

School Calendar

This Week

Wednesday, February 5

7th Grade Parent Evening 6:30 pm

Thursday, February 6

5th Grade Parent Evening 6:30 pm

Friday, February 7

Community First Friday 8:30 am
Candlelight Concert 6:30 pm

Upcoming Events

Tuesday, February 11

1st & 2nd Grade Parent Evening 6:30 pm

Wednesday, February 12

6th Grade Play 6:30 pm

Friday, February 14

Grade School Ice-Skating Party

Monday-Friday, February 17-21

Winter Break – NO SCHOOL

Monday-Friday, March 9-13

3rd Grade Farm Trip

Thursday, March 12

Middle School Play – Willie Wonka, Jr. 7:00 pm

Friday, March 13

Middle School Play – Willie Wonka, Jr. 7:00 pm

Saturday, March 14

Middle School Play – Willie Wonka, Jr. 1:00 pm

How to Contact Us

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

Candlelight Concert

This year's Candlelight Concert will take place this
Friday, February 7th at 6:30 pm.

Grades 4 through 8 will be performing and everyone is invited to attend. Please come hear our Orchestras, Choirs and grade school classes make beautiful music for you.

Students in grades 7 and 8 should plan to arrive no later than 5:45 for instrument tuning. Grades 4-6 should arrive no later than 6:00.

Dress is Concert Attire as described below
from the Parent Handbook.

The concert will reflect on the message of peace and a celebration of freedom throughout the world, with a thoughtful and joyful program meant to bring light and warmth in these cold winter months.

Concert Attire

For both the Candlelight Concert and the Grandparent's Assembly, in keeping with traditional concert attire, the dress is as follows:
Girls - White Blouse, black skirt no shorter than 4 inches above the knee, or black dress pants, black tights or socks, black dress shoes with maximum 1-inch heel.
Boys - White button-down shirt tucked into black dress pants, black socks, black dress shoes (no sneakers).

Auction Update

Consider being an auction sponsor!

Many of the sponsorships this year include tickets to the event and other special benefits; Plus, they are a tax-deductible contribution to River Valley Waldorf School. Find a committee member or visit our [auction website](https://auction.rivervalleysschool.org/) for tickets, sponsorships and to learn about other ways to get involved with this community event.

<https://auction.rivervalleysschool.org/>

Please contact auction chairs,

Cat Miles or **Alex Di Candia** with any questions!

Or email: auction@rivervalleysschool.org

Our February Community First Friday

this **Friday, February 7th**, is dedicated to nursery and kindergarten parents as well as new families. After morning drop-off, please come to the main building for coffee, breakfast and conversation.
Warmly, Erica Nichols

After-school Woodworking

Would your child like to join an After-school Woodworking Class? If so, please fill out the form found at the back of the Current and place it in the folder on the office door. More information will follow once we know how many are interested.

Grade School Ice Skating Trip

On Friday, February 14th, the grade school will have their annual Ice-Skating Party. This is a field trip for grade school students only. We ask families who have early childhood children to please send them to school as usual and not bring them on the ice-skating trip.

There are many reasons for this. Most importantly, it is not safe for little children to be skating in between older, faster, more experienced skaters. Also, it is not fair to early childhood children who don't get to go, while some of their friends are off skating and they are not invited.

In an effort to avoid hurt feelings and hurt bodies and to give the younger ones something to look forward to when they are in the grade school, we ask that only grade school children come to the skating rink on the 14th.

From Administration

Housing for Visiting Teachers

At this time of year, we have teachers who visit River Valley as mentors or candidates for teaching positions for next year. They often come from far away and need a place to stay for a few days. If you have room for a guest and are able to host someone, please let Robbie know.

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 The Faculty

What the Children are Learning:

First Grade – Language Arts

Second Grade – Language Arts

Third Grade – Language Arts

Fourth Grade – Math

Fifth Grade – Ancient Civilizations - Egypt

Sixth Grade – Class Play

Seventh Grade – Physiology

Eighth Grade – Anatomy

Handwork –

The fifth grade handwork students are busy working on knitting socks and fingerless mitts.

The sixth grade handwork students are learning many new hand sewing stitches and techniques as they work on soft sculpture dolls.

From The 8th Grade

Save the Date to Sing For Good!

March 21st, 4:00 at RVWS

I am Lily Brunell and for my eighth grade project I am mentoring under Kira Willey to host a pop up choir event called Singing For Good.

All proceeds of this event will go to an organization called Hungry for Music: They provide instruments to children who otherwise wouldn't have them.

I am also collecting unwanted instruments from the community. To donate please email me at: tigerlili4640@gmail.com

Hope to see you there!

From the Community

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

Upcoming Events from LGBTQ+ in Bucks County

We know the research - having supportive adults and community spaces not only reduces the risk of self-harm and suicidality amongst LGBTQ+ youth, it also helps to create a more loving, inclusive and empowering community for ALL! Here are some upcoming (and on-going) programs and events in Doylestown for LGBTQ+ youth and families for you to forward, share and post!

Sat, Feb 15, 2020, 7-10pm: Love Is Love: A Queer Prom for All!

<https://www.facebook.com/events/538389277027045/>

ALL Rainbow Room alum and ALL LGBTQ+ youth AND ALLIES ages 13-21 are invited.

At the Michener Art Museum and brought to you by The Rainbow Room. Sell out expected! DJ, photo booth, red carpet entrance, much fun awaits! It's going to be A-MAZ-ING! Dance and be you in the beautiful glass enclosed ballroom of the Michener Art Museum in Doylestown Borough. Tickets are FREE, but all must register to get in.

Absolutely no tickets at door. Parents, supporters and friends are invited to the red carpet entrance. Message us for details. Email for the registration form! marlenepray@gmail.com (Adult allies! If you know a 13-21 year old who may want to attend, please share this info with them or direct them to us. If you are interested in supporting or sponsoring this free fabulous event, please let us know!)

Wednesdays 6-8pm: Rainbow Room Youth Programs!

<https://www.instagram.com/pprainbowroom>

Every Wednesday night from 6-8pm, for over 17 years, we meet in Doylestown for programs led by professional sexuality educators, focused on education, empowerment, support, resilience, advocacy and making friends. For all youth ages 14-21 (LGBTQ+ and allies). 4th Wednesdays each month are open to ages 12 and 13 as well, with parent/guardian consent. PFLAG Bucks also meets on 4th Wednesdays 6-8pm just down the hall.

Yoga Loka

-Meditation Clinic - 12noon-1pm - Tuesdays, 2/4 through 3/10. \$80 for the 6 session series.

-Restorative Yoga with Yoga Nidra - 6:00-7:00 pm Friday, 2/7. \$15 for the session.

-Psoas Clinic - 11:15 am to 12:15 pm - Fridays. 2/4-2/28. \$45 for the three session - series

-Valentine's Day Partner Yoga - 6:30-8:30 pm - Friday 2/14 - \$35 of registered by 2/2; \$45 after.

-Spiritual Studies: Lakshmi Sadhana - 1:00-7:00 pm - Saturday 2/15 - \$100 for the session

-Therapeutic Thursdays: Back Care Clinic - 7:00-8:00 pm Thursday, 2/20 - \$15 for the session

-Therapeutic Thursdays: TRE workshop - 7:00-7:45 pm Thursday, 2/27 - \$15 for the session

-Spiritual Studies: Lakshmi Sadhana - 1:00-7:00 pm Saturday, 2/15 - \$100 for the session

T-RE Retreat Day: 12:00-4:00 pm Saturday 2/22 - \$100 for session

All workshops require pre-registration. Check the regular weekly schedule for drop-in classes at

www.yoga-loka.com/class-schedule.html

Palisades Area Youth Baseball

Spring 2020 Registration Now Open!

PAYB is a recreation league serving the youth of the Palisades community. It supports the independent associations of Bridgeton, Durham, Revere (Nockamixon), Silver Creek (Springfield) and Tinicum. All teams are open to both boys and girls.

Teams are organized as follows:

Rookies (age 7-8), Minors (age 9-10) and Majors (age 11-12)

T-ball team recommended age is 4-6 years. (Based on player age as of 5.1.20)

Sign-ups will end March 1, 2020.

For more info contact DurValFarm@aol.com

The Lotus School of Liberal Arts – Grades 9-12 Admissions Open House for Prospective Students February 6 from 2:00 pm – 5:00 pm

Take the time to come by and tour our school, talk with the teachers, and learn more about our program.

We will also be working with prospective students to make a glitter jar as part of a workshop for students to create their own personal Mindfulness Jar that they can take home with them. The jar works as a reminder to practice awareness and kindness toward oneself and others.

Lotus School of Liberal Arts, 8340 Easton Road, Ottsville, PA 18942 484-312-0011. Contact: lotus@lotusla.org

Full British High Tea

Sunday Feb. 23, 2020, 3:00pm at the Riegelsville Public Library

\$30 per person (non-refundable ticket)

Catered by Chef Nikkie Cuya and Sous Chef Cathy Kates

Ticket price includes: Tea, soup, salad, assortment of finger sandwiches, petite four, and scones with a selection of jams & butters.

Tickets must be purchased in advance at the Riegelsville Public Library or reserved online at

www.riegelsvillelibrary.info. Tickets go on sale 1.1.20.

Please reserve by 2.16.20.

For more info please call 610.749.2357

Silvercreek Baseball Registration 2020 now open

Springfield Township Residents

Co-ed Tee Ball 4-6

Palisades Area Youth Baseball

Rookies 7 & 8

Minors 9 & 10

Majors 11 & 12

Fall Ball League for players who are 8-12 as of 8.31.21
after July 4th -October

All Palisades School District Teens

Bushkill Valley 13 & 14 -April – June

Lehigh Valley Connie Mack 14 -16 end of May – July

Register Online:

www.silvercreekathleticassociation.com

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.

Artyard

Upcoming Exhibitions:

Paper Weight: Works on Paper by Elsa Mora

January 18 – April 12, 2020

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

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.

Upcoming Events:

Saturday, February 15, 7:30 – *A Valentine for the Future: On Poetry, Love and Living Forever* with Sasha Stiles and Humanoid Robot BINA48

Saturday, February 29, 10 am-1 pm – Paper Sculpture Techniques Workshop with Elsa Mora

Saturday, February 29th at 3 & 7:30 – Screening of *The Pollinators*

Saturday, March 7, 10 am – 1 pm – Hatch Costume-making Workshop

Saturday, March 14, 7-9 – The Inbetweens, Album release and concert featuring Noah Jarrett, Mike Gamble and Conor Elmes

Saturday, March 21, 2-5 pm – Neurons, Needles & Thread; A Punch Needle Workshop with Elsa Mora

Wednesday, March 25 & Saturday, March 28, 7:30 pm – An evening celebrating Lotte Reiniger, the paper silhouette animation – with screenings of *The Art of Lotte Reiniger* and *The Adventures of Prince Achmed*.

Saturday, March 28, 6:30 pm – Gallery Walk with Elsa Mora (before Lotte Reiniger Screening)

Saturday, April 4 & Sunday, April 5th, 9 am-5 pm – Nesting Box Kit workshop with Ulla Warchol

For more information or to register for any of these events go to: artyard.org

Gallery hours: Wednesday Through Sunday, 11:00 AM – 5:00 PM Address: 62A Trenton Ave. Frenchtown, NJ 08825

BACK TO THE SCHOOL OF THE FUTURE: The Real Cutting Edge of Education Probably Isn't What You Think It Is

by Richard Louv

In recent decades, many of America's school districts have favored reduced recess, fewer field trips, longer hours sitting at desks, more tests, and more computers, iPads and even video games used as teaching tools in classrooms.

Consider what may be the ultimate high-tech school: AltSchool Brooklyn, a pre-K to eighth-grade private school. As Rebecca Mead writes in *The New Yorker*, it "does not look like a traditional educational establishment. There is no playground attached, no crossing guard at the street corner, and no crowd of children blocking the sidewalk in the morning. The school is one floor up, in a commercial building overlooking Montague Street."

Inside the school, the cutting edge is sharp indeed. Students are issued tablets in pre-K. "AltSchool embeds fish-eye lenses in the walls of its classrooms, capturing every word, action, and interaction, for potential analysis." The teacher of the future will be transformed, into a data-enabled detective" according to one of the school's founders. "Retroactively omniscient," is how another AltSchool leader, formerly a Google employee, put it.

The good news, apparently, is that testing, as we know it, will go away. The weird news: we won't need traditional testing because the machines will be watching our kids all the time — every keystroke will be monitored and measured, every restless wiggle, every eye that wanders into a daydream, every sidelong glance at a tree beyond the window, moving in the wind.

Some digital technology is effective in and outside the classroom. But how far do we really want to go in that direction? As a new school year begins, a refresher on what may be the real cutting edge of education is in order.

Around the country and the world, a countertrend to Silicon Faith is building – based not on a rejection of educational technology, but on a growing hunger for a better balance between the virtual and the real.

As I reported in *Last Child in the Woods*, and earlier in this space, evidence supporting nature-based, place-based education or experiential learning (as this approach is variously called) has been building for decades. Gerald Lieberman, an internationally respected education expert, helped produce a 2002 report for California report called "Closing the Achievement Gap." He worked with 150 schools in 16 states for 10 years, identifying model programs in place-based education or experiential learning, examining how those students fared on standardized tests.

The findings were stunning. Students in the schools achieved gains in social studies, science, language arts and math; improved their grade-point averages; and developed skills in problem-solving, critical thinking and decision-making.

Another pioneer in the philosophy of place-based education, David Sobel, conducted an independent review of "Closing the Achievement Gap" and other studies. His conclusion? When it comes to reading skills, place-based education should be considered "the Holy Grail of education reform." Still, for years, Lieberman's report was virtually ignored by the education establishment. Among the possible reasons, the body of evidence is relatively new; and most of the studies of health and education showed correlation, not necessarily cause.

Today, longitudinal studies are offering encouraging data. A six-year study of 905 public elementary schools in Massachusetts found that third-graders got higher scores on standardized testing in English and math in schools that had closer proximity to natural areas. Likewise, preliminary findings of a 10-year University of Illinois study of more than 500 Chicago schools, comparing green schools with more typical schools, indicate similar results, especially for the most challenged learners.

As it turns out, greening schools may be one of the most cost-effective ways to raise student test scores.

(Continued on next page.)

An additional approach is the use of nature preserves by environment-based schools, or the inclusion of established farms and ranches as part of these “new schoolyards.” Norway’s departments of Education and Agriculture support partnerships between educators and farmers to revamp school curriculum and to provide more direct outdoor experience and participation in practical tasks. A purely natural setting isn’t required. Natural learning environments can be created in a forest or in an urban neighborhood, especially if it’s graced with a little nature.

None of this is news to educators in Finland. In the early 1970s, after decades of war and Russian occupation, Finnish schools were in bad shape. But, during past decade or two, while the US began to fall behind, Finland’s scores in math, science and reading have consistently been at or near the top, as measured by the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA). Year to year, Finland typically ranks first in PISA’s measure of “study effectiveness.” The reasons for these gains are complex, but in Finland, outdoor recess, often held in natural spaces, is considered nearly as crucial to academic success as literacy.

When he first visited Finland, Tim Walker, an American teacher teaching in that country, was skeptical. In a 2014 article in *The Atlantic*, eloquently described the difference that periods of nature play made in his own students. “Normally, students and teachers in Finland take a 15-minute break after every 45 minutes of instruction,” he wrote. “During a typical break, students head outside to play and socialize with friends while teachers disappear to the lounge to chat over coffee...Once I incorporated these short recesses into our timetable, I no longer saw feet-dragging, zombie-like kids in my classroom.” Most importantly, he reported, after their 15-minute outdoor breaks, his students “were more focused during lessons.”

Walker’s observations mirrored the growing body of research that points to a relationship between more natural learning environments and reduced symptoms of Attention Deficit Disorder, stress reduction, lower burnout rates for teachers, and increased civility.

In the United States, exciting developments include the dramatically increasing popularity of nature-based preschools or forest schools, such as Raintree School in St. Louis, Missouri, as well as nature-based public schools, including the exceptional Chattahoochee Charter School in Georgia. We also see the national movement to build natural play-spaces at schools, serving both children and the surrounding neighborhoods. “Natural spaces and materials stimulate children’s limitless imaginations and serve as the medium of inventiveness and creativity,” says Robin Moore, an international authority on natural school design, who heads the Natural Learning Initiative. New schools must be designed with nature in mind, and old schools can be refitted with playscapes that incorporate nature into the central design principle. And the field of animal-assisted therapy, including in schools, is also growing rapidly.

What if nature-based learning environments were part of an even grander goal? In New Zealand, the government now prioritizes measures of mental health over economic growth, in education and other sectors. As reported here, proponents, including Lord Richard Layard, a professor from the Centre for Economic Performance at the London School of Economics, argue that this new direction would stimulate economic growth by increasing happiness and productivity.

Surely in the age of biodiversity collapse, the climate emergency and nature-deficit disorder, we need new nature-based models for education and community – ones that help produce a gentler world for the children of all species.

After-School Woodworking Class
Interest Form
(For grades 5-8)

Does your child want to spend more time in the woodworking studio making more useful and beautiful wooden items? Ms. Siftar is willing to put together an afterschool woodworking program for students in grades 5-8.

In order to gauge interest, please select your 1st, 2nd and 3rd choice of days and return the bottom half to the form to the front door of the office.

Cost is still being estimated but will be in line with other afterschool programs.

Name: _____

Grade: _____

Email: _____ Phone: _____

CLASS DAY PREFERENCE
Order from 1-3, cross off unavailable days:

___ Monday 3:30-5:00

___ Wednesday 3:30-5:00

___ Friday 3:30-5:00