

Roxbury Newsy

PO box 95
Roxbury VT 05669

Roxbury Village School Young Artists

Celebrate the kids of RVS! These drawings, paintings, and sculpture were created by our younger community members!



Roxbury Newsy

Your community newsletter

April-June 2021, Vol. 6 No. 2

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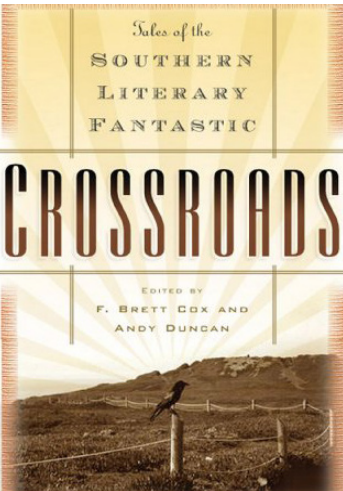
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RVS Student Artwork.....back cover

Photos and illustrations contributed by F.
Brett Cox, Heidi Albright, Kai Pincus and
students of Roxbury Village School.

Do you have upcoming news-
letter submissions, suggestions,
or corrections to the mailing
list?
Please contact the RFL at
librarian@roxburyfreelibrary.org
or 802-485-6860.

Thanks to Ryan Zajac, Courtney B.
Jenkins, Jane Pincus and Heidi Albright
for compiling, editing and designing
this issue of the Newsy!
We hope you enjoy it.
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F. Brett Cox, author

by The Roving Reporter

What brought a science fiction writer immersed in imagining the future to live in present-day Roxbury, Vermont? Though Brett Cox hasn't yet set any of his stories in outer space, his writings about the everyday world contain the element of fantasy.

In reality, in 2002 he moved with his wife, Jeanne, to Vermont to teach English at Norwich University, with an academic specialty in American literature and creative writing. They found their house in Roxbury in 2005, and consider it "exactly the right choice."

When Brett was young, he read obsessively, as did his brother, and developed a passion for the Fantastic. The 1950s and 1960s saw the golden age of science fiction, generating hundreds of books.

"When you are 12 years old you get hooked. We never ran out." Still, "You could pave a highway from here to Montpelier with the books I have not read."

He wanted to be part of the community which included the great Robert Heinlein, Isaac Asimov, Ray Bradbury, and Arthur Clarke, whose novels and short stories created windows into whole other worlds.

"I wanted to go live with those people."

He mentioned the writers who followed, such as Ursula K. LeGuin, Octavia Butler, and so many others who also inspired him. They addressed a lot of the issues we are still

continued on next page...

"F. Brett Cox, author" continued from front page...

confronting, such as racism, sexism, politics, and technology gone wild.

As a university professor, Brett is expected to write. He finds it "the hardest thing in the world. Sometimes I sit at the computer and just stare. Finally, you get over your feelings about your own work and shut off the analytic part of your brain."

He has co-edited an anthology of sci-fi stories and written 27 stories in a debut collection entitled *The End of Our Exploring*, describing moving through many times and places (Amazon blurb) "from the monsters of the 19th century to the future fields of war, from New England to the South to the American West, from the strange house at the top of the hill to the bottom of your childhood swimming pool. But whatever the time and place, and whether utterly fantastic or all too real, all of these remarkable fictions pose the fundamental question: what's next? It also includes Cox's unique historical notes."

His upcoming book is a nonfiction study of the career of American science fiction writer Roger Delazny. It will come out this May.

Also, for the past 11 years, he has been a co-founder of the Shirley Jackson Literary Awards, and currently serves on its board of directors.

At the end of our discussion, Brett says that he's aware of his good fortune, of the level of privilege that he has, while others face all sorts of obstacles. He has found a job that incorporates his love of writing into his everyday work of teaching. He can write what he pleases.

Though some editors and publishers have rejected his writing, no one has ever told him, "You can't write that." He himself tries to welcome and support new authors. "That's what sci-fi writers are—helpful along the way."

He and Jeanne are happy living in Roxbury. 🏠



The Newsy always welcomes new contributors. Please let us know if you have anything you'd like to share with the community and we can get it into the next issue. Send questions and content to librarian@roxburyfreelibrary.org.

From the Town Clerk's Office

2021 DOG LICENSES

It is time to license your dog(s). The deadline is April 1st. The cost is \$9.00 for a neutered dog and \$13.00 for an un-neutered dog. After April 3rd the cost will be \$11.00 for a neutered dog and \$17.00 for an un-neutered dog.

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.

It is the law of the State of Vermont that all dogs are vaccinated every three years. The first vaccination is only good for one year.

Due to COVID-19, there are no rabies clinics planned in Roxbury.

TAXES

The next property tax installment is due on May 21, 2021. The town office will be open until 5 p.m. on Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday. The Town accepts postmarked envelopes.

SUMMER HOURS

Summer hours will begin on May 7th. The Town Office will close at noon on Fridays (except for the day property taxes are due). Summer hours will end the last Friday of September.

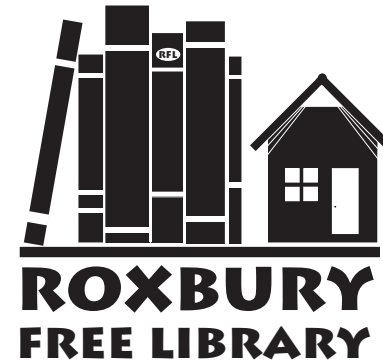
2021 TOWN MEETING

Town Meeting was on March 2nd at the Roxbury Town Offices. The normal Town Meeting did not happen, due to COVID-19, and all articles were voted by Australian Ballot. 291 votes were counted.

Officers elected on March 2nd are:
 Town Moderator – Lucinda Sullivan
 Town Clerk – Tammy Legacy
 Town Treasurer – Anne Maxham
 Selectman (for 3 years) – David McShane
 Selectman (for 2 years) – Shane Ryan
 Lister – Mollie DeFont
 Auditor – Matthew Lipschutz
 Collector of Delinquent Taxes – Sam Twombly
 Library Trustee – Carl Ellis
 Cemetery Commissioner – Wendy Cashman
 First Constable – Bill Hansen
 Second Constable – Randy Whitney

All articles passed except for Article 10 (purchase of two properties).

continued on page 6...



Roxbury Free Library Notes

Happy spring, Roxbury,
 In March we were excited to learn that the RFL was a recipient of a \$1,500 grant from the Vermont Community Foundation to improve access to internet and digital services in the community. We are currently reaching out to the primary stakeholders in the community to begin chartering the best path for using the funds. If you have any suggestions on how the RFL can make a positive impact on your access to the internet, please reach out and let us know.

We regret having to make the announcement one more year, but there will unfortunately be no Green Up Day book sale in 2021. We are considering a fundraiser book sale later in the summer if safety guidance from the State of Vermont indicates we can. Please note, we are not accepting book donations at this time, thank you!

We want to invite everyone in the community to join us as we organize a multi-generational book club for the month of April. What is a multi-generational book club? It can be just two people, or a larger group. What do you need to do? Connect with each other on a regular basis and talk books—it's that simple. You pick how you want to share stories with someone older or younger, and have fun doing so for a month (or more!). Helpful resources and suggestions will be available through the RFL.

Remember, we are in the last quarter of the RFL's fiscal year, which means we are in the position to know exactly how much money we have left to spend on books and library materials. So, get ready and anticipate seeing lots of new materials showing up at the RFL over the next three months. How is the RFL operating, these days? We continue to offer three COVID-safe options for accessing the collection: 1) in-person visits, limited in capacity and duration; 2) curbside pickup options; 3) home deliveries. We look forward to seeing more community members again as spring weather takes hold. 🏠



Roxbury Review of Books

by Heidi Albright

Exit 8 by John Bragg



In this nostalgic story, an old-time Vermonter is swept up in events beyond his control. The story opens in 1963 in a small Vermont town, with a cloud of dust looming on the southern horizon. Construction of Interstate 91 is creeping northward up the Connecticut River Valley, and Roland Tuttle's farm sits smack in the middle of the proposed highway.

Roland lives a quiet, introverted life tending to his dairy cattle, putting up hay and grain with his team of workhorses. Resistant to even small changes, he names each of his successive dogs "Sam." Everywhere he looks, he sees something on his farm that needs fixing, or work needing to be done. He relies on a bit of help from neighbors to prepare for winter, but keeps mostly to himself as he reminisces about growing up with his three brothers and two sisters, grandmother, and parents in the early part of the 20th century.

The family struggles through many hardships, including WWI and the flu pandemic. When he's ultimately left alone to run the farm, he can't imagine any other place for him in the world. Roland's tale is foreshadowed by town meetings he never attends, even with his own sense of impending change on the wind. "*Don't hold much with meetings. Too much talk. Got work to do. Don't have time for all that gab.*" Roland's mother remarks early on that maybe someday he'll have a story he'll want folks to remember.

The author describes the book as a tribute to the very real story of Romaine Tenney, a Vermonter who refused to leave his land during the building of I-91.

The language is lyrical and simple, where ghosts of the past are characters as solid as Roland himself. As the story rolls toward its inevitable ending, it contains both the tragedy and beauty of real life, and gives voice to an otherwise powerless hero.

If you are interested in learning more about the history of the highway construction and its impact on Vermonters, there is a free Zoom discussion on **April 13th at 7PM**, hosted by the Guilford Historical Society of Guilford, VT. A panel of community members will talk about living through the I-91 highway construction and how it changed the town forever. More information: GuilfordHistoricalSociety.org
www.guilfordhistorical.org
 Join Zoom Meeting <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86136410971>
 The event is free, open to all, and will be recorded. 🏠

"From the Town Clerk's Office" continued from page 2...

The Montpelier/Roxbury School District meeting was also held on March 2nd.
School District Clerk – Tammy Legacy
School District Treasurer – Shelley Quinn
Roxbury's School District Director – Kristen Getler

The combination of Montpelier and Roxbury votes passed all articles.

2021-2022 PROPERTY TAX DUE DATES

At Town Meeting, the voters approved these dates that property taxes will be due. The dates are:

August 13, 2021; November 12, 2021; February 11, 2022; and May 13, 2022.

APPOINTED POSITIONS

The Roxbury Selectboard appointed the following:

Selectboard Chair – Clare St. John
Selectboard Vice-Chair – Shane Ryan
Road Commissioner – David McShane
Energy Coordinator – Nicholas Laskovski
Emergency Management Director – Mike Dickinson
Animal Control Officer – Janine Manninen
Town Health Officer – Craig Sullivan
Deputy Health Officer – Duane Natvig
Chairman of Civil Defense – Steve Twombly
Tree Warden – Steve Lusk
CVRPC Representative – Gerry D'Amico
CV Internet Board Member – Tim Sullivan
Roxbury Planning Commissioner – Dotti Guiffre
E-911 Coordinator – Tammy Legacy
CVRPC Transportation Rep. – Gerry D'Amico
Webmaster – Nina Govoni

SURVEY RESULTS

The Roxbury Selectboard sent out a survey to all Roxbury Taxpayers. The Board closed the survey on February 26. The results are:

Do you support a Junkyard/Salvage Ordinance? – Yes 203, No 76, Undecided 3

Do you support paying legal fees to enforce Junk/Salvage Ordinance? – Yes 160, No 114, Undecided 8

The majority agreed to contact the Representatives/Senators requesting they enforce the existing laws.

CENTER FOR TECH & CIVIC LIFE GRANT

The Roxbury Town Clerk applied for a grant, with the ap-

proval from the Roxbury Selectboard, in the amount of \$5,000. Items purchased with funds were personal protective equipment (PPEs) to help protect staff and voters at the polls, a new laptop to be used during elections along with IT help to set the computer up, signs to help with voter access, and a portion of the funds were used to offset the cost of the new OnDemand Generator that was installed at the Town Office.

These funds were very much appreciated. A big Thank You goes out to the Center for Tech & Civic Life.

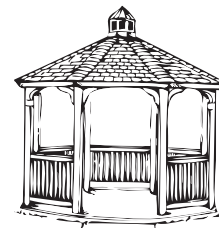
TOWN OFFICE

The Town Office is a multifunctional building. Not only is it the office of the Town Clerk, Listers, Auditors, Planning Commission, and Selectboard, but it is also the location of the General and Primary Elections, and is the command station in case of emergencies. The OnDemand Generator will enable elections to proceed if faced with power outages, allowing the office to remain open and the command station ready in case of emergencies.

GREEN MOUNTAIN PASSPORT PROGRAM

The Green Mountain Passport Program allows free day-use passes to Vermont State Parks and historic sites. If you are a Vermont resident at least 62 years of age or a Vermont veteran of the uniformed services you are eligible. To enroll in the program, you must complete an application at your Town Clerk's Office and pay a one-time fee of \$2. Once completed you will receive a Green Mountain Passport card which is good for life and is not transferrable. For more information contact the Town Clerk's Office at 485-7840, or stop by. 🏠

Roxbury Park Committee



The Ad Hoc Roxbury Donor Fund Committee is pleased to announce that the Roxbury Donor Fund has reached the \$15,000 required to purchase the park site across from the Roxbury School. Heartfelt thanks to all who so generously donated to the park fund. Without your support this project would not be possible.

The Roxbury Donor Fund Committee met with the Roxbury Selectboard on Monday, March 15, 2021, and requested that the Selectboard proceed with the purchase of the land. Once the purchase has been completed and the Town of Roxbury owns the land, the Ad Hoc Donor Fund Committee, with the help of the Roxbury Community, will begin planning the park. As the process proceeds, and with the Selectboard's approval, we hope to transform the vacant lot into a functional and attractive park for all to enjoy as soon as possible. 🏠

Field Naturalist's Corner

by Caleb Pincus

Spotted salamanders (*Ambystoma maculatum*)

Spotted salamanders are 6-9" long, black, moist amphibians with bright yellow spots in patterns unique to individuals. They live and hibernate in the vacant subterranean burrows left behind by voles, shrews, and moles. Their primary diet is slugs, snails, spiders, worms, and insects.

In the early spring (March or April), on the second warm rainy night of the year, hundreds, if not thousands, of salamanders make their annual journey from their burrows to vernal pools to breed. Spotted salamanders are very selective about their choice of pools, only breeding in pools that have no fish and that will dry up in a few months. Sometimes traveling up to 1,000 feet, a single salamander may make this journey 20 times in its lifetime.

The male salamander's arrival at the pool precedes that of the female by a few hours, in which time the males congregate into writhing masses of 12-100 individuals. Occasionally a male will break apart from the main congregation to fertilize a nearby female's 2-10 egg masses before returning to the group. This spawning behavior occurs mostly for a single night out of the year. They often exit the pool at the same point from which they entered, and then return to their burrows.



Each egg mass, attached underwater to grass stems or branches, can contain up to 250 eggs, which are enclosed within a gelatinous sphere of jelly. A white protein may discolor the eggs, or an alga may

form within the egg mass, which is said to have a symbiotic relationship with the developing salamanders, speeding the metamorphosis process. After around one month, the eggs hatch into tiny, gilled juveniles, who quickly become effective predators of early spring insect larva, including mosquitos. In two to four months, the juveniles' gills are lost, lungs develop, and the young salamanders become terrestrial.

Spotted salamanders grow throughout their 20-year lifespan—the larger the salamander, the older it is. 🏠

Celestial Events: April-June 2021

BY KAI PINCUS

- ✧ BOEING STARLINER ORBITAL FLIGHT TEST 2 (UNCREWED), APR. 2
- ✧ 55TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FIRST SPACECRAFT TO ORBIT THE MOON, LUNA 10, APR. 3
- ✧ 60TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FIRST PERSON IN SPACE, YURI GAGARIN, APR. 12
- ✧ 40TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FIRST LAUNCH OF THE SPACE SHUTTLE COLUMBIA, APR. 12
- ✧ NEW MOON, APR. 12
- ✧ LYRID METEOR SHOWERS, APR. 17-22
- ✧ NASA, SPACEX CREW-2 FALCON 9 MISSION TO THE INTERNATIONAL SPACE STATION, APR. 20
- ✧ FULL MOON, APR. 27
- ✧ ETA AQUARIID METEOR SHOWERS, APR. 19-MAY 28
- ✧ MERCURY REACHES GREATEST EASTERN ELONGATION 22° FROM THE SUN, MAY 17
- ✧ FULL MOON, MAY 26
- ✧ COMPLETE LUNAR ECLIPSE OF A FULL MOON, 18 MINUTES OF TOTALITY, MAY 25-26
- ✧ NEW MOON, JUN. 10
- ✧ SOLAR ECLIPSE, JUN. 10
- ✧ 45TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE VIKING 1 ORBITER ARRIVING AT MARS, JUN. 19
- ✧ FULL MOON, JUN. 24 🏠

Two Roxbury Vignettes

by Jane Pincus

Years ago
As Susan and I sat
In her garden
Just outside the middle of town
A car pulled up, the driver and a boy both strangers.
We waited, they approached,
asked:
"Is this the center of Vermont?"
"Of course," we replied.

Today
When I planned to drive to Northfield,
An unfamiliar car appeared, turned around in the driveway and headed down the hill.
The woman passenger
Leaned out to take a photo.
Driving alongside, I asked if they were lost.
"No," replied the man, "We're coming from Bristol.
We measured distances on a map
To find out the location of the exact center of Vermont
We thought it might be Roxbury."

And why not? 🏠

MRPS
(Montpelier-Roxbury Public Schools)
Kristen Getler, School Director
Montpelier Roxbury School District Board

I am your newest School Board member, and am honored to be serving you aside Gerri Huck. Hats off to Ryan Zajac who precedes me and served in this role for 8 years; by my calculation, that’s at least 96 Wednesday evenings, on top of innumerable committee meetings and hours of meeting preparation given to this public service position. For that, I bow to Ryan and his family; that is an incredible service to the community.

A few days prior to Town Meeting day, it was brought to my attention that there were no candidates for this open ‘Roxbury School District Director’ position (a.k.a. School Board member). After some nudges and much deliberation, I decided to throw my hat in the ring. Thank you to everyone who put your faith in me and wrote me in on your ballots. While only a Roxbury resident for a year and a half (so far!), Vermont has been my primary home for over 10 years. I bring 15 years of experience working with and within public schools. I have served as a contractor offering educational programming, and worked as a staff educator at public schools throughout Central Vermont and beyond. Schools are formative grounds for shaping our young people, and primary hubs for community building. In an ever-complexifying world, the roles of schools and the heroes within them are continuously expanding. I have a well-developed sense of the myriad systems that keep schools up, running, and sprinting to satisfy their role. All that said, I am new to the School Board role and look forward to all the learning ahead!

I am two meetings young on the School Board. In that time I have taken up membership on the Equity Committee and the Facilities and Energy Committee—both of which are new committees. The Equity Committee will take stock of current district equity work underway, identify gaps, and develop the Board’s charge and agenda around ensuring that all students access their learning equitably. The Facilities and Energy Committee will look at facility opportunities and challenges, in addition to working with the Policy Committee, to explore a net-zero energy policy for the Montpelier-Roxbury Public School (MRPS) district. The net-zero policy initiative emerged from an incredibly inspiring presentation to the Board by the student-led Earth Group, based at Montpelier High School. What a wonderful thing to have student voices at the table, inspiring their “elders” to address challenges and demanding action around the paramount issues of our time. Aside from the Board and committee work, a primary goal

of mine is to engage the Roxbury community and perspective. After all, this is the primary role of a School Board member: to engage and listen to the voices of parents, students, and community members, and to represent this collective voice in Board decisions and recommendations. A process of great import to me, and hopefully you, is the Roxbury Village School (RVS) visioning process that will be initiated this year. This process began last year but was put on hold due to COVID-19. As I understand it, the Board will begin a stakeholder-inclusive process that will explore the future of RVS and consider how to best integrate and optimize our community’s school in the district. While the timing and exact process is not crystal clear, your participation will be critical. I will keep you posted.

The MRPS School Board currently meets virtually (Zoom) on the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays of each month, from 6:30-8:30 p.m. All Board and committee meetings are warned at least 48 hours in advance; meeting agendas and materials are posted at www.mrpsvt.org/school-board. Every meeting begins with the opportunity for public comment. Please take the opportunity to get involved.

I look forward to serving the Roxbury community on the MRPS School Board. Please feel free to connect with me at kristengetler@mpsvt.org. Cheers to a swift mud season and a vibrant start to Spring 2021! 🏠

Calling all Roxbury Kids !
Tell us what you did this year! Got a story to share? We want your artwork, poetry, photos and writing to publish in the next Newsy.
Send it to librarian@roxburyfreelibrary.org

Planning Commission

The Roxbury Planning Commission submitted an initial draft of the Roxbury Town Plan to the Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission. Once the review of the draft is completed, and any additions/corrections required are made, the plan will be available for public review by any community/interest/business group that has requested notification in writing; planning commissions of abutting municipalities; the Executive Director of the Regional Planning Commission; or the VT Department of Economic, Housing, and Community Development. Following that review, a public hearing will be published after which the Roxbury Planning Commission may make changes and then submit the plan to the Selectboard. The Selectboard will then hold a public hearing on the plan and may make revisions or adopt the plan as written. 🏠

Roxbury Community Calendar

Thu	4/1/2021	Roxbury Select Board meeting at 7:00
Wed	4/7/2021	Montpelier Roxbury School District meeting at 6:30
Tue	4/13/2021	Roxbury Free Library Trustee's Meeting at 5:30
Wed	4/14/2021	Montpelier Roxbury School District meeting at 6:30
Thu	4/15/2021	Roxbury Select Board meeting at 7:00
Sat	5/1/2021	Green Up Day 2021
Wed	5/5/2021	Montpelier Roxbury School District meeting at 6:30
Thu	5/6/2021	Roxbury Select Board meeting at 7:00
Tue	5/11/2021	Roxbury Free Library Trustee's Meeting at 5:30
Wed	5/19/2021	Montpelier Roxbury School District meeting at 6:30
Thu	5/20/2021	Roxbury Select Board meeting at 7:00
Fri	5/21/2021	Property taxes due today
Wed	6/2/2021	Montpelier Roxbury School District meeting at 6:30
Thu	6/3/2021	Roxbury Select Board meeting at 7:00
Tue	6/8/2021	Roxbury Free Library Trustee's Meeting at 5:30
Wed	6/16/2021	Montpelier Roxbury School District meeting at 6:30
Thu	6/17/2021	Roxbury Select Board meeting at 7:00

Visit our Town website for official information on the COVID-19 pandemic.
www.roxburyvt.org/resources-vt/covid-19-resources/

Meet your Neighbors!

East Roxbury, Heartberry Hollow Farm & Forest
Rachel Field: Priest, Birder & Writer
Jonathan Moulin: Arborist, Climber & Cultivator

Rachel grew up in the suburbs of Philadelphia, and spent every moment she could running around outdoors (shoes off was preferable). Spending summers in Vermont meant that, when her desire to learn with the land about what it means to be a human began to take shape, the mountains were an easy invitation. When she’s not working at the parish in Brandon or the Episcopal Farm in Killington, she’s probably curled up with a book, stalking warblers, or snuggling with her cat, Eowyn.

Born in Montreal and growing up in Burlington, trees and mountains have never been far from Jonathan. Combine that with an enthusiasm for anything more than 20 feet off the ground, and you get an arborist! When he’s not off the ground he’s growing mushrooms, milking their cow, and splitting firewood.

“We are delighted to be a part of the community that we call Heartberry Hollow Farm & Forest in East Roxbury, VT. This



land is part of the Abenaki territory and is nestled in the mountains of central Vermont. We purchased Heartberry Hollow in the winter of 2019, with the intention to build a life here among the red oaks, white pines, beaver, red winged blackbirds, and other members of the land community. Our hope is that, over the next number of years, we will evolve along with the land to learn what is coming into being...as well as introducing a few things that are close to our hearts! We have a flock of laying hens, raise meat chickens and ducks, as well as raising heritage pork and raw milk from our beloved Jersey cow, Mocha.

We have milk, eggs, and occasionally overabundance from our organic vegetable garden and orchards for sale. Our farm stand is open from 7-7 every day except Sunday, or by appointment. We offer landscape consulting, tree assessments, and permaculture design conversations by appointment. Please reach out to us with questions about our products, or if you are interested in any educational or spiritual programming on the farm.”

To read their blog, or to reach out and say hello to Rachel and Jonathan, contact them through their website:
www.heartberryhollow.com 🏠