



January 31, 2025

PRINCIPAL - SARA ROSE

# Monthly Newsletter

## Get Cozy With a Good Book, or Two!

Dear Families,

As we move deeper into the winter months and the excitement of the holiday season fades, I wanted to take a moment to talk about something near and dear to my heart: the joy of reading.

Here at school, we work hard to foster a love of books and stories in our students. But as much as we emphasize reading during the school day, the foundation for a lifelong love of reading is often built at home.

Research shows that when children read regularly outside of school, it has a profound impact on their academic success and overall development. Whether it's curling up with a picture book before bed or reading aloud to a younger sibling, the time spent reading at home helps build vocabulary, comprehension skills, and creativity—skills that benefit our students both inside and outside the classroom.

So, how can we encourage this love of reading at home?

**Create a Cozy Reading Nook:** Whether it's a small corner with a blanket and pillows, or just a quiet spot at the kitchen table, having a designated reading area can make a big difference. Make it inviting and comfortable for your child to settle in with a good book.

**Be a Reading Role Model:** Children often follow the example set by the adults around them. If they see you reading—whether it's a

book, a magazine, or even an article online—they're more likely to see reading as an enjoyable and valuable activity. **Visit the Local Library:** Our local library is a wonderful resource, and it's more than just a place to borrow books. Many libraries offer free story times, activities, and special events that can help spark a child's love for reading. Plus, it's always exciting to pick out books that your child is eager to read themselves.

**Read Aloud Together:** Even if your child is already reading on their own, reading aloud together is a powerful tool. It's a great way to bond, and it allows you to share stories that may be a bit too advanced for them to read alone. Don't be afraid to pause to ask questions or discuss the story.

**Let Your Child Choose the Books:** Giving your child the power to pick the books they're interested in can help foster excitement for reading. Whether it's a book about animals, adventure, or even comic books, letting them follow their passions will encourage them to read more. **Make It Fun:** Reading doesn't have to be a structured activity! Play games with words, create stories together, act out your favorite books, even singing silly songs promotes literacy. The goal is to make reading something enjoyable and natural, not a chore.

Reading should always be something fun and enjoyable, not just a task to check off. When we, as parents and educators, encourage children to read for the sheer joy of it, we are setting them up for success

### In this newsletter you can expect:

Get Cozy With a  
Good Book, or  
Two!

Project Block  
Update

Upcoming  
Dates

Essential Arts  
News

Winter at  
Westshire:  
Photo Gallery

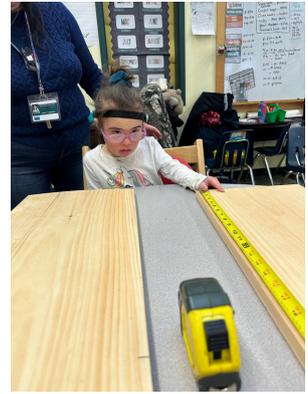
Local  
Happenings and  
Resources

—not just in school, but throughout their lives. Together, we can help our students develop a love of reading that lasts a lifetime.

Thank you for all you do to support your child's education. If you ever need any book recommendations or have questions about how to help your child develop as a reader, please don't hesitate to reach out.

Wishing you and your family cozy reading moments in the days ahead!

Warmly,



## Project Block Update:

The halls are alive with the sound of projects! Every class is currently engaged in a project, bringing deeper learning to all Westshire students.

Preschool is "reading around Vermont", Kindergarten is working on a project to help acquire and manage recess equipment. First grade is engaging with games in the hopes of creating their own math games. Second and third grade are learning about the importance of bats in our ecosystems and fourth and fifth grade just launched an international project where they become an expert on a country of

their choosing!

Each grade is engaging in deep, authentic learning and will be sharing what they learn, build and create!

We would like to share deep gratitude for community members who have jumped in to support these projects!

If you'd like to know more about your child's project and how you can help, feel free to reach out.



### February:

- 2/5 100th Day of School
- 2/6, 2/13 & 2/20 Winter Program/Ski Program
- 2/6 & 2/13 Running Water Trip (Winter Program)
- 2/18 Beautiful Words Family Literacy Night
- 2/21 CLiF Book Giveaway (in school)
- 2/22 Vershare Snowshoe-a-thon
- 2/24 - 2/28 February Break, No School

### March:

- 3/3 - 3/7 Upper Valley Circus Residency
- 3/7 Circus Showcases (K-3 @ 2:30, 4/5 @ 5:30)
- 3/14 Student Led Conferences - No School
- 3/15 Annual District Meeting



## Beautiful Words Night

Did you know that Westshire is writing a book this year! As part of the CLiF grant, we have chosen "literacy dollars" as one of our perks. We will work together to write a book around one theme and plan to get the book published!

We want to kick off this writing journey with all of you on **Tuesday, February 18th!** Join us for "Beautiful Words" Night from 5:30-6:30pm.

Details and RSVP to follow!



PHYS ED With *Mrs. Claflin*



VISUAL & PERFORMING ARTS With *Mrs. Libby*

Students rocked their winter concert! Thanks for coming out to support them and all their hard work.



LIBRARY With *Mrs. Wise*

CLiF awarded us the opportunity to engage with two authors over the last two months. Marek Bennett joined us for a 3-day writing workshop where students tried their hand at writing graphic novels.

Jason Chin, who grew up locally, shared his journey into becoming a non-fiction author and illustrator.



STEAM With *Mrs. DeSimone*

**Got recycles?  
Save them for STEAM!**

Mrs. DeSimone is collecting recycle items for class projects:

- paper towel and toilet paper tubes
- lightweight boxes (from cereal, granola bars, pasta...)
- larger cardboard boxes

Please make sure all donations are empty, clean, and free of crumbs



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# Winter at Westshire

Merek Bennett teaches us the fine art of creating and publishing graphic novels



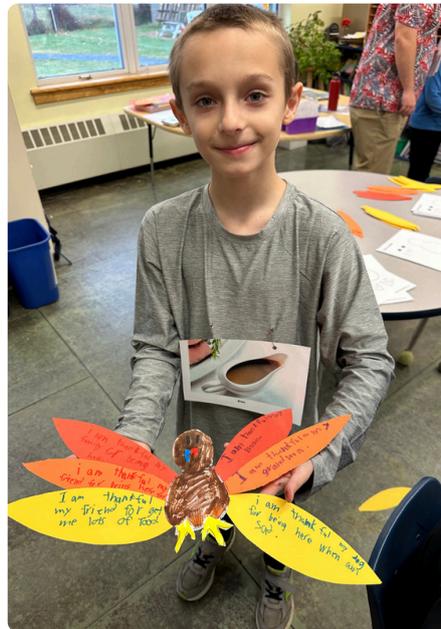
Snow Buster stops by for a visit! See more about our adopted plow, Snow Buster, below.



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# Winter at Westshire

Sleet and freezing rain didn't stop our first annual Westshire Turkey Trot!



More project based learning fun! Check out our 2nd and 3rd graders building for bats!



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# Winter at Westshire

The beloved Giving Gallery!



Everybody Wins Vermont Reading Buddies!



Fourth and Fifth Graders in STEAM



## Local Buzz: What's happening in the Upper Valley?



## Rivendell Rec News:

**Rip-Up Basketball Tournament is coming up tonight!**  
**Jan. 31st - Feb. 2nd**

(see flyer below)

[rivendellrec@gmail.com](mailto:rivendellrec@gmail.com)



*Thank you for your continued support!*

## Meet Snow Buster!



Westshire adopted a VT-AOT snowplow! We named the truck "Snow Buster". You can follow Snow Buster around as the snow falls and our plow arrives on the scene. Follow this link to keep up with Snow Buster's snowy escapades! Give a wave when you see our plow go by!

[Find My Plow](#)

## Food Access:

Follow the links below for more information



**Thetford  
Vermont**



<p><b>WESTSHIRE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL</b></p>	<p>802-333-4668  <a href="mailto:westshire@rivendellschool.org">westshire@rivendellschool.org</a></p>
<p><a href="https://vtwestshirees.schoolinsites.com/">https://vtwestshirees.schoolinsites.com/</a></p>	<p>744 VT. Route 113          West Fairlee, VT 05043</p>

# RIP UP RIVENDELL BASKETBALL TOURNAMENT

HOSTED BY THE  
RIVENDELL REC

GRADE 3&4 BOYS AND  
GIRLS TEAMS AT SME  
1/31, 2/1, & 2/2

GRADE 5&6 GIRLS AT  
RIVENDELL MIDDLE SCHOOL  
2/1 & 2/2

GRADE 5&6 BOYS AT  
RIVENDELL HIGH SCHOOL  
2/1 & 2/2

## SUPPORT!

COME CHEER ON YOUR  
TEAM!

THIS IS THE REC'S LARGEST FUNDRAISER  
AND WE NEED YOUR HELP

DONATE BY VENMO (@RIVENDELL-  
REC) OR CONTRIBUTE ITEMS TO  
SELL (WATER, GATORADES, CANDY)

## ADMISSIONS

General:

\$5/day, \$12/3 days, or \$10/wkd

Seniors:

\$3/day or \$5/tournament

Kids & Students are free

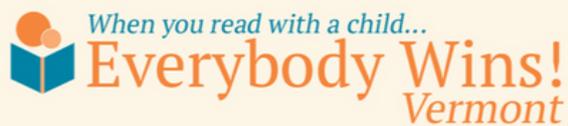


PURCHASE  
RIVENDELL APPAREL

## THANK & SUPPORT OUR SPONSORS

Shaws, Walmart, BradyPLUS, Wing's Market, Lui Lui, Ben & Jerry's, Kinney Drugs, Hannford, Price Chopper, Co-op Food Stores, Wells River Savings Bank, Mascoma Savings Bank, A Small Indulgence, Cold Hollow Cider, BJ's, Colatina Exit, Montshire Farms, Percy Nott, all the families who have donated items and food

QUESTIONS: REACH OUT TO RIVENDELLREC@GMAIL.COM



Celebrating Mentors at Westshire Elementary

January is National Mentoring Month and **Everybody Wins! Vermont** would like to celebrate all the amazing mentors and mentees that we have at Westshire school! This year we have seven mentees in second and third grade that meet with their mentors for an hour each week during lunch and recess on Wednesdays.

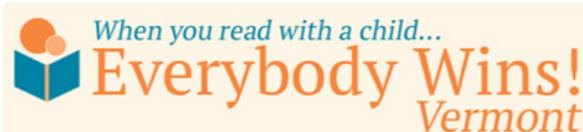
Each week they gather to connect through reading and playing games. Several mentoring pairs have been together since last year while others have just been paired this year. New mentors and mentees continue to be matched. Everybody Wins! hopes to expand the mentoring program to include more kids as mentors become available. For more information about Everybody Wins! or if someone you know would like to be a mentor, please visit our website at <https://everybodywinsvermont.org/> or email Westshire Site Coordinator, Nancy at [westshire@everybodywinsvermont.org](mailto:westshire@everybodywinsvermont.org)

Thank you for spreading the word!

## Meet the Mentors

Pizza and Games w/Everybody Wins Mentors

March 20th from 5 - 6:30pm



Everybody Wins! Vermont is a statewide reading mentoring program. Here at Westshire, we currently have 7 children read with their mentors every week throughout the school year.

In honor of National Mentoring Month, Everybody Wins! is raffling off a gorgeous quilt made and donated by Claremont coordinator Toni Williams. The drawing is Friday February 14th.

Tickets are \$5 each and 5 for \$20, available online: <https://bit.ly/QuiltRaffle25>

A photo of the quilt and more information can be found at the above link.

Funds raised through the quilt raffle support children and mentors around the state.

Thank you, and good luck!



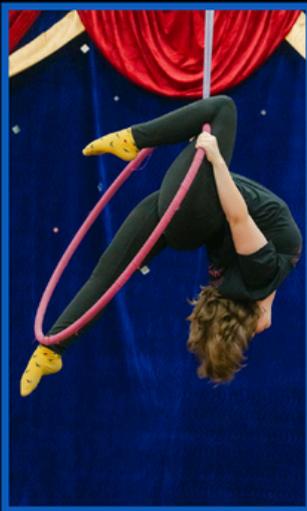
UPPER VALLEY CIRCUS COLLECTIVE



THETFORD ELEMENTARY  
THETFORD, VT

February 24 - 28  
Ages 8-18

Register Now!  
for  
WINTER CAMP  
at  
[www.uvcircus.com](http://www.uvcircus.com)



It's the most fun you will have all  
winter...**GUARANTEED!**

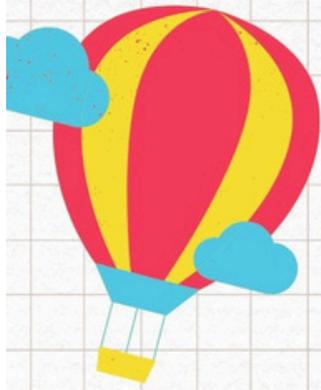
A decorative border of various shades of red and pink hearts surrounds the central text area.

**WEST FAIRLEE PUBLIC LIBRARY  
INVITES YOU TO**

**VALENTINE'S  
DAY CRAFTS  
&  
BINGO WITH  
PRIZES**

**7TH FEBRUARY | 3:00-4:30 PM**

*Refreshments Provided*



RIVENDELL EARLY  
CHILDHOOD PRESCHOOL  
**PRESCHOOL**  
**ENROLLMENT**

Rivendell Early Childhood Program is a high-quality preschool program designed to provide a strong foundation for children's learning and development.

**3-5**

YEARS  
OLD  
BEFORE  
SEPT. 1ST

**PROGRAM FEATURES :**

- Developmental curriculum
- Play-based learning
- Outdoor play



**ENROLL NOW**

**MONDAY TO FRIDAY**

Contact

Heidi Nichols, Westshire School, 802-333-4668

[hnichols@rivendellschool.org](mailto:hnichols@rivendellschool.org)

Ashley Bean, Samuel Morey School, 802-333-9755,

[abean@rivendellschool.org](mailto:abean@rivendellschool.org)



# VERSHARE

## SNOWSHOE-A-THON

### FEB 22, 2025



"Snow Family"

Artwork by Stella T., Grade 3

## Vershire Town Center

Registration starts at 9:30am

Free winter fun & community Lunch

Snowshoes available to borrow!

For more details & to register, visit [VerShare.org](https://www.vershare.org)

All donations benefit the VerShare Free Summer camp!



# A WANDER IN THE WOODS

CREATIVE WRITING CONTEST  
FOR ELEMENTARY STUDENTS

*Opportunity for  
your students to  
be published in  
a real book*

*Motivate your  
students to write  
with exciting  
story starters*



**A WANDER IN THE WOODS** gives your students the opportunity to fall in love with story writing.

From tales about nature or the supernatural to a recount, you can adapt it to all abilities and link with your current class project.

Writing a mini saga (a story told in 100 words) removes the fear of extended writing and you'll be amazed at the quality, engagement and excitement it creates. The woodland scene naturally leads students to write using imagery and atmosphere, fires up imaginations and will inspire them to write about something they find exciting.

Let's get your school buzzing about creative writing today!



## IT'S EASY TO TAKE PART...

1. Use the graphic organizers - copy/download as many as you need from [www.youngwritersusa.com/contest/wander25](http://www.youngwritersusa.com/contest/wander25)
2. Students write their mini sagas, include their name & age and hand in to you
3. Mail your entries, along with your teacher entry form (found on reverse of letter & online)

Young Writers Wander  
77 Walnut Street  
Unit 11  
Peabody, MA, 01960

## OR GO PAPERLESS!

With **one** of these options...

- \* Upload at [www.youngwritersusa.com/new-uploader](http://www.youngwritersusa.com/new-uploader)
- \* Email to [contests@youngwritersusa.com](mailto:contests@youngwritersusa.com)
- \* Use the Online Writing Portal (can be used in lessons or for homework) at [www.youngwritersusa.com/teachers](http://www.youngwritersusa.com/teachers)

## PRIZES FOR SCHOOLS

### Young Writers' Award of Excellence

**PLUS** a free copy of the book your students feature in.

The more entries you send, the more free books you'll receive! See our website for further details.

## PRIZES FOR

Our favorite **3** writers will each win a fantastic creative writing goody bag!



The goody bag contents may differ to photo.

**PLUS** every entrant receives a bookmark for taking part. Students chosen for publication also receive a certificate.

(The school & student winners will be chosen from the entries received in Jan-Feb 2025 and prizes awarded the following semester.)



## EXCITING FREE RESOURCES AVAILABLE ONLINE

- \* **Video** to get your students intrigued and excited
- \* **Example stories** featuring previous winners
- \* **Lesson plan** with 4 levels of differentiation
- \* **Story mountain** planning sheet
- \* **Slide deck** to complement the lesson plan
- \* **Story starters** to kick-start ideas

All available at [www.youngwritersusa.com/contest/wander25](http://www.youngwritersusa.com/contest/wander25)



# CLOSING DATE: FEBRUARY 21, 2025

WEST FAIRLEE PUBLIC LIBRARY

# NEIGHBORHOOD FOREST GIVING TREES TO CHILDREN

Sign up for a free tree by  
March, 15th 2025



<https://www.neighborhoodforest.org/parent-registration/?school=78804>



**EARTH DAY 2025**