



OUR 24TH YEAR

NEWS FOR THE WEEK OF

November 11, 2013

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



News and Notes

Come to Open House This Saturday from 10 to noon

It's not too late to post flyers - pick them up in the hallway. Invite friends who might be considering the school, especially preschool, for their children. Parents are hosts at the Open House, welcoming guests, baking refreshments and helping with projects in the classrooms. We open our school and our hearts to visitors. There is a sign up sheet in the hallway for food and tasks. It's always a lot of fun, and your children will enjoy it too.

Annual Book Fair Begins Next Monday, Nov. 18

Our annual book fair will begin next Monday. Every family will receive an order form next Monday with the full list of books, including the new 2014 Village School calendar. Books will be displayed in the hallway all next week. Please fill out your order form and return it with a check for the total, to the hallway envelope by 3:15 p.m. on November 22nd.

Save the Date Parent/Teacher Night Out

Wednesday Nov. 20 6 p.m. Get a babysitter and treat yourself to a free night out at the Gardner Ale House, with teachers and staff. Food and drink are on the Ale House.

Annual Fund Update

Thank you to all of you who have responded to the Annual Fund letter. Those who haven't responded yet, please send in your donation or pledge, which will also save Sarah Briggs the task of calling you. Our aim is 100% parent participation.

Sign up your Rewards for Teachers Staples Rewards

If you have a Staples Rewards account, your rewards can be matched and added to your child's teacher's Rewards, and you still get all your Rewards. The teachers then save money on classroom purchases. Check with George and/or Shannon.

Thank you everyone for making the Lantern Walk such a heartwarming and magical event, with a great outpouring of community spirit. It's a treasured experience for the children.

Preschool

Last week the class helped make apple pumpkin cookies by grinding spelt grain, grating the apples and measuring and mixing all the ingredients. The warm, moist cookies were a big hit.

Last Friday was a perfect night for the Lantern Walk and it was good to see everyone there. Singing together, listening to a story by the fire, eating dinner and dancing together made for a magical night for the children.

Today we celebrated Avery's birthday. This week we will be telling the story *One Fine Day* by Nonny Hogrogian. In this story a fox drinks some milk that belongs to an old woman. She be-

comes angry and chops off the fox's tail. The old woman says she will sew it back on as soon as the fox replaces the milk. This story is a good opportunity to talk with the class about anger. Was it right for the old woman to chop off the fox's tail? If not, what else could she have done? It will be interesting to see what ideas the children come up with, based on their experience with conflict resolution.

This Saturday, November 16th is our fall Open House from 10 to noon. We have some spots to fill in the preschool class for next fall, so invite your friends to come and visit us.

November 2013				
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
11 NO SCHOOL VETERANS DAY	12 2nd-6th at Farm School 8:45 to 3:00	13 8:30 a.m. Reading Hour with 4th-6th Parents	14 8:45 Reading Buddies	15 soccer OPEN HOUSE → Saturday 10-12
18 8:45 All School Sing BOOK FAIR ALL WEEK →	19 8:45 Reading Buddies	20 8:30 a.m. K-1 Theme Share 6 p.m. Parent Teacher Ale House Night Out	21 8:45 Reading Buddies	22 4th-6th at M.F.A. Send in Book Fair orders

Kindergarten—1st Grade

This week we continue our Growing theme, looking at a selection of books about growing, what our bodies need, and how to keep healthy. Last week, we read a selection of books about teeth and losing teeth, including *Dr. De Soto* by William Steig, and *One Morning in Maine* by Robert McCloskey. The children drew their own teeth. Trina bought in animal skulls, including a chipmunk, a sheep, a beaver, and a squirrel, so the class could look at animal teeth and sketch the skulls. This week we'll measure the children's height on a growth chart that we'll update throughout the year.

Wednesday Nov. 20th is our Theme Share for parents, when the children will be singing, playing recorder, and sharing their ideas and work from the last ten weeks. You'll be your child's partner for the Theme Share. The morning will begin at 8:30 a.m.

Last week in phonics we looked at the 'p' and 'ch' sounds. This week we are looking at the letters 'u' and 'b'.

In art last week the class made Thanksgiving wall hangings. Each child drew three cards showing what they are thankful for, and decorated them with a mosaic border. The cards were strung together with wool and are displayed in the classroom. They'll go home for Thanksgiving.

The kindergarten is comparing two quantities to see which is larger. Last week they counted the letters in their names and compared the amount of letters in their names to their classmates'. First graders are starting a new *Investigations* unit, *Solving Story Problems*. This week we'll look at number combinations and play addition and subtraction games including *How Many Am I Hiding?* and *Five-in-a-Row*. See the attached math news.

We had a wonderful community Lantern Walk last Friday. It was great to see the K-1 class and their families so happily joining in the event, from the beginning procession to the contra-dancing at the Town Hall.

2nd - 3rd Grade

We started last week with a trip to Plymouth, Massachusetts. Our first stop brought us aboard the Mayflower II where children learned about different parts of the ship and met interpreters (including the ship's captain). We learned that the 102 passengers spent the majority of their time below deck in the dark with their animals. When the children saw the size of the space, they were surprised and wondered how the Pilgrims could get comfortable there. The children loved exploring the ship and liked that the ship was docked in the water.

Next, we made our way to Plimoth Plantation where we visited the Wampanoag Homesite and the English village. We watched a man control a fire as he burned out a *misboon* (canoe). Then we went into a *wetu*, sat by a fire and listened to a woman talk about her ancestors. The children were very attentive and asked great questions. We also watched a woman cook a stew. The children then had an opportunity to grind corn with a very big mortar and pestle. In the English village, the children visited different houses and learned what life was like in 1621. They watched people perform different chores and had fun seeing the insides of the different houses.

It was a wonderful trip—the children did really well and one Plimoth Plantation staff member said that they were the nicest children they had seen in a long time. Thanks to all the chaperones and drivers for helping to make this trip possible.

In reading we begin a study of characters. We will look for clues that authors give us to learn about characters. You can support your child at home by asking questions about the main character in the book he's reading. (How old is the character? What does she like to do? Has he changed at all? What are the names of the characters?)

We finished the week with a magical Lantern Walk. Before we walked out to the fire, the children enjoyed a moment of silence as they stared in awe at their glowing lanterns in the dark classroom. Then we enjoyed the singing and story by the fire--and, of course, had a blast dancing. It was a memorable night.

4th - 6th Grade

We hope to see all the parents this Wednesday at 8:30 a.m. for a special Reading Hour in our classroom. The children will start the morning with a soccer scrimmage, while parents learn ways to support the 4th-6th readers. Then the children will come in to interact with you about reading.

The children's lanterns looked particularly beautiful for last week's Lantern Walk. Renée had come up with a new way of making them, in which the children painted with watercolors on a special, high-grade translucent 'paper'. This formed the body of the lantern, so that the children's designs were softly illuminated from within.

The lanterns are part of a series of watercolor projects in preparation for our visit to the M.F.A. next week, to see watercolors by John Singer Sargent. In next week's art lesson, the children will practice a variety of watercolor techniques, which will develop their own art and, the following day, give them a greater appreciation of the pictures in the exhibition.

Some of the children have now completed the first drafts of their memoirs, and this week and next we will be focusing on ways to extend and develop their stories. The three 6th-graders chose to write memoirs about the class trip to the U.K. in 2012, when they were 4th-graders. They have adopted the idea of writing collaboratively, so that various incidents on the trip will be described in their three different voices. They have taken as their inspiration the excellent book, *Because of Mr. Terrupt*, in which the story is told from the perspective of seven different narrators.

In music the class has been learning the song, *Union Maid*, which led to a long discussion of labor unions, and how and why they developed.

The 6th-grade math group will complete a unit on data this week, and next week will begin a 2D geometry unit. The 5th-graders are continuing to work with a unit on 3D geometry and volume measurement. They have been learning about standard units of volume and will start a project to estimate and measure the volume of the classroom, in both cubic meters and cubic ft.

In next week's science lesson, the three study groups will present their findings about the principal biomes of the western U.S.A.