



OUR 24TH YEAR

NEWS FOR THE WEEK OF

November 4, 2013

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



News and Notes

Come to Parent Group Meeting this Wednesday Nov. 6 8:45 a.m. at Kyra's house, 5 minutes from the school at 4 Stockwell Rd., Royalston. Over coffee, we'll prepare for the Lantern Walk, the Open House and the Book Fair.

About the Lantern Walk This Friday Evening

On this special evening, all families participate in this traditional Village School event and all the children look forward to this.

Important: All children should report to the classrooms by 5:00 p.m. Preschool students go to their class with their parents to pick up their lanterns and then go outside and wait by the fire. K-6th children meet in the classroom (their parents wait outside) and then walk in a singing procession to the playground, holding their lanterns high, to join the preschool children at the fire. Then we enjoy more singing and a seasonal story. After the story, children will walk with parents to the Town Hall for the pot luck dinner and contra dance. The suggested donation at the door is \$10 per family, or \$5 per adult and \$2 per child. Parents are responsible for their children throughout the whole event. We recommend that children and parents dress in layers- it may be cold outside, and very warm at the Town Hall. **About the Lantern Walk Pot Luck:** All parents need to bring a main dish that serves 10-12, such as a meat lasagna, vegetarian lasagna, baked ziti, meat-

balls, or any Italian style dish that is easy to serve and eat. Salad and bread together count as a main dish. For those of you who can't cook, we'll have a collection box for pizza. If you have time, desserts are welcome additions. **Please leave your pot luck Italian dish at the Town Hall before the Lantern Walk,** with a folded card denoting content (meat, vegetarian, spicy, etc.). **Volunteers are needed to organize the kitchen, set tables, prepare the pot luck, and of course, clean up. A sign up sheet is posted in the hallway.** We will all clean up the kitchen before it is all over.

About the contra dance: The contra dance is a Parent-Child dance, for which the K-6 children have been practicing. The older students will lead dances, dance with their parents, and dance with Reading Buddies. Younger children join right in the fun, and love to dance with their parents. The dances are called and are easy to learn. Children who are not dancing are expected to sit with a parent. **Save any carved pumpkins** that are in good shape, for the Lantern Walk, to use as luminaires for the procession. Drop them off on the ramp at the school.

The Fall Open House is Saturday Nov. 16th from 10 a.m. to noon. Parents are hosts for this event. Everyone can help post the flyers, which are coming out soon.

Preschool

The class enjoyed Halloween last week. The children had their faces painted, and then dressed up in capes, fire hats and fancy dresses. The K-1 came in to sing for us. The preschool sang *Five Little Pumpkins* for the K-1 and then went downstairs and sang for the 2nd-3rd and the 4th-6th classes. Thank you to Stashu's family for sending in the clementine "pumpkins" for snack. They went well with our roasted pumpkin seeds.

Last week the children practiced cracking eggs into a bowl for scrambled eggs for snack. Leanne will be making pumpkin cookies with the class this week. Today we walked to the Royalston Library and began putting finishing touches on our lanterns. The children

are learning lantern walk songs which will be sung around the fire on Friday evening. This week we are telling the story *Time to Sleep* by Denise Fleming. This story is about hibernation and has a cast of characters which includes a bear, snail, skunk, turtle, woodchuck and ladybug. Many of our puppets were bought with this story in mind and the class always sits and listens carefully when we put on the puppet show. To prepare for the Lantern Walk on Friday we are reading *Possum's Harvest Moon* by Anne Hunter. We look forward to seeing everyone this Friday evening for the Lantern Walk. Please bring your child to the preschool classroom at 5 p.m. to pick up his or her lantern.

November 2013

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
4 8:45 All School Sing 7:45 a.m. 2 nd -3 rd go to <u>Plimoth Plantation</u>	5 8:45 Reading Buddies	6 8:45 a.m. Parent Group meeting at Kyra's house	7 8:45 Reading Buddies	8 Lantern Walk 5:00 gather at fire 6:00 Potluck Town Hall 6:30 Contradance
11 NO SCHOOL VETERANS DAY	12 2 nd -6 th at Farm School 8:45 to 3:00	13 8:30 a.m. Reading Hour with 4 th -6 th Parents	14 8:45 Reading Buddies	15 OPEN HOUSE →

Kindergarten—1st Grade

Our Growing theme continues this week looking at teeth. The class will be telling some of their own stories about teeth and losing teeth, and we'll read stories about teeth. We're also having a special science lesson about teeth on Wednesday.

Last week in science Trina brought in sprouted sunflower seeds and the children looked at them closely with microscopes and magnifying glasses. They then drew detailed pictures of the seeds in their journals and labeled them. We are sprouting some alfalfa seeds in the classroom for a tasty snack. We have two more weeks left on our Growing theme. We'll finish with a Theme Share on Wednesday November 20th to which all parents are invited. The morning will begin at 8:30 and the class will be singing, playing recorder, and sharing their work and ideas.

In phonics we are looking at the letter 'p' and the 'ch' sound. We'll read and write words that begin with these letters.

Last Friday we went to the Town Hall for a final contra-dance practice. This week we are cutting sticks from the woods to use as handles for the lanterns we are assembling. The Lantern Walk begins this Friday evening at 5:00 with K-1 meeting in the classroom. We'll take our lanterns and walk with the rest of the school, singing lantern songs, to the fire pit where we'll listen to a seasonal story from Rise. Afterwards we'll walk to the Town Hall for an Italian pot luck meal followed by contra-dance. This is a special night for the K-1 children.

Last week the kindergarten math class began comparing classroom objects with their ten-unit measuring stick to see which object was longer and then recorded that information. First graders are continuing their 2D geometry unit. Last week we were solving story problems and worked on making 2-D designs. This week we'll continue describing, comparing, and making shapes.

2nd - 3rd Grade

In our memoir study, we are paying particular attention to how stories begin, good description, and the use of periods, ellipses, and dialogue. The children have a good eye for descriptive passages and especially loved when Donald Crews used onomatopoeia (a word such as *buzz* that is used to indicate sound), in his book, *Shortcut*. The children began brainstorming their own ideas on Wednesday. We will begin to write our own memoirs this week. In reading, the children have been working on decoding strategies. They need to remember that after they've worked on a word, they should go back and read the whole sentence so that they can hear their strong reading voice. They also have a 'tricky word' list in their reading folder or homework log. They should add their tricky words to this list so they can work on them and build their word power.

Last week, we read Halloween stories, heard a scary story and in art, drew our own monster creation, like those featured in Maurice Sendak's *Where the Wild Things Are*. The children learned that he used pen and ink for the drawings and used a cross hatch method. The children then set out to make their own scary and fanciful creatures using the same method.

We finished our scary story unit in Theme. This month, we turn our attention to stories and traditions of thanks. In music, the children are learning all the verses to the song *Pumpkin Town*. The children enjoy using the big drum. One group of children drums, while the other dances and sings in a circle.

Second graders finished the *Shapes, and, Blocks* geometry unit and began a new unit, *Stickers, Number Strings, and Story Problems*. The students enjoyed playing *Beat the Calculator*, trying to add a string of 4 or 5 numbers faster than the calculator. Using our combinations of 10 and our doubles combinations helped us to be faster than the calculator. This week we are playing *Close to 20*. See the instructions with homework so you can play with your child.

Our contra-dance practices have been going well. The children are ready for the Lantern Walk on Friday. Children should be in the classroom by 5:00. Children should dress in layers—it will be cold when we sit by the fire listening to Rise's story, but very warm when dancing.

4th - 6th Grade

Last week the children began planning their own memoirs. As we've been reading a variety of memoirs in the past two weeks, we've been identifying features that make them successful, including having a strong 'set-up' to put the memoir in context, adding interesting detail, expanding beyond the incident itself and including the writer's thoughts and feelings at the time, and in retrospect.

Last Wednesday was our last visit this fall to Sweetwater Farm. We began in a circle with each child reporting one thing they enjoyed about the farm. Animals were among the favorites, as were milking the goats, climbing the apple trees to pick the fruit, making cider, pulling carrots and visiting the herb garden. Many thanks to Ellyse and Nikki for welcoming the children this week, and to Karen Davis for hosting us all year.

In science, the class has been divided into three groups, each of which is researching a different biome in the western United States. Next week each group will give a presentation to the rest of the class.

In math, the 4th graders finished the unit on data. See their surveys hanging on the stairwell walls. They began a new unit, *Multiple Towers and Division Stories*. Ask your child to show you how to break apart larger multiplication problems into smaller manageable pieces, using arrays.

Arrangements are set for the class trip to Washington D.C. in May. Every class member will be attending the trip, so we can prepare for it as a whole class, though not for several months yet! Please return deposit checks to George.

We hope to see all the parents on Wednesday, Nov. 16th, at 8:30 a.m. for a special Reading Hour in our classroom. We'll present ways to support the 4th-6th readers, and then the children will come in to interact with you about reading.

On November 22nd we are visiting the M.F.A. in Boston, mainly to see a special exhibition of watercolors by John Singer Sargent. Please sign and return the attached permission slip. In preparation, Renée has been teaching the children various watercolor techniques, (used on this year's lanterns) which will help them appreciate the paintings they see.

See you at the Lantern Walk this Friday evening.