

The

INKWELL

NEWSLETTER OF THE

WEBUTUCK COUNTRY SCHOOLHOUSE ASSOCIATION

Fall 2007

Vintage Baseball Game is a Winner!

This summer's vintage Base Ball game turned out to be a base-clearing success – from the happy crowd enjoying a perfect August day to a lively game that gave a heartening boost to the schoolhouse coffers.

Several hundred people lined the Maplebrook School ball field above Indian Rock Schoolhouse in bleachers and lawn chairs to watch the Hartford Senators play the Roxbury Nine.



The exhibition from the past featured equipment and rules of the 1890's.

Game announcements and by-play with the crowd by a costumed suffragette added nostalgic color to the event. A hometown touch was added to the game when the Hartford team drafted local John Rooney for the day to fill the position of a missing player.

As well as having the new Baseball Booklet for sale (see page 7), there were sunbonnets and straw hats, peanuts, hot dogs and hamburgers, sodas and the (now) world -famous Amenia Cookbook. The Bank of Millbrook provided free water to all the fans.

The town favorite, Joe McEnroe threw out the first pitch – much to the delight of the crowd. Many have asked that Indian Rock repeat the event next year... especially those who missed the fun and excitement this year.

Summer Sundays – Activities for Everyone

Indian Rock welcomed many visitors this summer to workshops and a concert. The activities were all free – even the Ice Cream Social!



Eliza Jenkins did make that birdhouse all by herself



Helen Avakian and friends sing for the crowd at Indian Rock



Janet Burke shops for her family at the tag sale



Mrs Farr-Killmer and a friend paint folk art on wood

Trunk Exhibits... for seniors too!

With funds donated in memory of Kay Kane, the last one-room school teacher in the area, and a generous donation made by the Webutuck PTA Indian Rock's efforts to bring local history to the classrooms of the Webutuck School District with a the trunk exhibition program has been established. Better known as "Trunk Shows," the two trunks already completed illustrate how people lived long ago by presenting a trunk full of memorabilia, photos, books, clothing and games. "It is refreshing to hear about the history we remember from somebody else!" commented Marcella Butts, a long-time resident of Wassaic.



Now as popular with adults as with children, the first show, "A Visit to the One-room Schoolhouse" has been seen by both elementary and secondary children in public and private schools.



Senior lunch at the Wassaic Firehouse September 27...the first trunk show for seniors

The second show on freedom quilts is already on the road and will be exhibited at the Northeast Historical Society and Maplebrook School next month. The children in the afterschool program last year at the NorthEast Community Center not only filled the trunk with books on the freedom quilts, sewing supplies and quilt patterns, but actually made a quilt themselves for the exhibit. Meanwhile, the students at Kildonan School are planning a 5th grade social studies trunk on Westward Expansion in America to share with other children and adults.

If your group, no matter what the age or ability level, would like to borrow a trunk, please contact Joan Murphy at 845-373-8258 or e-mail us at IndianRockschool@aol.com.

The Schoolhouse Garden grows



Children in the garden planting seeds with Rudy last spring

The Three Sisters garden, planted by first- and second-graders from Amenia Elementary School and fifth-graders from Eugene Brooks Elementary School, produced a good stand of sweet corn, a spread of squash and pumpkin vines, and a colorful border of annuals.

Planted in the old tradition of the Native Americans, the garden includes three kinds of plants that grow well together: the beans that grow up the corn, and the squash and pumpkin vines that shelter the soil, retaining moisture. They were known as “The Three Sisters.”

But the garden also yielded thriving weeds and a few lessons for next year.

The weeds, which crowded out the sister beans, indicated the need for enlistment of a

small weed corps for next year and the use of mulch. Rudy Eschbach, master of the garden, said, “All we need is a couple of volunteers who can spend an hour or so a week. They can make a big difference.” If you would like to help out in the garden please e-mail him at rngesbach@mohawk.net or send us a letter at PO Box 172, Amenia, NY 12501

Another change planned is to have the children start the seeds in pots in the classroom and then transplant the zinnias and marigolds seedlings when the last danger of frost is past.

In an effort to encourage “participatory membership,” this year’s renewal form asks for your help on one of the Schoolhouse Association’s committees listed on page 5.

Lend a Hand... and share your skills with children

GROUNDS AND GARDENS

(Chairs: Rudy Eschbach and Andy Durbridge)

Our partner, Maplebrook School, mows the lawn for us, but there is much more to be done!

Arbor Day is a big occasion at the Indian Rock Schoolhouse just as it was in the olden days. The students from the first and second grades at the Amenia Elementary School come to visit, plant a tree with Pine Cone Pete, work in the Three Sisters school garden with Rudy, have a lesson in the one-room schoolhouse with Miss Murphy and maybe a music lesson with Margie O'Brien. They bring a picnic lunch and play some games. On that special day we always need volunteers to help pass out seeds, plant flowers, lead a nature walk around the grounds or bring cookies for the children – now an Arbor Day tradition.

During the summer, when the children are on vacation, volunteers are asked to check on the garden, trees and hedgerow, renew the mulch, trim or replace plants and perhaps put up some deer deterrent pieces of soap! There is also watering and weeding around the trees and checking the flower containers.

SPECIAL PROJECTS

We are working toward becoming certified by the National Wildlife Federation as a “Wildlife Schoolyard.”

We will be planting hedgerow bushes on Saturday, October 20 at 10 am with Andy. Please bring a shovel and give us a hand! Raindate: October 21. For info call 845-373-8338.

PROGRAM COMMITTEE

(Chairs: Joan Murphy and Tilly Strauss)

This committee is the perfect way for retired teachers and folks who have lots of good ideas to help Indian Rock. The group plans the Summer Sundays activities, organizes and collects items for the Trunk Shows, and all winter long takes the trunks to classrooms, organizations and Senior groups. If you like people, this is the perfect committee for you!

For more information on any of these committees, call the chairmen, or write to us: PO Box 172, Amenia, NY 12501, e-mail:IndianRockschool@aol.com.

PUBLICITY

(Chairs: John Quinn and Ann Linden)

Indian Rock School has a quarterly newsletter – e-mail or hardcopy. Folks who can take photos, write articles, maintain an address/email database or distribute copies to libraries and schools are always welcome on this committee. If you can write press releases, produce a newsletter or know how to design a website and be its Webmaster then we want you!

FUNDRAISING

(Chairs: Roger Fazzino and Tilly Strauss)

Brainstorm ideas for the two or three large fundraisers Indian Rock has every year. These participatory events reflect 19th century life and history (farm market, civil war, vintage baseball) and are appealing to all ages. Find donors and grant sources for larger projects.

CONSTRUCTION

(Chair: Julian Strauss)

The restoration of the schoolhouse and construction of the pavilion were largely the work of this committee. Now the group works on smaller construction projects and repairs. This is an on-call committee.

MEMBERSHIP

(Chair: Jenn Scully)

Help with mailings, database and membership letters and communications. Find organizations and businesses that might want to join as a group and have a particular function or run an event at the schoolhouse.

LONG TERM PLANNING

(Chairs: Roger Fazzino and Ann Linden)

The Indian Rock School strategic plan is in the works... a plan to define what the school will be in the future and how to get there. Planning can also involve future financial security and board recruitment.

School grounds landscaping underway

Money has been approved by the Indian Rock Schoolhouse Board for planting a stretch of the hedgerow fronting the school this fall.

Andy Durbridge, who is guiding the school grounds landscaping, explained that the bushes and shrubs, supplementing the Arbor Day trees already planted, will provide cover and nesting for birds and small wildlife. “A variety of native species, including some having berries, has been selected to require low maintenance, thereby avoiding plant health problems,” he said. To clear the way for future Arbor Day tree plantings, a layout of the school grounds parking lot is being drafted.

So far the new plantings include flowering crab apple trees and last year’s four evergreens. Volunteers are “winterizing” the young trees to protect them from foraging deer.

An interesting discussion of trees to be selected in upcoming years for Arbor Day celebrations centered on a program “Saving the American Elm” and a project to bring back the American Chestnut. Both of these efforts would be interesting to schoolchildren.

The American Elm, once common to many towns and woodlands across the country, was almost wiped out by a parasitic fungus from Asia known as the Dutch Elm Disease. The development of a disease-resistant variety has now provided the means of returning the shapely American Elm to our landscape. A number of nursery sources today offer the disease-resistant elm saplings.

Another tree being considered for future planting is the American Chestnut. The American Chestnut Foundation has conducted a research and breeding project which is expected to make available a blight-resistant American chestnut tree within the next decade.



Students, parents, teachers and Pine Cone Pete gather on Arbor Day to plant an evergreen tree.

January "Dues Month" for all Schoolhouse Association members

As we are re-structuring membership and getting new members daily, we are working to make membership easier. A plan is in place to have a universal dues date. **That means that all members renew and pay their dues at the same time each year, in January.**

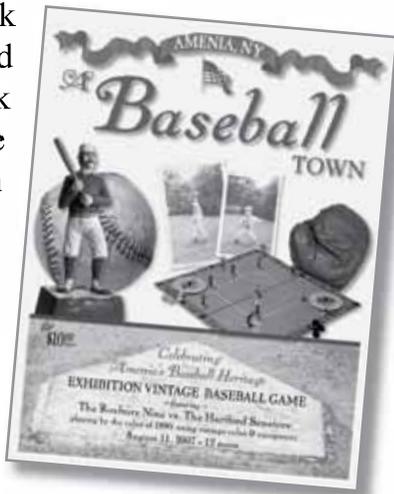
You will receive a letter in the mail soon explaining how the changes will work. Whether you renew or join for the first time you will receive a new membership card for 2008, which will be a different color from the 2007 card. The membership cards worked well for the discount on admission into the Baseball game in late August.

We appreciate your help with this universal dues date project, and your support of Indian Rock School. We look forward to seeing you at our Schoolhouse soon.

Jenn Scully, Membership Chair
845-373-8191

Baseball Booklets still available

"Amenia, A Baseball Town" stirred considerable interest both at the game, a subsequent Tri-State League Old Timers' game, and from townspeople generally. The book contains articles and photos going back over a century of the national pastime in our town. Proceeds will benefit local history projects at Indian Rock Schoolhouse.



ORDER FORM

Name _____

Address _____

Town, State, Zip _____

Qty. _____ @ \$12.50 ea. Total enclosed \$ _____

(includes \$2.50 S&H)

Mail this form with your check made payable to WCSA to:

WCSA-Indian Rock Schoolhouse
PO Box 172, Amenia, NY 12501

Please allow 2-3 weeks for delivery

BOOKS CAN ALSO BE PURCHASED AT:

Rooney Design Group, Freshtown Plaza, Amenia
Oblong Books & Records, Millerton

Indian Rock School MEMBERSHIP FORM

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

E-mail _____

New Membership Renewal

Classmate/Individual \$15

Dick, Jane & Spot/family \$25

Teacher's Pet \$100 Lifelong Learner \$500

Additional tax-deductible donation \$ _____

Total Enclosed: \$ _____

I would love to lend a hand with:

__ Grounds & Gardens __ Arbor Day __ Publicity

__ Program Committee __ Trunk Exhibits

__ Newsletter __ Fundraising __ Construction

__ Membership __ Long-Term Planning

Checks should be payable to "WCSA" & mailed to:

Indian Rock Schoolhouse
PO Box 172
Amenia, NY 12501

Indian Rock Schoolhouse Association
PO Box 172
Amenia, NY 12501



The new schoolhouse sign was designed and created by Rooney Design Group and Red Hen Signs. It was given by an anonymous donor.

The new hedgerow along the front fence should add even more to the appearance of Indian Rock.



School Calendar for Fall 2007

Saturday, October 13

INDIAN ROCK hosts the closing reception of the Dutchess County Historical Society's Road Rallye at the pavilion from 3-4 pm.

Members of the Schoolhouse Association are invited to bring some cookies and meet historical society folks from around the county.

Saturday, October 20

Help plant the new hedgerow for wildlife inside the front fence of the schoolgrounds. Mulch and put protection around the trees the children planted on Arbor Day.

Meet at the schoolhouse with a shovel at 10 am. Raindate is Sunday, October 21. Call 845-373-8338 for info.