coined the phenomenon "gamified childhood".

"Free, unstructured play promotes interactions that boost vocabulary, nurture parent-child relationships, and encourage social skills and creativity. Play helps young brains develop," says Jenny Radesky, M.D., a developmental behavioral pediatrician and researcher at Mott who is leading the AAP session.

"But mobile devices are becoming an almost unavoidable part of children's worlds. We hope to demystify the design differences between technology and classic toys and help parents increase open-ended play experiences for their children."

Radesky says there are some benefits in "shared" technology experiences, such as watching a movie together as a family and discussing it or looking up new recipes to cook together. But children are increasingly on devices alone as parents see them as tools to pacify tantrums, keep children occupied during mealtime and even as a way to take a break from parenting.

"Early childhood is a vulnerable time for exhausted parents, and they may find relief in technology," Radesky says.

"But both children and parents need experiences with play that provide a sense of self-efficacy and living in the moment."

Radesky highlights four key differences between the classic and tech-supported types of play and why parents and pediatricians should take notice.

(continued next page)

Child's Autonomy: In digital games, the app designer is in control, Radesky says. Many apps and games are simple, cause-and-effect puzzles or races with a design that constrains a child's behavior. They have a "closed loop" design that decides for children what they are going to do next, rather than letting the child's brain take the lead. "The designs behind much of children's digital technology does not support the autonomy, self-realization, and parent-child interaction that traditional play allows," Radesky says.

Another part of autonomy is learning self-control. However, many parents are using mobile devices to keep children seated at the dinner table, calm on brief car rides or to settle them to bed. These habits may inhibit their ability to learn how to self-regulate emotions and be counter-productive when it comes to good sleep.

Unstructured play, on the other hand, puts the child in control. "Child autonomy and control is at the core of unstructured play. The child thinks up what to do, how to do it, and what to do when things don't work out," Radesky says. "This is where imagination really allows a child to push past old ideas and create new ones, handle strong feelings, and figure things out for themselves."

Hooking Kids in Different Ways: While digital games are attention-grabbing, unstructured play is attention-building, Radesky says. In some apps and games, "there are so many over-the-top interactive enhancements" that children mainly pay attention to these exciting features, rather than understanding the concept the app was trying to teach. But it can be difficult to screen for appropriate apps. Radesky's research analyzing apps and games marketed to young children found that most of them came with a misleading 'educational' label that they may not deserve.

"The natural and social worlds are rarely going to be as attention-grabbing and 'shiny' as online games and apps are artificially designed to be," Radesky says. "But this allows the child to determine what they want to direct their attention towards, and to think clearly without artificial distractions."

External versus internal rewards: Apps and games provide many external rewards, such as tokens, candies, virtual toys, or piggy banks every time children get an answer correct. This is intentional because designers know that young children are driven by rewards, Radesky notes. What can be problematic is that "children may get over-focused on consuming and collecting."

She points to examples, such as balloons, fireworks and parades that "reward" a child for completing a simple task in a digital game. This type of digital design, known as "persuasive design" is a strategy used to maximally engage a user.

The rewards of traditional play, however, are internal and social. "When children struggle with a new challenge and figure out a solution, the reward can be subtle, with a sense of satisfaction and self-efficacy," Radesky says. "Providing children with praise for hard work is appropriate, but it shouldn't be over the top. Otherwise children can get used to always needing external validation."

Solitary play versus social play: Most apps and games are designed in a way that assumes there will be only one user, and children tend to use tablets and smartphones with a body posture that can nudge out social interaction with others, Radesky says.

"In our study comparing play with traditional toys to play with tablets, there wasn't really that space for parents," Radesky says. "Children created their own solitary space and cocoon around the tablet. It was rare for a child to look up and say 'look at this!' Parents feel this difference in play, so it's important to help them know it's not their fault, it's an intentional design feature of the tablet."

Meanwhile, toys, nature, art, and music allow for shared experiences.

"Social play creates space for multiple people to take part, have back-and-forth interactions, and see each other's faces and emotions," Radesky says.

"Parents are familiar with playing with toys and books because they probably grew up with them. They probably get their moments of strongest connection and feeling effective with their children when they are playing with well-designed toys. As pediatricians, we can help parents carve out spaces for the traditional play that feels good to them too."