



NEWS FOR THE WEEK OF
May 21, 2018

PO Box 122 Royalston, MA (978) 249-3505
 villageschoolma.org

News and Notes



Congratulations and Thank You for an Outstanding Play

Last week the 4th-6th grade class gave two wonderful performances of their own play, *The Perils of Power*, which they'd written and rehearsed over the previous six weeks. See the synopsis on page 2.

The excellent costumes – two for each student, since they were appearing as actors for one night, and extras for the other – looked very convincing, thanks to the ingenuity and hard work of Kyra Kristof and Corynne Malia. Our art teacher Elizabeth, aided by Myra and the class, produced three wonderful sets, including a forest that simply invited you to wander in it.

Music direction was by Isaac Richardson, who also led the band consisting of Robin Langer on violin and recorder, and guitarist Dick Hyland, a valued supporter of our plays for many years.

Matthew Hamer did a great job running the lighting yet again (with the help of a spotlight generously loaned by Athol High School), and a huge thank-you to Nathan Flint for setting up a complex and professional sound system that let even the quietest actors be heard. Thank you to Will Szal for videography. Thanks, too, to cousins and former VS actors Vivienne and Gabriella Henshaw, for helping out behind the scenes as stage managers.

Finally, a huge thank-you to the large number of parents, friends and former students who helped in taking down the sets so efficiently at the end of Friday evening. It takes a village to build a play, and take it down!

Saturday, June 2nd on Royalston Common

The Annual Pancake Breakfast and Silent Auction are less than two weeks away!

Can you feel the Momentum building?

Can you be an active participant?

When you're Spring Cleaning, please remember *gently used items and children's clothing* to donate to the Yard Sale tent. (this year's proceeds will help pay for the newly revised math curriculum).

Have you solicited your circles for *items to be donated?*

Have you brought in *your donation?*

Have you spread the good word? Flyers and Street signs are in the office, please consider distributing.

Let us know if we can do anything to assist you in the process...

Here's to another celebratory year and thank you for your contributions!

- * Needs for the Auction: pop up tents and folding tables
- * Go to the website to see the new list and photos of auction items
- * Sign up for Pancake Breakfast/Auction jobs in the hallway: for example, we'll need fruit salad makers for the breakfast.
- * Save good clean items for the Tag Sale. No clothes or electronics, please. You can drop items at the Town Hall on Friday June 1st.

Preschool

Last week the children sprouted sunflower seeds. The first day they ate raw sunflower seeds at snack. Then the remainder of the sunflower seeds were soaked in water overnight. The next morning each plump seed had a tiny white root emerging from its shell. These seeds were served at snack and the children easily opened the now soft shells. The class helped to plant some of the sprouted seeds in the preschool garden. The remainder of the sprouted seeds were planted in containers of soil. The children were excited to see the seeds growing more the next day. They could see the root systems forming through the clear container. Next week the class will help harvest and eat the green sunflower

sprouts. Gardening bead bracelets were started last Friday. To depict the elements needed by a seed to grow, the children strung a yellow bead to represent the sun, a brown bead for soil, a blue bead for water, a clear bead for air, and a bead of their choice for care.

In art class Liz read a *Pete the Cat* book and the children designed, drew and decorated their own cats which are displayed in the hallway. On Friday the class watched their Reading Buddies in the play *Perils of Power*. The children were fascinated by the scenery, the costumes and by watching their older buddies sing, play recorder and act in the play. This week the preschool will hear the story *The Magic Fish* and begin an ocean Theme.

May - June

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
21 8:45 a.m. All School Sing	22 8:45 Reading Buddies	23 4th-6th at Sweetwater Farm 8:45-11:45 8:30 2nd-3rd at new school 9:00 K-1 at Millers River Environmental Center	24 8:45 Reading Buddies 2nd-3rd to Pequot Museum 7:45-4:15	25 gardening soccer
28 NO SCHOOL MEMORIAL DAY	29 8:45 Reading Buddies	30 8:30 a.m. K-1 Theme Share	31 8:30 a.m. 2nd-3rd Theme Share Bring in Auction items K-1 Tully Mtn Hike 1:00-3:00	1 Auction & Breakfast prep at Town Hall Drop off Yard Sale items Town Hall

**SATURDAY June 2nd →
 PANCAKE BREAKFAST AND AUCTION**

We continue our theme of Local Animals with the topic of Bears. We're reading a Cherokee bear legend about how bears descended from a human family who returned to the wild to live in nature. We're also reading *Bears* by Deborah Hodge, which is full of interesting facts including that bears only semi-hibernate in winter and don't fall into a deep sleep. We'll complete our theme with a Theme Share on Wednesday, May 30th at 8:30 a.m. The class will be singing and sharing their work and ideas from the past six weeks.

This Wednesday we're visiting Miller River Environmental Center in Athol to look at their animal and bird collection. Drop off at the center is at 9:00 and pick up is at 11:45.

On Thursday May 31st we'll hike up Tully Mountain in Orange. It's a fun easy hike for this age group with wonderful views from the top. Parents are invited to join us and help transport the class there and back. Please sign and return the attached permission slip.

In phonics Kindergarteners are hearing, saying, and deleting beginning sounds in words such as changing cat to -at and dog to -og. 1st graders are learning that 'c' and 'g' have two sounds, for example cat and city, and get and giant.

The kindergarten math class is subtracting 1, 2 or 3 from a number up to ten. First graders are using a 100 number square to help add and subtract 10's. On Friday afternoon we continue soccer with coach Shannon.

2nd - 3rd Grade

We are getting down to the wire in preparation for our Theme Celebration on May 31 at 8:30 a.m. The children are diligently working to complete their writing projects, the focus of most of our theme and language arts time. In music, they are working on the songs they will perform and continue to work on drums. We did take a break to create our own drums. We used large cans (thank you Great Falls Harvest!) and duct taped the tops. Then the children used tissue paper and Modge Podge to cover the cans. They were encouraged to layer the tissue paper and experiment with shapes and colors. Naturally, the most fun comes when they get to play them.

Last week, the children enjoyed both play rehearsals. They found it interesting to watch two different casts perform the same play. They loved the story and thought everyone did a wonderful job.

In art, the children glazed their spirit animal masks. Then they worked with line and form and created 3-D hands and letters. In music, the children have been practicing the songs that they'll perform during the theme celebration. It's important that they practice recorder for 5 minutes (or more) a night to be ready for the performance.

Third graders are continuing to work on patterns to hold a given number of cubes. They have discovered how it links to multiplication and can give them another visual to help them with their multiplication facts. They'll work on completing designs when given part of it with the number of cubes the box can hold.

On Thursday, we head to the Pequot Museum. If you are leaving from the school, please be there by 7:40 so we can leave promptly at 7:45. This will ensure that we have the time needed to explore the museum. Children need a lunch, water bottle and extra snacks. We'll return to the school by 4:15.

On Wednesday, we'll visit Camp Caravan and visit with Native American elder, Jim Farnham. Drop-off is at 8:30 at the new school building site. Please return the permission slip by tomorrow if you haven't done so already.

This year's play featured two casts, each acting out a script written for half the numbers in the class. Thus, in the following synopsis, the two student names after each character are the actors in the Thursday and Friday performances respectively. The exception is Charlie Savage, who played the bad Duke Baldwin in both productions, since we have an odd number of students in the class. The two-cast experiment worked very well, with the non-speaking half of the class acting as extras for the other half, and the whole class performing various musical interludes together. Both casts produced excellent performances.

This year's play - set in the early Middle Ages - opened in the king's castle in the kingdom of Candor, where the young king Edmund (Fraser McBeth, Richard Amistadi) was lamenting his unpreparedness for the throne, following the early death of his father. His mother, Queen Margaret (Ella Sutton, Aria Malia) had little patience with him, nor with his opposition to war, and told him just to 'man up and rule'. The king's advisor Estef (Lucas Gadway, Michael Casavant) suggested privately that Edmund should disguise himself, and spend time with ordinary people, to learn about his kingdom. With the blacksmith Conrad (Hammie McBeth, Lucian Pierre) as his guide, Edmund headed for the forest. Meanwhile, in the neighboring duchy, Duke Baldwin was over-taxing his starving people, and preparing an army to attack Candor. His recruitment tool was food, since he promised to feed his new soldiers properly. So when the local baker Francis (Violet Malley, Jamie Paquet) petitioned the Duke for extra flour, he got short shrift, despite the objections of the duke's daughter Isabel (Sage Buddington, Safia Pincheira).

When Edmund arrived in the forest incognito, he was regarded with suspicion by Ralph the shoemaker (Chason Ridings, Anthony Kleber). In contrast, Ralph's daughter Joan (Clara Troisi, Emmy Skagerlind) was more welcoming, even though all the forest people were suffering from the demands of Duke Baldwin. Forester Gilbert (Nathaniel Henshaw, Malachi Malia) couldn't understand why the duke was cutting down so many trees until baker Francis reported that Baldwin was building siege towers, in order to attack Candor.

Edmund soon offered to help Rowan Hood (Rhea Sawicki, Velouria Menegoni) who had been stealing food from Duke Baldwin's store, and returning it to the people. Their raids were so successful that Baldwin's steward Malcolm (Ezrah Kurinsky, Sam Connors) was obliged to shorten the rations given to the duke's soldiers, with the result that many of them deserted and hid in the forest.

Things were looking bad for the duke, until he captured Edmund during a food raid. Not recognizing him, the duke and Malcolm wanted to execute Edmund, but Isabel, who had her own agenda, revealed that their captive was actually the king of Candor, and could be ransomed.

Rowan and the foresters had befriended the deserters from the duke's army, and when Isabel met her in the forest they agreed an alliance in which Rowan would persuade the deserters to support Isabel in her bid to overthrow the duke and replace him herself. With Estef they concocted a plan to lure Baldwin into a trap, which required the cooperation of Queen Margaret.

The duke, thinking he held all the cards, agreed to meet Margaret in the forest, where he planned to restore Edmund to the queen in return for the throne of Candor. Unbeknownst to him, however, Isabel had freed Edmund when her father left for the parlay, and the duke was left with no cards to play. Isabel, with an army of former deserters at her back, demanded that the duke step down and when Estef suggested that the duke and Malcolm leave for the crusades, Baldwin reluctantly agreed. Isabel and Edward vowed never to attack each other again, and the play ended with all the forest people looking forward to a rosy future under new and benign rulers.

Don't forget to drop off 4th-6th students at Sweetwater Farm this Wednesday at 8:45 a.m. Please pick them up at the farm at 11:45.