
Roxbury Newsy

Your community newsletter

October-December 2021, Vol. 6 No. 3

Inside...

<i>Roxbury Village Park</i> <i>by The Roving Reporter.....</i>	<i>p 1</i>
<i>From the Town Clerk's Office.....</i>	<i>p 2</i>
<i>Field Naturalist's Corner</i> <i>by Caleb Pincus.....</i>	<i>p 3</i>
<i>Celestial Events</i> <i>by Kai Pincus.....</i>	<i>p 3</i>
<i>Roxbury Website.....</i>	<i>p 3</i>
<i>MRPS</i> <i>by Kristen Getler.....</i>	<i>p 4</i>
<i>Red Cross Shelter.....</i>	<i>p 4</i>
<i>RVS PTO.....</i>	<i>p 4</i>
<i>Community Calendar.....</i>	<i>p 5</i>
<i>Food Shelf.....</i>	<i>p 5</i>
<i>STA needs YOU!.....</i>	<i>p 5</i>
<i>Planning Commission.....</i>	<i>p 6</i>
<i>Newsy Book Corner</i> <i>by Ed Carney.....</i>	<i>p 6</i>
<i>Roxbury Free Library Notes.....</i>	<i>p 7</i>
<i>Roxbury Recipe</i> <i>by Lise Cloutier</i>	<i>back cover</i>

*Photos and illustrations contributed by
Heidi Albright, Kai Pincus*

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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Roxbury Village Park

by The Roving Reporter

If you were driving through Roxbury on a beautiful September morning a month ago, you would have seen Ed Carney digging two post-holes in a plot of land located between the Warren Mountain Road and the Roxbury Country Store. He was placing a sign announcing the newest Roxbury Park. You would have stopped to let the children from Roxbury school cross 12A and gather there. The grass shone green in the morning light, and you could spot Dottie Guiffre guiding the students to put up four colorful signs in each corner.

How did the idea for this this park come to be? Over the past year, a group of Roxbury citizens donated enough to buy the land from Rick Tintle in order to keep the space public and owned by the town. Now it's a welcome, shady green bit of land in the center of town, larger than it seems.

On the sign erected at the front of the land you can see a map of the proposed park—a park where passing bikers and tourists can relax with a treat from Randy's store, and families and community members can come together to enjoy all sorts of town and holiday events.

continued on next page...

"Roxbury Village Park" continued from front page...

Dottie has taken the acquisition a visionary step further. She imagines curving paths with designated spots for a gigantic chess board, a ping pong table, a gazebo, benches for train watching under the huge maple tree, and picnic tables here and there.

Retired from teaching at the Roxbury School and holding a degree in landscape architecture, Dottie wants to use her time, knowledge and energy to turn this space into a community resource. She is also a member of the Planning Commission, and has lived in town since 2010.

She stresses that creating the park can be successful **ONLY** if townspeople become involved in the planning and realization. Some have already offered their knowledge and skills.

Thanks to those who have donated, and congratulations to Dottie and others who have begun the process, which is still in the development stage.

Of course, further funds will be needed to make the vision a reality. If you feel inspired to donate to the Roxbury Park Development Fund, many thanks for your generosity.

Stay tuned for more information about fundraising and the proposed timeline.

Check out the park – it's up to you to bring it to life!

And remember, Roxbury's first park, Third Branch Park, can be found a few miles south of town by the river! 🏠



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

TAXES

The next installment of taxes is due on November 12, 2021. The Town Office will be open until 5pm on the Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday of the week that taxes are due. Normal office hours are Tuesday – Friday, 9am – noon/1pm – 4pm.

TOWN OFFICE

The Town Office is open to the public at this time. Appointments for researching land records, vital records, or generic search are required. Please contact the Town Clerk to schedule an appointment.

SELECTBOARD MEETINGS

Selectboard meetings are being held at the Community Hall. Schedule, agendas and minutes are posted on the Roxbury website.

As a result of the survey that was sent out a while ago, the Selectboard has been working on the Draft Ordinance regulating the Disposal of Solid Waste and the Outdoor Storage of Junk and Junk Vehicles. Due to increased COVID cases in Vermont, the Board has tabled the adoption of the ordinance until the numbers are lower.

As a result of some dedicated townspeople, there were enough funds donated to purchase a piece of land in the village to create a park. The Park Committee is working hard planning the design of the park and will now start raising funds to make their design come to life.

HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT

Roxbury's long time highway employee, Roger Thomas, retired in the spring. Roger has worked for the Town of Roxbury for twenty years. Roger always plowed East Roxbury roads, and was the main employee grading roads. Thank you, Roger for your dedication to Roxbury over the years.

The Selectboard has been trying to replace Roger, but is finding that a hard task. Roxbury is in the same situation as many towns, it seems that no one is interested in being on a road crew. The Warren Mountain Road has been receiving a lot of attention this summer. The Town received multiple grants for Warren Mountain Road. At this time, the 2017 Structures Grant is complete and the 2020 Class 2 Grant is finishing up. The Selectboard and Highway Department appreciated your patience when dealing with the road being closed for a month or so. They understand it wasn't easy on the residents of Roxbury.

TOWN-WIDE REAPPRAISAL

The New England Municipal Consultants is conducting the Town-Wide Reappraisal. Their employee, James, has been

continued on page 6...

Field Naturalist's Corner

by Caleb Pincus

Any plant that has evolved to trap, dissolve and digest animals in order to extract nutrients from them would be considered carnivorous. Most carnivorous plants cannot digest anything other than arthropods, but some do consume small vertebrates such as frogs or young fish.

Most species of carnivorous plants grow in nutrient deficient environments such as bogs or fens (pitcher plants and sundews), and some grow on cliffs (butterwort) or even in water or mud (badderworts). Digesting prey is one way they can supplement otherwise hard-to-find nutrients, however, they can survive without prey. Vigor and reproductive success are greatly enhanced for these plants when their diet includes animals.

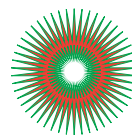
Carnivorous plants have evolved passive and active ways of catching prey. Examples of passive prey capture are those of butterworts, which use a kind of sticky flypaper trap, and pitcher plants, which have a cup-like leaf which contains a mix of rainwater and digestive acids that help break down prey.

Semi-active prey capture is seen in sundews, which have leaves with red hairs covered with droplets of adhesive liquid. This "dew" attracts insects, who become stuck and, as they struggle, more hairs stick, which folds the leaf around them.

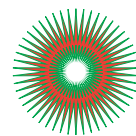
Active strategies are seen in bladderworts, which are rootless aquatic or semi-aquatic plants that have floating leaves. The leaves contain tiny bladders of air which can capture prey using a kind of vacuum suction. Like a tiny oval balloon, these sacs have a double-sealed airtight opening or "door" on one end. When the door is closed, the bladder expels water through the plant wall, creating a partial vacuum inside the sac. A leafy structure near the opening twists when an organism bumps against it, which breaks the seal. Water rushes into the bladder, sucking prey inside. Equalizing water pressure then causes the doorway to close, and the prey is captured.



Pitcher plants (*Sarracenia purpurea*) and round-leaf sundew (*Drosera rotundifolia*) can be found in Roxbury at the Beaver Pond on Beaver Meadow Road. Tread carefully, as these plants are sensitive to human disturbance.



Celestial Events: Oct.-Dec. 2021



BY KAI PINCUS

- ✧ SOUTHERN TAURID METEOR SHOWERS, OCT. 5-OCT. 10
- ✧ ORIONID METEOR SHOWERS, OCT.16-OCT. 21
- ✧ FULL MOON, OCT.20
- ✧ MERCURY REACHES GREATEST WESTERN ELONGATION (MORNING SKY) 18° FROM THE SUN, OCT. 25
- ✧ VENUS REACHES GREATEST EASTERN ELONGATION EVENING SKY 47° FROM THE SUN, OCT. 29
- ✧ URANUS REACHES OPPOSITION AT MAGNITUDE 5.7 AND AT A DISTANCE OF 1,740,000 MILES FROM EARTH, NOV. 4
- ✧ NORTHERN TAURID METEOR SHOWERS, NOV. 14-NOV.19
- ✧ FULL MOON, NOV. 19
- ✧ LEONID METEOR SHOWERS NOV. 19-NOV. 24
- ✧ DWARF PLANET CERES REACHES OPPOSITION AT MAGNITUDE 7.0 AT A DISTANCE OF 164,000,000 MILES FROM EARTH, NOV. 26
- ✧ PARTIAL SOLAR ECLIPSE, DEC. 4
- ✧ GEMINID METEOR SHOWERS, DEC. 10-DEC. 15
- ✧ URSID METEOR SHOWERS, DEC. 17-DEC. 22
- ✧ FULL MOON, DEC. 19
- ✧ WINTER SOLSTICE, DEC.21 AT 10:59AM EST 🏠

Roxbury Website

Do you have a new business in Roxbury? Changes to your business? Website or social media links to update? Let me know at roxburyvtweb@gmail.com. I reviewed the Our Businesses links in July, but I'm sure there are more of you out there who could be listed.

All the Agenda/Minutes pages were redesigned to make it easier to get the information you need. Keep up-to-date with the Town wherever you are and read the Selectboard Minutes and others. The website is a living organism. Come back regularly to see what's been added to the Home Page and sidebar, and explore the other pages. You may be surprised at all the information available. Our Resources pages contain a wealth of information and are added to on a regular basis.

As you know, the Town Reappraisal is underway. We have a page devoted to the project. Check it out. It's updated as information comes in.

Have a glorious VT Autumn and Happy Holidays everyone!
Your Town Webmaster 🏠

MRPS

(Montpelier-Roxbury Public Schools)

Kristen Getler, School Director

Montpelier Roxbury School District Board

Greetings Roxbury!

First off, thank you to Gerri Huck for her focused and steadfast 2 ½ years of service to the Roxbury community on the MRPS school board! After reaching out to the community, Rhett Williams offered his candidacy to complete Gerri's term through March 2022, and was officially nominated to the board on September 15th. Given that Roxbury has 2 seats of the 9-seat board, it's essential both seats be filled. Welcome, Rhett!

Rhett has lived in Roxbury for about ten years. He has twin daughters in the Kindergarten class at RVS, as well as a step-daughter who is a junior in the district. He is an active RVS PTO member and works with Dynamos soccer and Northfield Little League. In Rhett's words: "I am grateful for the opportunity to serve my community as an MRPS school board member. I recognize there will be a learning curve. I have a background as an elementary school teacher. I have since become a nurse and am a nurse educator at the Vermont Psychiatric Care Hospital in Berlin. I served on the committee to select Libby Bonesteel as superintendent. Libby's work during the pandemic, to establish a district-wide approach to learning, has been impressive. As a school board member I will represent the Roxbury community in establishing the district vision, provide budgetary oversight, and monitor the school system's progress. I want to empower our superintendent, and all of the educators and support people in the Montpelier Roxbury Public Schools, to ensure our learners have the most effective educational experience possible. I look forward to working with all of you."

The turning of the leaves prompts the fall season scurry: secure the wood pile, press the apples, fix the handle on the snow shovel, find the winter gear and knitting needles. For your school board members, we add to that list: study up and reach out to our community about school budget season. Over the next month, we will offer various ways for you to connect with us about your priorities for the Montpelier Roxbury Public Schools (MRPS) budget ('22-'23). Your input will be shared with MRPS leadership as they begin crafting the budget for a draft presentation in December. Be on the lookout for us in the community!

The MRPS school board is reinvigorating a process that began and stalled in the spring of 2020. The board's vision is to bring the Roxbury and Montpelier communities together to discuss and determine what our collective vision for a high-

quality education looks like for our students. We are currently seeking a consultant to help facilitate a broad community engagement process that attempts to capture all voices, from students to those often underrepresented. That community work will take place from December '21 - July '22. Stay tuned for opportunities to share your ideas.

A primary function of school board members is to be the bridge between the community and the schools; Our role is to listen and represent the voices of the community in our discussions, decision making, and policy work. Do you see a gap that needs to be filled? Do you have a suggestion to improve our schools? We encourage you to reach out to us (kristengetler@mpsvt.org and rhettwilliams@mpsvt.org). The board is currently working on a community outreach plan to ensure we provide a variety of opportunities for you to access us.

School board meetings are open, public meetings that welcome your presence. Head to the MRPS School Board webpage (<https://www.mpsvt.org/school-board>) where you will find the board's meeting schedule and agendas. The MRPS school board meets at the Roxbury Village School (RVS) every 4th meeting; the next three RVS school board dates are November 17th, January 19th and March 16th. We hope to see you there!

Kristen Getler and Rhett Williams 🏠

Red Cross Shelter

The Roxbury Village School is an American Red Cross Emergency Shelter. The school now has a generator which makes the building a great resource in case of an emergency. We have cots, blankets, and dried food stored at the shelter.

Tina Young is the coordinator and can be reached at tinayoung@mpsvt.org or 262-1506. Please contact her if you would like to be added to the list of volunteers. 🏠

Roxbury Village School PTO

RVS PTO has scheduled a visit from our friends at the Vermont Institute of Natural Sciences (VINS). VINS will bring their Raptor Road Trip to RVS on October 26th. The presentation will be outside, weather permitting, from 9:45 to 10:45.

The PTO has also started our first fundraiser since the pandemic started. RVS families are promoting Little Caesars frozen pizza kits to our friends and families. That effort will continue until October 15. If you are interested in joining the PTO, participating in our fundraiser, or donating to the PTO directly, please email roxburypto@gmail.com. 🏠

Roxbury Community Calendar

Mon	10/4/2021	Roxbury Select Board meeting at 7:00
Wed	10/6/2021	Montpelier Roxbury School District meeting at 6:30
Tue	10/12/2021	Roxbury Free Library Trustee's Meeting at 5:30
Thu	10/14/2021	Roxbury Planning Commission Meeting at 5:30
Fri	10/15/2021	PTO fundraiser deadline
Mon	10/18/2021	Roxbury Select Board meeting at 7:00
Wed	10/20/2021	Roxbury Auditors Meeting at 9:00
Wed	10/20/2021	Montpelier Roxbury School District meeting at 6:30
Tue	10/26/2021	VINS presentation at RVS
Sun	10/31/2021	Tentative Trunk or Treat
Mon	11/1/2021	Roxbury Select Board meeting at 7:00
Wed	11/3/2021	Montpelier Roxbury School District meeting at 6:30
Tue	11/9/2021	Roxbury Free Library Trustee's Meeting at 5:30
Fri	11/12/2021	Property taxes due today
Mon	11/15/2021	Roxbury Select Board meeting at 7:00
Wed	11/17/2021	Montpelier Roxbury School District meeting at 6:30
Thu	11/18/2021	RFL Zoom program: KonMarie Method of Tidying Up, 7:00 (RSVP required)
Wed	12/1/2021	Montpelier Roxbury School District meeting at 6:30
Mon	12/6/2021	Roxbury Select Board meeting at 7:00
Tue	12/14/2021	Roxbury Free Library Trustee's Meeting at 5:30
Wed	12/15/2021	Montpelier Roxbury School District meeting at 6:30
Mon	12/20/2021	Roxbury Select Board meeting at 7:00

Visit our [Town website](http://www.roxburyvt.org/resources-vt/covid-19-resources/) for official information on the COVID-19 pandemic.

www.roxburyvt.org/resources-vt/covid-19-resources/

Student Transportation of America Bus Drivers Wanted!

Calling all retired community members, grandparents, stay-at-home parents, family members, friends or whomever would consider adding this position into their working schedule.

Across the country there is a shortage of school bus drivers. As a small community in Roxbury, we help one another when help is needed.

We need your help to get our children to and from school and to athletic practices and games.

STA is working hard to see that every route runs daily. However, it is becoming very difficult if we have a shortage of drivers.

See our announcement to the right for details, and contact us at (802) 433-5144 if you are interested becoming a driver! 🏠

Please monitor all the groups in Roxbury individually to find out the format (in-person, conference call, or video). 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 Food Shelf

We are asking individuals in need of food to please contact Claire Chomentowski at 485-7779. She will let you know how food may be picked up, or if necessary, delivered. 🏠



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

School Bus Drivers needed in Roxbury!

Join our Professional Team at STA

New Online Learning System
Paid Training to Receive School Bus License
Morning & afternoon routes available, or
“pick a shift” athletics Bus Drivers

Competitive Wages

\$23.55/hr for established routes

\$19/hr athletics

CALL US TODAY, we need your help!

Contact Stacy Emerson at (802) 433-5144
or drop by in person

STA-Vermont

185 Ferno Road, Suite 1

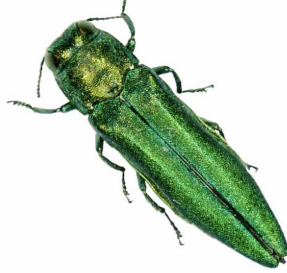
Williamstown, VT 05679

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

out visiting properties for the past couple of months. If you haven't seen him yet, you will. You can contact the Town Office to make an appointment for him to visit your property. The Town was ordered to have a Town-Wide Reappraisal. Part of the contract with this company is to have them visit every property. This will create an updated and accurate record on properties.

EMERALD ASH BORER

The Emerald Ash Borer is in Berlin, and is probably in Roxbury. The Outreach & Education Coordinator from VT Urban & Community Forestry Program informed the Board about Berlin. There are many Ash trees in the Town's Right-of-Way. The Selectboard is concerned and discussing ways that could help. (Resource for public is www.vtinvasives.org – Emerald Ash Borer is an invasive insect that attacks and kills 99% of all 3 species of ash found in Vermont). 🏠



Planning Commission

The Roxbury Planning Commission has successfully completed the proposed Roxbury Town Plan, and it has been sent out to the Planning Commissions of our surrounding towns. Completed copies of the proposed plan are available for review on the Town Website, at the Town Office, and at the Roxbury Free Library.

Summary of the Proposal:

- I. Purpose and Authority
- II. Brief History
- III. Inventory Analysis
 1. Physical Features
 - a. Natural Resources
 - b. Cultural Resources
 2. Demographics
 3. Economic Development
 4. Housing
 5. Transportation
 6. Community Utilities, Facilities, and Services
 7. Energy
 8. Land Use
 9. Regional Cooperation
- IV. Goals and Objectives
- V. Maps

The Roxbury Planning Commission will hold a hearing on the proposed update of the Roxbury Town Plan on Thursday, October 14, at 5:30 PM, at the Roxbury Community Hall. 🏠

Newsy Book Corner

Readings of a Roxbury Library Trustee

by Ed Carney

Greetings, my name is Ed Carney, and I was asked to write a book review for the Newsy. As a scientist I have decided to converse with you about books that I am familiar with or read. I hope that, if you try one or more of my suggestions, you will have an enjoyable and worthwhile experience.

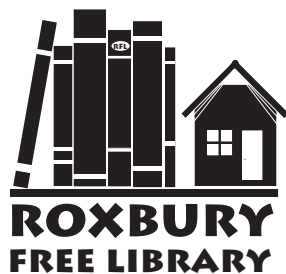
Starting with mystery-suspense novels, I would include James Patterson, John Grisham, and Daniel Silva. All are exceptionally good storytellers, easily readable, and if you enjoy reading before bedtime, their chapters are short and the number of characters is very manageable. All three have published extensive collections of books. For some suggestions, I recently finished Silva's *The Order* and *The Cellist*. Silva's main character in this series is an intelligence officer, spy, and art restorer, Gabriel Alon. Silva's stories will keep you on the edge of your seat, they are that good.

Currently, I am reading Grisham's *Sooley*, which centers around a seventeen-year-old South Sudan basketball player, Samuel Sooleymon. Samuel is from a country plagued by terrorists and unimaginable violence. He gets the chance of a lifetime to travel to the United States with ten of his Sudanese team mates to play in a showcase basketball tournament with the hope of being picked by a school to play basketball and further his education. Culturally, socially, and athletically this is a fascinating read. You may also enjoy Grisham's *The Rooster Bar*, about third-year law students whose delusional awakening catapults them to take action to deal with the injustice they experienced. *The Rooster Bar* provides a satisfying and enjoyable, well-paced story, and doesn't require a trip to the bar for enjoyment.

From Patterson, consider *The President Is Missing*, which will definitely keep you guessing as to the linchpin of the operation. The book is coauthored with Bill Clinton and is a very intriguing story. If you would prefer a mystery series with a European flair, consider Donna Leon's *Commissario Guido Brunetti* book series, based in Venice, Italy. Her stories always provide an enlightening cultural experience along, with professional and family challenges to confront. You won't be disappointed.

For those who enjoy quirky, insightful, and delightful looks at everyday life situations, I would suggest Fredrik Backman, a Swedish author, who wrote *A Man Called Ove*, *Anxious People*, and several others. I recently read *Anxious People* and marveled at the experiential fabric of human experiences that Backman pieced together in presenting a snapshot of human life. In reading the book, I felt like I was completing a jigsaw puzzle to reach the enjoyable resolution to some of the everyday issues

continued on page 7...



Roxbury Free Library Notes

Greetings Roxbury,

We have a few announcements we are excited to share with the community. First, we want to make sure everyone knows our current hours of operation, as they are a little different since the last Newsy went out in April.

RFL is open now during the following hours:

Tuesday 10:00 - 6:00

Wednesday 8:00 - 11:00

Thursday 2:00 - 5:00

Saturday 10:00 - 3:00

Did you notice the change on Thu. and Sat. hours? RFL staff members Lisa Mercurio and Caitlyn Santi have shifted their hours and roles around some in the last couple of months. Part of that shift included us reexamining building visitation rates which led to us making these changes. We are hopeful the new hours fit the needs of community members better.

We also want to make sure everyone is aware of some of the fun money saving opportunities available to you through the RFL. Starting this summer we have had a pass available to all patrons to get reduced admission to Vermont Institute of Natural Sciences (VINS). The VINS pass will get you \$5.00 admission for up to four people per visit. What a screaming deal! Is your Cable or Netflix bill getting too big? Did you know the RFL provides every patron with access to 100,000's of streaming videos and TV series? It's true - your RFL account gets you access to way more than just the physical collection. If you're happy staying at home, don't forget your RFL account can still serve you well with digital content even without coming into the RFL. Our digital content services, like Kanopy, Hoopla, and Listen Up Vermont are available to everyone and offer so much content it's worth checking out. But don't be mistaken, there are a lot of great reasons to come into the COVID-safe library as well!

Finally, we are working on our fall programming schedule and have a few announcements to share here. We are tentatively hopeful that we will be able to safely host our annual Trunk or Treat celebration on Halloween. Final decisions about the event will be made as we get closer and can determine the risk for hosting the event. We know quite a few of you will be interested in this next program, since *The Life-Changing Magic of Tidying Up*, by Marie Kondo, has been a perennially

popular book the last couple of years. We are coordinating an interactive program on the KonMarie method and Spark Joy programs. The program is scheduled for Thursday, Nov. 18 at 7:00PM, via Zoom. RSVP is required! As always, we'd love to hear your preferences and interests for programs and library materials.

Stay in touch and happy fall from the RFL crew,
Lisa, Caitlyn, and Ryan 🏠



"Newsy Book Corner" continued from page 6...

we may confront someday. His novels are quirky, humorous, enlightening and very entertaining. Wonderful reads!

In the realm of history, I would strongly recommend Sonia Prunell's *A Woman of No Consequence*, the true story of Virginia Hall, a masterful spy for the British and Americans during World War II, who provided vital intelligence to the allied forces, shortening the course of the war and bringing it to a successful conclusion. Virginia had to contend with an artificial leg while collecting intelligence, and wasn't given the recognition she earned and deserved for her outstanding contribution to the war effort until years after the war. A remarkable story about a remarkable woman.

In the area of medicine my suggestion would be Atul Gawande's book, *Being Mortal: medicine and what matters in the end*. As we grow older it's important for each of us to confront our mortality and the role medicine should play to facilitate, when requested, making the end as joyful a parting experience as possible. A must-read, written in an understandable, thoughtful, and informative way for the layman by a well-respected medical writer and physician.

In conclusion, I would add climate change and global warming as topics to your reading list. When I was in Antarctica last February, I experienced a record high temperature of 68 degrees. The Earth, with all its diverse life forms- us included- is in a struggle to sustain and perpetuate life. For a few informative readings on the subject, I would recommend Vermont's own Bill McKibben's, *Earth: making a life on a tough new planet*, *The End of Nature*, and Sir David Attenborough's book, *A Life on Our Planet*, a book he wrote in 2020 at the age of 94. McKibben and Attenborough tell it like it is. They are not lightweights when it comes to articulating the life-threatening challenges we are currently and will need to continue dealing with as the Earth warms and the carbon dioxide level rises.

The books mentioned in this article are available or can be obtained for you from the Roxbury Free Library. 🏠

Roxbury Newsy

PO box 95

Roxbury VT 05669



Tomato, Melon, and Hot Chili Salad with Burrata

When you combine tomatoes, melons, and hot pickled peppers, the sweet, tart, and spicy juices mingle into a delicious complexity. The salad is beautiful, too, especially when you use a mix of tomato and melon colors—an ideal party dish. Make the salad with burrata or mozzarella—buffalo if you can find it—or without cheese at all. If you do use burrata, it's best to toss the salad with your hands so you can get the creamy burrata to coat the tomatoes and melon.

Serves 4

1.5lbs tomatoes (a mix of larger tomatoes, cut into wedges, and cherry tomatoes, halved)

1.5lbs melon, seeded, rind cut away, and cut into crescents or half-crescents

Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper

¼ cup chopped hot pickled peppers, such as oil-packed Calabrian peppers, or something milder such as pepperoncini

¼ cup white wine vinegar or red wine vinegar

1 small handful basil leaves

Extra-virgin olive oil

2 balls burrata or very fresh mozzarella

Put the tomatoes and melon into a large bowl, season generously with salt and black pepper, and toss gently. Add the hot pickled peppers and vinegar and toss again. Taste and adjust the salt, black pepper, pickled peppers, and vinegar to make a wonderful sweet-tart-hot balance.

Add the basil and ¼ cup olive oil and toss again. Right before serving, pull apart the burrata and distribute it over the salad, and toss gently with your clean hands. It will get nicely runny and messy as people serve themselves.

-contributed by Lise Cloutier