



OUR 23RD YEAR

NEWS FOR THE WEEK OF

September 16, 2013

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News and Notes

School Photo Day is this Friday, September 20th. Photos are taken here in the school yard by Kirsten Spencer. Individual photos are taken, as well as classroom photos, and an All School photo. Sibling photos will be taken **upon request** - let the office know. **IF you do not want a photo taken of your child, let us know before, to save time.** The proofs will be displayed online for school parents only, accessible with a password. You can then order photo packages of a specific proof using order forms in the hallway. If you don't like them, you don't have to buy them.

Go to www.villageschoolma.org

Parent reminders for the next two weeks are on the left hand side of the home page. Underneath it is the list of upcoming field trips. You can also find the constantly updated monthly calendar on the website. The newsletter is posted there too.

Sunday October 14 Annual Parent Work Day 10-4

The day is set up so parents can drop in anytime and pitch in for a few hours. We'll spruce up the playground, do some indoor painting, work on cleaning projects and more. Parents are needed to 'take on' projects- sign up on the list in the hallway. Child care is provided in the playground and the kids have a lot of fun. This is our big chance to make improvements to our children's environment for the year.

Come to Curriculum Night Sept. 25th K-6th Presentations *Don't* miss your child's teacher's presentation on the curriculum, events and practices for the year. Also, if you are **a parent of a young child at the school**, you may want to attend any or all of the presentations to learn about the unique challenging curriculum. If you can't get a babysitter, sign up in the hallway for babysitting at the school. Here are the times: 5:45: K-1st 6:30: 2nd-3rd 7:15: 4th-6th

Don't Miss the Garlic and Arts Festival! Oct. 5th & 6th Parent volunteers are needed for the Village School tent. We offer a woodworking project for children. It's a lot of fun. Bring your kids. The sign up sheet will be posted in the hallway.

Please keep snipping your Box Tops for Education and put them in the labeled box in the hallway. They are due to be sent off next month. For every box top you clip and return, the Village School receives 10 cents. It really does add up.

All School Sing

The current song sheet is always posted on the board just outside the office. Take it home, and have your children teach you the songs!

Donations of farm fresh local eggs are always welcomed by the Preschool, to be cooked for snack once a week.

Preschool

Last Friday we had our first yoga class with Alijah's mother, Loren. During the 20 minute class, the preschoolers were butterflies, frogs, trees and teapots. After yoga, the children finished painting their snack napkins and put them in the sun to dry. They acted out *The Three Billy Goats Gruff* enthusiastically on the ramp. This week our story is *The Three Little Pigs* so there will a lot of huffing and puffing going on.

Today we walked to the Royalston Library to begin our twice monthly visits. Librarian Paula (Stashu's mother) reads the class a book and then each child chooses a book for our class library.

This Thursday Renee will teach art to the class. Renee will visit our classroom every other Thursday throughout the school year introducing the class to different art media such as clay, collage and wet on wet watercolor.

On Friday, September 27th the Preschool visits Red Apple Farm in Phillipston. Please sign and return the attached permission slip.

Leanne and Kim always welcome donations of local fresh eggs to be cooked for snack.

September 2013				
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
16 8:45 All School Sing	17 8:45 Reading Buddies Music Classes	18 K-1 to Sweetwater Farm drop off 9:00 Pick up 11:30	19 8:45 Reading Buddies Art classes	20 School Photo Day Yoga K-6th Hiking
23 8:45 All School Sing Spanish	24 8:45 Reading Buddies Music Classes Harvest Morning Children should dress for getting dirty!	25 K-1 at Maggie's Farm CURRICULUM NIGHT 5:45 K-1st 6:30 2nd-3rd 7:15 4th-6th	26 8:45 Reading Buddies All School Roast Potato Snack Art classes	27 Preschool at Red Apple Farm Yoga K-6th Hiking

Kindergarten—1st Grade

We continue our *Growing* theme this week with the story *The Tree That Grew Through the Roof*, retold by Thomas Berger. This picture book is about an old couple who tend an acorn that eventually grows up through their house into the sky above. We'll find out what happens on the day the old man climbs the tree.

The class began bringing in items for theme share including an avocado pit in water, a snake skin, a flower, and a fern. Check the list on the class notice board for your child's theme share day.

We visited the garden last week with Rise who explained about different types of corn and then we harvested the Indian flint corn. The corn will dry in the classroom before grinding it in a few months to make delicious corn bread. In science last week, Trina brought in grasshoppers for the class to observe and draw. She then read some passages from the book *On the Banks of Plum Creek* by Laura Ingalls Wilder which describes a swarm of locusts descending on home and crops. The class did some wonderful detailed drawings of the grasshoppers.

Last Thursday in art we made clay pinch pot cups that we'll be using for our drinking cups at snack time. This week in art we'll be working on self portraits. We had another great hike down to Lawrence Brook last Friday with the whole school. Parents are welcome to join us on the Friday hikes.

This Wednesday we are visiting Sweetwater Farm in Petersham, where we'll be exploring the farm, including visiting the garden, the orchard, and the animals. Drop off at the farm is at 9:00 and pick up is at 11:30.

The kindergarten math group is exploring materials including pattern blocks, geoblocks and buttons. Please see the attached math letter to learn more. First graders are on the *Investigations* unit *How Many of Each?* This week we'll practice addition, and play *Roll and Record* and *Five in a Row*.

On Wednesday, September 25th, we'll visit The Farm School and Maggie's Farm in Orange for the morning. Please sign and return the attached permission slip.

2nd - 3rd Grade

Last week, we continued working on community building skills by practicing our morning greeting, playing games, and learning the classroom routines. We are working on creating a set of agreed upon rules for our class. On Fridays, Lindsey has been teaching games that the children can play at recess. In one game, the children had to work together as geese to steal an egg from the fox (Lindsey), without her seeing them. It involved freezing when she looked, and working together to make sure she didn't see the person with the 'egg' once it was stolen.

Our Friday hikes have been a wonderful way to end the week. The children are happy to play along the river and in the woods. We were greeted with a surprise at Lawrence Brook this year—the beavers have been busy and there is an impressive dam there, which was breached by last week's heavy rains. We will continue hiking for the next few weeks.

We launched our reading program. For now, children are working with partners and learning how to choose 'just right' books. We are off to a promising start. The children settled in quietly with their books and read diligently. The children have colored folders which they will use to carry their 'just right' books to and from home. Please help your child build a successful routine at home for reading. Help her find a quiet place to read, the right time of day to read, and a good system for remembering to bring her book back to school in her book bag.

Last week the children worked on memorizing a poem and were sent home with a copy of their poems. Tomorrow, the children will recite their poems in front of the class. This week we'll begin crafting our own poems. In theme, we have learned about the role of a talking stick in Native American culture. This week, we'll create a class talking stick and individual ones. Children should bring in items such as feathers and beads to put on their talking sticks.

Please keep an eye out for homework folders and logs coming home in book bags later this week. So far, math and reading are the only consistent homework that is going home. Next week, handwriting will be added.

4th - 6th Grade

We've made a great start with our new theme, *The American West*. This week we're taking a brief look at how the United States grew from thirteen disparate colonies into a united nation, before going into more detail about early moves westward.

We'll be mapping the Northwest Territory, which stretched from the land that became Ohio across to modern Minnesota. It also included Wisconsin, the location of the first book in the *Little House* series. We spent much of our time last week in reading and discussing *The Little House in the Big Woods*, to launch us into the whole theme. Next week we'll be learning more about the Lewis and Clark expedition, and how the United States purchased 'Louisiana' from France.

We are also beginning a unit on poetry this week. The children will be taking home poetry books and choosing poems that appeal to them. They will practice them at home and then read them to the whole class. We will discuss how to read poetry well, and practice the necessary skills. After the children have heard and discussed a large number of poems, they will begin writing their own poetry in a couple of weeks' time.

Our science lessons this year have been extended to ninety minutes, and last Tuesday the class made good use of the extra time. Everyone had time to study a number of tree samples under a microscope and to calculate the ages, as well as learning about photosynthesis. The children were very excited by the work and, of course, they also used the microscopes to examine their own hair and skin, and anything else they could fit under the lens.

Last Wednesday we visited Sweetwater Farm for the first time this year, and it was a pleasure to see how at home the children feel there. It was an unseasonably hot day, but they engaged very well in a range of jobs, including sorting apples for the cider press, weeding the vegetable rows and mucking out the goat pen. We also found time for everyone to try milking one long-suffering nanny goat.