

Roxbury Newsy

Your community newsletter

January-March 2019, Vol. 4 No. 1

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PHOTO CONTRIBUTED, CIRCA JANUARY 1943

The road leading to Paul Wehr's childhood home, showing a sled, a sleigh and a wagon for travel to town.

Back to the Past in Roxbury

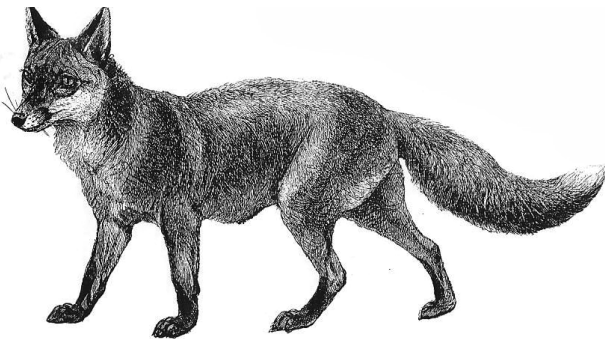
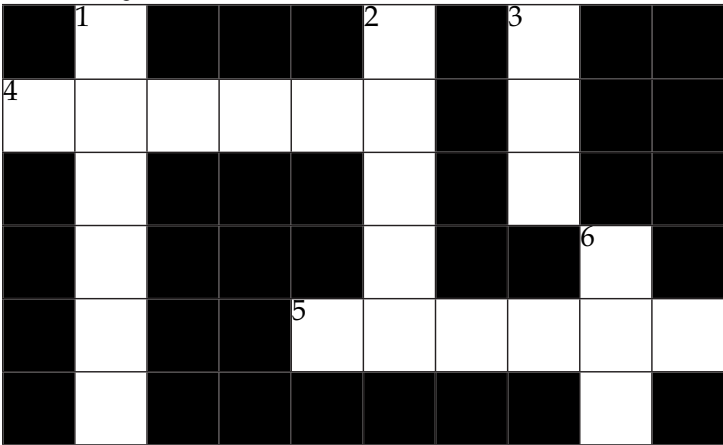
By Jane Pincus

If you've ever wanted to know in detail what it was like to live a mile up a hill in Roxbury, VT, from 1942 to 1944, and then to live in town for another few years, read Paul Wehr's wonderful autobiography *Seeking...through a Vermont Childhood and Beyond*.

Though Paul died two years ago, he comes alive as one of three young children- David, Paul and Jeanine- in the Wehr family, who moved from New Jersey to Vermont during the years of WW2. Living in the New York area, with their German-American heritage, they were nervous about their physical safety, for the country was then in the midst of war with Germany, when no one knew how long it would last or how safe they were on the East Coast. The Wehrs were also seeking a less expensive place to live, as Julian, Paul's father, an artist and inventor of children's pop-up books, could not earn much of a living at that time. So they packed up, along with two grandmothers and a grandfather, and found themselves on a hardscrabble hillside farm in a house that had not been lived in

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Roxbury Crossword



Red Fox (*Vulpes vulpes*)

DOWN

- 1. First name of Roxbury native who received the Medal of Honor for his heroism in the Civil War.
- 2. Unique _____ antique stone was quarried in Roxbury.
- 3. 3 Roxbury citizens were killed in World War _____.
- 6. First name of Roxbury citizen who was lieutenant governor from 1902-1904.

ACROSS

- 4. _____ Howe Rd. in Roxbury is being worked on in 2019.
- 5. Roxbury is VT.'s geographic _____.

“...Back to the Past...” continued from page 1...

for a while.

Paul Wehr devotes at least a third of this book to this life in Vermont, including photos. He uses his mother Julie’s letters to friends as the basis for the tale he tells, with his own childhood memories interjected here and there. As total city newcomers to a spare country life, the Wehrs learn to grow food and outwit the hungry animals around them who would nibble new vegetable shoots. Fruit and vegetables are preserved for the oncoming winter. The family reads by kerosene lamp, heats with wood, pumps water from a well, acquires a horse too spirited to pull a plow or cart, finds another to draw the sleigh down and uphill again, drinks milk from a cow they love until a tragic event occurs. The two boys walk the two miles to Roxbury Elementary School and back again every day possible, spring or wintertime. Life, even with its rewards, is difficult and sometimes unsafe. Paul’s mother’s determination and courage sustain everyone, as she recounts with wit, insight and sometimes despair their struggles, joys, successes and failures. Although she’s at times heartbreakingly lonely for old friends, they certainly are in touch with more neighbors nearby than I’d imagined, who offer them a lot of useful country-living advice and help them out when help is needed. The Wehr boys and parents also at times are thought of and even verbally attacked as ‘Nazis’ -- Paul tries to darken his blond eyebrows in school, someone comes to inspect the house’s rudimentary wiring, perhaps suspecting the Wehrs to be German spies.

Paul Wehr attributes a lot of the strengths he gained personally to living here during those challenging years. With clear eyes he talks about their move to a house in town, after his father had begun making more money. Everyday life became easier. Still, Paul acknowledges that although their family had friends in Roxbury and although Julie, his mother, participated in town as a librarian, auditor and as an activist on several fronts, the family at that time would always be considered as outsiders.

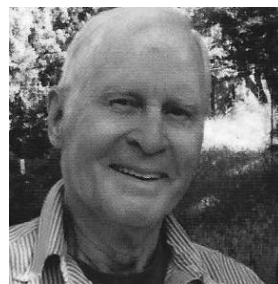
For the past forty-five years, I’ve been living with my family in this very same house on the hill. It is moving to sit at a window and look out at the hills that Julie Wehr described and loved; to view the faded photographs of sapling maples long grown into huge trees; to know just how

long Sullivan Hill Road can seem, how many footsteps left to go as we climb uphill on a snowy night in a winter blizzard. We’ve had the good fortune to spend time with Paul and his wife Christine on one of his visits back to Roxbury.

Paul’s deeply personal, heartfelt book contains engaging local, national and international history. I am so grateful to him for having taken the time in his last remaining years to write it, and to his

family for having brought it into being.

You’ll be glad to hear that we have a copy of the book at the Roxbury Free Library. 🏠



Paul Wehr, author of “Seeking...”

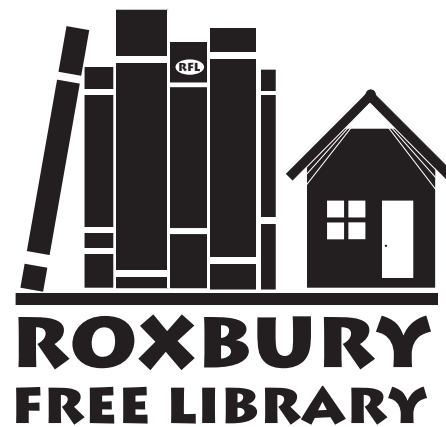
Did you know????

The Roxbury Free Library is open four days a week and has WiFi access 24/7!

RFL is more than a place to find a great book– you can use computers for many uses such as writing a resume or surfing the internet.

You can also use RFL passes to several museums and events in the area. Come in and visit!

Hours: **Tues.** 10-6, **Weds.** 8-11, **Thurs.** 2-7, **Sat.** 10-1



Roxbury Free Library Notes

We want to start with a special invitation for everyone to visit the RFL. If you have not been to the library during December, then you haven’t been in to see the recently opened **Betsy Eckfeldt Children’s Reading Nook**. With a little bit of paint and some new shelving courtesy of Erik Wardle, we have transformed a previously-unused storage area into an inviting reading and play space for children. I will assume everyone reading this knows how small our building is, so you can understand how big of a deal it is to find more space in our building.

As for upcoming events and happenings at the RFL: **The Roxbury Book Club** is meeting each of the three months covered here and you will find those dates in the community calendar.

We would like to consider hosting a 6-8 week **Story Hour** session this winter. Please contact us to let us know if you’d be interested.

We have presenters from five Roxbury families lined up to share stories and pictures of their recent international travels. Please note, in the past couple of months we have sent out letters and emails inviting folks who we have heard that have taken a big trip. If you have done some recent traveling, but were mistakenly overlooked please contact us and let us know. We’d love to host anyone who is interested in sharing stories with others. We hope to start this series of **Travelogues** by the end of January. Watch our website, and for flyers in town, for the final details.

We look forward to seeing you at some of these events, or at the RFL next time you are in. 🏠

Roxbury Website Updated!

The Town of Roxbury official website rebuild is complete, and is now in maintenance mode. It has a wealth of information and resources, and is updated regularly. Visit www.roxburyvt.org. Thanks to Andre Souigny who did such a good job in its first iteration!

- **Official Roxbury** is under the **Government** section. **Agendas and Minutes** is your source for all Town committee meeting minutes/agendas.

- **Our Roxbury** lists all the institutions that makes Roxbury such a great little town.

- The **Calendar/Newsletter** pages host the Community Calendar and the Roxbury Newsy.

- **Visit Roxbury VT** lists the Town attractions for folks visiting the area.

- The **Resources** page lists a wide variety of VT resources: nearby medical centers and Urgent Care clinics, family/child resources, veterans resources, you name it.

If you want a useful resource added, or think a new category should be added, email me at roxburyvtweb@gmail.com

There is also a new **Our Businesses** page. Roxbury is chock-full of makers, builders, growers, and gear-heads!

If you have a business in Roxbury and want it listed, email me (see above). Provide a blurb on the business, contact details, and any social media links (Facebook, Instagram, etc). Not sure if your business is listed? Check out the **Our Businesses** page!

Please visit www.roxburyvt.org and check it out! Submitted by Tatiana/Nina Govoni, Town of Roxbury Webmaster. 🏠



Roxbury Village School PTO

RVS students will be participating in the 2nd Annual Winter Sports Program in January, sponsored by RVS PTO and Misse Axelrod. If you are interested in being a volunteer to assist the RVS kids with putting on ice skating gear or snowshoes then please contact Misse Axelrod or Roxbury Village School. The specific dates will be forthcoming from the Roxbury Village School.

Specific events scheduled for spring 2019 are still in the works, with more information forthcoming. RVS PTO is working on events for the spring through the end of the school year. We will have one more fundraiser in the spring to raise money to enhance the RVS playground.

We thought it would be easier to centralize communication to and from the PTO, so we've created an email address (**RoxburyPTO@gmail.com**), created a **bulletin board** in the hallway at RVS, and have a **Facebook page, Roxbury Village PTO**. Feel free to send any of your questions and suggestions to one of the contacts listed above, or to stop one of the PTO members in the hallways to chat. We'd love to have you get involved, so please email us if you would like to participate in any events (baking, decorating, set up or break down, or volunteering in any way).

We look forward to working with you all! Thanks for all you do to make RVS a thriving place for our scholars and educators.

Thank you,
RVS PTO 🏠

Family Scouting

now in Roxbury and Northfield!

Cub Scout Pack 729 is a family scouting program. Both boys and girls starting in kindergarten can join. We meet on Sundays at 4:30 at the United Methodist church across from the Masonic temple in Northfield.

Please contact Kim Tenney if your child is interested at 485-4575

School Board Newsie

This fall the Montpelier Roxbury School Board has been working on approving district policies, creating a vision statement, and orienting our new superintendent. We also have two student board members from Montpelier High School (Emma Harter and Hope Petraro). We are now in the midst of the budget process.

There are a few notable changes in next year's proposed budget. First, the district would like to hire a Human Resources coordinator to handle all personnel related needs for the 200+ employees of the district. As of right now there are five different people who share this work, taking time away from other important duties. Also, adding busing for middle school students in the outskirts of Montpelier is in the works for the next school year. As it stands right now, there is no busing provided for Montpelier students above 4th grade, creating a number of challenges for students and families. Also, MRPS will be looking into the feasibility of a world language immersion program by starting the process with a consulting company that will help the district explore this in great depth. (This initial investment will cost the school district around \$20,000.)

The proposed budget as it stands right now would mean a 2.7% increase in the total budget. But the Roxbury tax rate is expected to slightly decrease (we won't know the exact rate until we get more data from the state, but ~5% lower than last year).

On the new website (www.mrpsvt.org) you can access video from all of our meetings, peruse the meeting agendas and packets (accompanying documents), and view all of the policies of the district. If there is anything you would like more information about, please don't hesitate to contact either of us. Ryan is on the policy, finance and negotiations committees, and Lisa is on the superintendent evaluation and transportation committees.

Thank you for supporting our schools and our students!

Lisa: 802-565-0506, lisafrost@mpsvt.org

Ryan: 802-485- 4278, ryanzajac@mpsvt.org 🏠



From the Town Clerk's Office

2019 DOG LICENSES

In January, residents can start licensing their dogs. The cost is \$9.00 for a neutered dog and \$13.00 for an un-neutered dog. After April 1st the cost will be \$11.00 for a neutered dog and \$17.00 for an un-neutered dog. Usually in March there is a Rabies Clinic at the Town Garage. A notice will be posted when a date is scheduled.

It is the law of the State of Vermont to license dogs annually. Owners of unlicensed dogs can be fined up to \$500 and/or the dog(s) could be impounded and destroyed.

TAXES

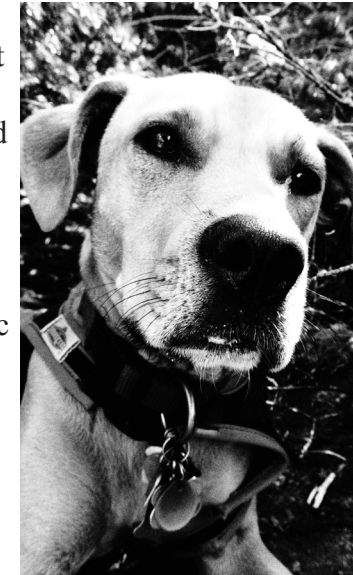
The next property tax installment is due on February 8, 2019.

2019 TOWN MEETING

Town Meeting is on March 5th at the Roxbury Town Hall (Village School). The deadline to register to vote is March 5th. Deadline for submitting petitions for office is January 28. The number of signatures required of legal voters of Roxbury is 7. Deadline for submitting articles for the Town Meeting Warning is January 17. The number of signatures required (of legal voters of Roxbury) for the petition is 27.

Since the merger of the Montpelier Roxbury School District took place, there are three new positions that the voters of Montpelier and Roxbury will need to fill. Those positions are School District Clerk, School District Treasurer and School District Moderator. The number of signatures required (of the legal voters of Montpelier and Roxbury) on the petition for these positions is 30. If you any questions, please contact the Town Clerk at 485-7840.

The new tabulator machine will not be used at Town



This Roxbury pup is wearing her dog license!

Meeting this March. As a reminder, the Secretary of State's Office encourages voters to use the MY VOTER PAGE, which you can access at <http://mvp.sec.state.vt.us>. You can request absentee ballots and keep track of your ballot. You can register to vote online, in person, or via mail. The online registration can be found at <http://olvr.sec.state.vt.us>.

2018 GENERAL ELECTION

The voters used the new tabulator machine at the 2018 General Election. It was interesting watching their faces when they put their ballot into the machine. Most people were excited about using the new technology. It was a lot more efficient when the polls were closed. The results of the election were available so much quicker. The Board of Civil Authority commented that it worked very well (even the non-supportive member).

There were 342 ballots counted at the election. Of those 342 votes, 74 were done by absentee ballot.

The Washington County Senators elected are: Ann Cummings, Andrew Perchlik, and Anthony Pollina

The Orange-Washington-Addison State Representatives elected are: Jay Hooper and Ben Jickling

Roxbury's Justices of Peace are: Gerry D'Amico, Gloria Gerdes, Adam Jackson, Susan Nevins, and Chuck Slocum.

NEW RULES FOR NOTARIES PUBLIC

There are new rules for Notaries Public. All Notaries will need to be licensed by the Secretary of State's Office of Professional Regulation (OPR), effective December 1, 2018, pursuant to Act 160, 2018. This change allows Notaries Public to join other licensed professionals under a unified licensing system with common resources and a state-of-the-art online licensing platform.

Notaries Public commission licenses will now renew on a fixed, two (2) year cycle with a \$15 application fee. Some professionals are exempt from fee or other requirements if acting within the scope of their official duties. Justice of Peace, Town Clerks, and their

continued on next page...

"From the Town Clerk's Office" continued from page 3..

Assistants are exempt from paying the application fee. The new law requires the application be done online, no paper applications will be allowed. You can access the necessary information at the Secretary of State's website for Office of Professional Regulation. Online applications will be available by mid-December. The application must be submitted by January 31, 2019.

There is also a continuing education that will be required. Two (2) hours of continuing education prior to submitting your online commission renewal application will be required by January 31, 2021. An exam will also be required. It is not required this renewal cycle. Justice of Peace, Town Clerks and Assistants are not exempt from the requirements for continuing education and exam.

An oath will be required and must be notarized and scanned to the OPR with your application. This will only be required for this renewal. The OPR needs the Notaries' signature on file.

HIGHWAY GRANTS

The Town of Roxbury was very fortunate to receive a Town Highway Structures Grant to replace the Oxbow Bridge. Unfortunately, the bridge beams were rusted and deteriorating. The contractor removed and replaced the existing bridge superstructure with a reinforced solid slab structure with bridge rail. New guardrails were installed. The work was done in November. The lower portion of Oxbow Road was closed for a couple of weeks.

The Selectboard was notified that Roxbury will receive funds from the Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission's Municipal Roads Grants-In-Aid Pilot Project. This grant will allow ditching and lining with stone, removal of grader berms and crowning on Carrie Howe Road and West Hill Road. The project must be completed by June 30, 2019.

The Town also received a grant from the Federal Highway Administration Emergency Relief Program. The work to be done is on Warren Mountain Road. The purpose of the project is to permanently repair and stabilize a slope area near the Webster Road.

The repairs to the Bull Run Road area that were damaged in July 2017 is complete. The project is through FEMA. Roxbury's FEMA/Grants Administrator is in the process of finalizing the paperwork with FEMA.🏠



This is a great example of pond ice you want to avoid! Come skate at the Roxbury Ice Rink instead!

Roxbury Ice Rink 2019

The goal is to get the ice rink up again in downtown by mid-January. We lost a couple of rink-maintainers over the past year and would love to have another set of hands or two to help keep the rink in good shape this winter. Are you interested in helping out in some capacity? Please reach out to Ryan Zajac if so (485-4278).🏠

*A Winter Haiku
by Carol Stack*

*The pile grows small, fast.
Another trip to get wood-
I'm warm already.*

Haiku is a traditional form of poetry from Japan. Usually about nature or the seasons, it consists of three lines where the first and last lines are five syllables and the middle line is seven syllables.

Write a Haiku for our next issue and send to librarian@roxburyfreelibrary.org!

Community Calendar January to March 2019

Wed	1/2/2019	Draft FY20 budget presentation and Montpelier Roxbury School District meeting at 6:30 in the MHS library
Thu	1/3/2019	RVS PTO meeting in the RVS library at 6:00
Fri	1/4/2019	Community Potluck at 6:00 in the Community Center
Mon	1/7/2019	Roxbury Select Board meeting at 7:00 in the Town Office
Tue	1/15/2019	Community Potluck at 6:00 in the Roxbury Congregational Church
Wed	1/16/2019	Montpelier Roxbury School District meeting at 6:30 in the MHS library
Thu	1/17/2019	Deadline for submitting articles for Town Meeting Warning
Mon	1/21/2019	Roxbury Select Board meeting at 7:00 in the Town Office
Mon	1/28/2019	Deadline for submitting petitions for office
Mon	1/21/2019	Roxbury Book Club meeting at 7:00 in the RFL
Fri	2/1/2019	Community Potluck at 6:00 in the Community Center
Mon	2/4/2019	Roxbury Select Board meeting at 7:00 in the Town Office
Wed	2/6/2019	Montpelier Roxbury School District meeting at 6:30 in the MHS library
Fri	2/8/2019	Property taxes due today
Mon	2/11/2019	Roxbury Book Club meeting at 7:00 in the RFL
Mon	2/18/2019	Roxbury Select Board meeting at 7:00 in the Town Office
Tue	2/19/2019	Community Potluck at 6:00 in the Roxbury Congregational Church
Wed	2/20/2019	Montpelier Roxbury School District meeting at 6:30 in the MHS library
Fri	3/1/2019	Community Potluck at 6:00 in the Community Center
Mon	3/4/2019	Roxbury Select Board meeting at 7:00 in the Town Office
Tue	3/5/2019	Town Meeting Day 2019
Wed	3/6/2019	Montpelier Roxbury School District meeting at 6:30 in the MHS library
Mon	3/18/2019	Roxbury Select Board meeting at 7:00 in the Town Office
Tue	3/19/2019	Community Potluck at 6:00 in the Roxbury Congregational Church
Wed	3/20/2019	Montpelier Roxbury School District meeting at 6:30 in the MHS library

Please note, board meeting schedules change so check the official posting places for each of these boards to verify the above meetings will occur as listed here before you travel to attend.



Roxbury seniors host weekly lunches each Monday at 12:00 in the Community Center. Please RSVP to Claire Chomentowski (485-7779) the night before if you plan to attend.