Roxbury

Your community newsletter

Inside...

Roxbury Roots by Heather Holterp 1
From the Town Clerk's Officep 2
ARPA Committeep 3
Roxbury Community Crafters by Mary Bouchardp 3
Roxbury Food Shelfp 3
MRPS by Kristen Getler and Rhett Williamsp 4
Roxbury Volunteer Fire Departmentp 4
RVS Caregivers Groupp 5
Roxbury Park Developmentp 6
Planning Commissionp 6
Red Cross Shelterp 6
Roxbury Free Library Notes 7
Roxbury Ice Rink by Ryan Zajacback cover
Photos in this issue were contributed by: Hannah Zajac, Mary Bouchard and Heidi Albright

Do you have upcoming newsletter 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.

© 2023 Roxbury Newsy.

January-March 2023, Vol. 8 No. 1



Some of the Roots members as they collectively prepare food for the Roxbury Food Shelf

Roxbury Roots by Heather Holter

Roxbury Roots is a group of community-minded, food-loving Roxbury members. The group has been meeting for over 15 years and is excited to bring the community together again around food. This fall we sat down to brainstorm our updated purpose and mission. Here is what we crafted:

"We are a community exchange dedicated to enhancing the vitality of our local foodshed. By growing, sharing, eating, and celebrating local food, we aim to support our connection with each other and the land."

Our goals for the next year are:

- To bring accessible, local, nutritious foods to the town of Roxbury
 - More donations of fresh food to the food shelf
 - Spring 2023: build a free fridge and shelf that is accessible 24/7
- To host monthly gatherings such as potlucks and eventually a farmer's market and community dinner
- Create an events calendar that highlights the Roxbury Roots Potlucks, Community Farm & Food Workshops, Farmer's Markets, and more

Let us know if you want to participate in working toward these goals! We would love to make connections and meet with folks who are energized to live out our mission in a tangible way. We hosted our most recent community event in December 2022, at the Congregational Church in Roxbury, inviting everyone to participate in community cooking and sharing a meal afterwards. We prepared Vegetarian Chili and Cornbread to freeze and serve at the Roxbury Food Shelf, where it was enjoyed and appreciated.

To sign up for the Roxbury Roots listserve or learn more about future events, please subscribe here: roxburyroots-subscribe@lists.rise up.net We hope to see you at an upcoming potluck or gathering!!

From the Town Clerk's Office

2023 TOWN MEETING

Town Meeting is on March 7th. The deadline to submit petitions to have an article on the Town Meeting Warning is January 19. The petition must have 27 Roxbury Voter signatures. The deadline to submit petitions for office is January 30th. The petition must have 7 Roxbury Voter signatures. A list of openings will be posted on the website and in town. Town Meeting will be held at the Town Hall (Village School). In-person Town Meeting will start at 10 a.m. Australian Ballot Voting will be from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m.

2022 GENERAL ELECTION RESULTS

347 votes were cast for the November 8th election. 272 votes were by absentee, 75 votes were in person. State Senators elected are: Ann Cummings, Andrew Perchlik, and Anne Watson. State Representatives elected are: Jay Hooper and Larry Satcowitz.

TAXES

Third installment of property taxes is due on February 10, 2023.

The Town Office will be open until 5p.m. on the Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday of the week that taxes are due. Normal office hours are Tuesday – Friday, 9a.m. – noon/1p.m. – 4p.m.

2023 DOG LICENSES

Dog Licenses are available. Dogs are required to be licensed annually by April 1st. The Rabies Clinic has not been scheduled at this time. A notice will be posted on the website, in Town Report, and in town, if a clinic will be held, announcing the day and time. Please contact the Town Clerk for more information.

SELECTBOARD MEETINGS

Currently, the Selectboard meetings are being held at the Community Hall. Starting at the meeting on December 19th, the Selectboard will be audio recording meetings, and the recordings will be available on the town's website www. roxburyvt.org

PUBLIC HEARING – REQUEST TO DISCONTINUE A PORTION OF SHAW ROAD

The Roxbury Selectboard will meet on January 23, 2023, at 7 p.m. at the Roxbury Community Hall, for the purpose of receiving testimony and hearing all persons interested in the matter of whether the Town of Roxbury shall discontinue a portion of Shaw Road. A site visit will be held on January 22, 2023, at 3:30 p.m. in the area of 430 Shaw Road in Roxbury. If you would like any information on this request, please contact the Town Clerk.

ORDINANCE REGULATING THE DISPOSAL OF SOLID WASTE AND THE OUTDOOR STORAGE OF JUNK AND JUNK VEHICLES

The Roxbury Selectboard adopted the Ordinance Regulating the Disposal of Solid Waste and the Outdoor Storage of Junk and Junk Vehicles on December 19th. The Board has been discussing adopting the ordinance for several years, at the request of members of the public. A survey had been sent out to all Roxbury Taxpayers. A large majority wanted an ordinance to be adopted. In 2022 the Board requested comments from residents on the draft ordinance. After hearing from the public and considering their suggestions, the Board adopted the ordinance. The ordinance will be become law in sixty days (February 17, 2023) unless a petition signed by 5% of the legal voters of Roxbury is submitted to the Town Clerk within 44 days (February 1, 2023). 24 V.S.A. § 1973.

If a petition is received in a timely manner with the necessary signatures, the Roxbury Selectboard will hold a Town vote. The vote on the ordinance would be held by Australian Ballot. A Public Hearing would be held prior to the vote.

INFORMATION FROM TOWN CLERK REGARDING LAND RECORDS

Over the past few weeks there has been discussion on whether the Town Clerk should digitize the land records that are kept at the Town Office, and whether they should be online to enable people to have easier access to the records. The Town Clerk's Office takes the duty of recording land records very seriously.

Land Records are the transactions that take place with someone's property. That could be selling the property, getting a mortgage, a lien being put against a property (this could be a contractor, State, or Federal lien), Child Support documents, and many other types of transactions. The records that are stored in the town vault go back to the beginning of our Town. Original ones would be handwritten into the special books. As time went on the process changed: handwritten, typed, photocopied, and now scanned. In 2013, the Town Clerk and Assistant Town Clerk looked into different companies that specialize in digitizing land records. After visiting two towns that used different softwares, Roxbury signed a contract with a company to have Roxbury's records digitized. All new transactions are immediately scanned into the computer and, as time allows, the older ones are being indexed and scanned into the computer. We currently are back to 1996. All digitized documents are backed up offsite. There is a designated computer reserved for the researchers to access the documents that have been scanned. Copies of Land Records received are put into special binders and kept in the vault for those that do not want to use the computer, or to use if the computers are down.

continued on page 7...

ARPA Committee

Roxbury American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Committee

The purpose of the ARPA Committee has been to assist the Town of Roxbury's Selectboard in determining appropriate uses for the \$211,938.56 ARPA award. The ARPA Committee, through public input, has compiled a list of requested projects for the Selectboard's consideration. Decisions on spending are expected to be made in 2023 by the Selectboard after the ARPA Committee delivers their report in early January 2023.

In mid-September 2022, the Selectboard approved a \$20,000 allocation to CV Fiber. Having made the September 15th deadline, the allocation amount was matched by the Vermont Communications Broadband Board. This means Roxbury now has \$40,000 which is to be used solely in offsetting the out-of-pocket costs for connecting to CV Fiber. If you currently have an Internet connection speed lower than 25Mb down and 3Mb up or you are not now connected to the Internet, you will qualify for a one-time \$125 connection cost offset drawn on this reserve when you connect to CV Fiber.

The ARPA Committee conducted two public surveys in 2022. The first was run in September to solicit ideas from the public and to rank the scoring criteria the Committee relied on. The second survey was run in December so Roxbury folks could prioritize the list of requested projects for the Selectboard. Thank you to all who took time out of their days to participate in these two all-important surveys.

On an ARPA-related note, but not specific to Roxbury or our funding pool, please be advised that the State of Vermont is deploying some of its ARPA funding to assist those with failed or failing septic systems or water wells. One of the eligibility requirements is household income below \$80,835. Applications are being accepted 12-Dec-22 thru 31-Jan-23. Google "Vermont ANR Funding to Install or Replace Water or Wastewater Systems" for more information on this helpful program found on the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources website.

To keep up-to-date with all things Roxbury ARPA, including meeting minutes, discussion notes, proposed project details, contacts, and other status updates, please visit the Town's ARPA Committee website here: https://roxburyvt.org/roxbury-arpacommittee/

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.



Roxbury Community Crafters

by Mary Bouchard

Roxbury Community Crafters has become quite the weekly event! So much talent in our town. So many wonderful ideas and projects. And so much positive energy being enjoyed and spread each week!

The Roxbury Community Crafters began in September of 2022, and have completed 8 projects, all well-attended and successful. There have been more than 60 participants so far, with lots of us repeating again and again. Several generous and talented crafters have given of their time and inventory, providing hours of instruction, guidance, and entertainment. Each week someone brings delicious sweets, and tea and hot chocolate are always available and enjoyed. All crafts have been free to-date, with donations graciously accepted and earmarked towards our 4th of July events.

The schedule for 2023 is in place, with ten more projects scheduled through March 11th. This venture has become so successful that we are already planning crafts for next Fall/Winter.

Our projects are open to Roxbury adults, and sign up is done via our town webpage. Nina, our town webmaster, has generously provided her time, creating wonderful updates with pictures and quips from our crafts each week. Randy provides space for us to exhibit the upcoming craft, and is extremely instrumental in getting the word out. Carol Randall, Carma Flowers, and Dotti Guiffre, along with myself have provided the project classes and supplies. Class size is based on the project that week, and classes are filling nicely. Repeat crafters welcome new arrivals, updates and chatter continue all afternoon, we pitch in to help each other, and often enjoy taking a well-deserved break for tea and sweets. My favorite part of the day is to step back, take in the laughter, see the smiles, and know that we are here together for each other. All said, we are a small town with a very big heart!



A few of the Roxbury Community Crafters showing their creations at a December 2022 event

MRPS

(Montpelier-Roxbury Public Schools) Kristen Getler and Rhett Williams

Greetings, Roxbury!

With 14-18 inches of snow coating the area, I write this as the busy holiday season is in full swing. We have seen power outages, a snow day, and snowpeople across the schoolyard. We wish the very best to you and your families through this time of year. As always, our schools are busy and so is the school board.

Mission/Vision and Values work has resulted in the following Vision for Montpelier-Roxbury Public Schools:

MRPS graduates practice respect and dignity for all, rooted in a diversity of perspectives and fostered by critical, creative, and empathetic thinking. They are provided the preparation, support, and learning skills needed to fulfill their potential and succeed in the pursuit of their passions and talents. They approach their futures with a growth mindset and the tools to be resilient. They take responsibility for their beliefs, behaviors, and actions.

Some small alterations in that statement may occur as we dive further into a set of values reflective of broad community feedback.

The MRPS School Board of Directors committed to building a new track at the Montpelier High School. The track is paid for using Fund Balance money. The Fund Balance is the school district's savings account for money that has been budgeted and received from the tax base that was not spent. Unspent money accumulated during the pandemic. There are many reasons. Many positions were vacated and were unfilled for months. There were no field trips, no need for substitutes, decreased energy spending because of less building use, decreased spending for school lunches and food, decreased transportation costs, and early retirements filled by less-tenured teachers. Construction of a modern, rubber, six-lane track, with an eight-lane straightaway will begin this summer and conclude in 2024.

This year more than 80 athletes participated in track, a huge jump from previous years: 30 at MHS and 51 from MSMS. Track is one of the most inclusive and healthy activities available to our students. Participation in co-curricular (especially after school) activities is an opportunity to build relationships. We hope Roxbury middle and high school students are building relationships with our Montpelier peers. If you have questions or concerns about participation or the late bus, please contact us.

It is budget season again. School budgets are complicated. Property values influence school budgets, and property values have gone up. Equalized pupil weighting is a mechanism Vermont uses to provide more funds where they are needed for students receiving free and reduced lunch, students with disabilities, students who speak English as a second language, and/or students who are in high school (some of us know how challenging they can be). MRPS lost equalized pupils. Property values and equalized pupil weighting have increased pressure on our budget but, based on current projections and the most recently proposed budget, we expect to reduce property taxes this year.

We are working to move the district in a positive direction. Progress is being made supporting social emotional learning and providing targeted small group instruction. Relationships are being made and our students are growing and learning. We know the school district is a huge and complicated organism. Please share your experience with us. Help us help you.

Whoever you are, whatever you do, we hope lots of snow treats you well.

Kristen and Rhett
Kristen Getler (kristengetler@mpsvt.org)
Rhett Williams (rhettwilliams@mpsvt.org)



Roxbury Volunteer Fire Department

Thanks for Your Support!

The sportsman's raffle and dinner held in November by the Roxbury Volunteer Firefighters Association were very successful fundraisers. The association sincerely thanks all who participated in these events by purchasing raffle tickets, enjoying a delicious roast pork dinner, and/or volunteering to help with these activities. Community support is critically important in sustaining our volunteer fire department!

Roxbury Volunteer Fire Department Seeks New Members

The Roxbury Volunteer Fire Department seeks new members to participate in bimonthly meetings and emergency responses. Meetings are held on the second and fourth Sundays at 7PM. To learn more, contact RVFD Chief Mike Dickinson at m.dickinson76@gmail.com

RVS Caregivers Group

It's been a busy fall!

With the support of the Caregivers Group, students visited Liberty Orchard in Brookfield, and produced some fabulous apple treats! Holiday wreaths were sold and now are gracing doors around town. Visits to the forest continue, with volunteer support from the Caregivers Group, and students have moved on from studying the forest's fall transition to exploring this new winter habitat!

If you want a way to contribute to supporting our students, there's a number of upcoming activities that we wanted to make sure you were aware of:

- Ice Skating! With sinking temperatures, winter fun is about to begin the work of many hands means that the rink is prepped and, with the right weather, will be flooded and ready for stick time and toe jumps soon. This also means that maintaining the ice through snowstorms and sunny days could use the help of volunteers—reach out via email to learn more on how you can help! [Read more about the Roxbury Ice Rink in this issue, back cover.]
- High Mowing Seeds is back! This successful fundraiser helped support a spring field trip to the Montshire Museum last year, and we're hoping to do more similar activities. In an effort to help people dream of green earlier in the winter months, students will be selling seeds earlier, with sale packets headed home in early February. Orders will be collected through the first week in February. Don't know a local student?? An order form will also be available at the Roxbury Country Store, to make purchasing and supporting our students easy!
- The Caregivers Group has developed a wish list of items that would be helpful to support a fun, educational, and comfortable learning environment in the forest. Students spend the morning hours every Friday in the woods, exploring and learning together – but there is a need for additional gear and tools to make this experience as fulfilling as possible. To support this, there is an Amazon wish list of desired items – you don't have to purchase items through Amazon (there is an option to mark it there as "buying this gift elsewhere"), but items can be dropped off or delivered directly to the school. To view the needs, go here: Roxbury Village School Wishlist hosted by RVS Caregiver Group (https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ ls/83HFPRHRPGJX?ref =wl share&fbclid=IwAR2qL2d7 O9918Tw28C7gD1VpAF3gib85RiKySSLuGCwCt6Y7IR1 -OVoiHcw&mibextid=Zxz2cZ)
- If you'd rather donate funds directly to the RVS Caregiver

Group, you can do so through the link below. Clicking on the Donate button, located mid-way on the page, will direct any funds to our program rather than the district-wide Parents Organization: MRPS Partners in Education – Roxbury Village School. (https://www.mrpspie.org/rvs-pg)

The RVS Caregivers Group welcomes any and all to participate at whatever level you're willing and able. As a group, families, school staff, and community members provide much needed care and support to enrich the educational lives of our students. To learn more, offer new ideas for engagement, or to become more actively involved, please email: roxburypto@gmail.com We meet in person the 2nd Tuesday of each month from 5-6 p.m. at the school library, and provide ongoing updates in the school newsletter (The Buzz) and on the Roxbury Village School PTO Facebook page – follow these resources to stay engaged!



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

Roxbury Park Development Committee

Greeting from the Roxbury Village Park Committee.

The Thank You Celebration, which was held at the Roxbury Village Park on November 6, 2022, was a great success! It was attended by approximately 50 individuals, including children, and once again reinforced the Roxbury community's support for the Park. The event was highlighted by the excellent Cherry Garcia and Phish Food ice cream donated by Ben and Jerry's. It also included a tour of the park, a brief history of how far along we have come since we started the Roxbury Park Project a little over two years ago, and a ribbon cutting to officially open the gazebo, the jewel of the park. Another star was also added to the poster in front of the park, which indicates where we are along the path toward the completion of the Roxbury Village Park. The ribbon cutting and star placement were accomplished by children from the community.

Your financial support, donations of plants and labor, along with the excellent supervision of our landscape architect and project manager Dotti Guiffre, have brought us to where we are today. Thank you to all who have participated in the park project to date. Your efforts and enthusiasm are infectious, and we hope we continue to swell our ranks as we, as a community, move the park project forward to completion in 2023.

While the park is in its winter hibernation, the park committee will be meeting on January 5, 2023, to plan the spring project schedule and review grant funding. We wish you all a wonderful holiday season with family and friends.

The Roxbury Park Development Committee: Ed Carney, Elizabeth Carney, Dotti Guiffre, James Rogler, and Craig Sullivan



Roxbury volunteer youth help spread mulch in the Village Park

Planning Commission

The Roxbury Planning Commission held an informational meeting regarding the benefits of the recently acquired Village Center Designation on November 17, 2022, at the Roxbury Community Center. Caitlin Corkins, Tax & Grants Coordinator with the VT Agency Commerce & Community Development, presented an excellent review of the tax rebate and grant opportunities available to residents and business owners within the Designated Village Center. The session was well-attended and well-received.

The map showing the area and structures included in the Village Center Designation, and a link to the list of Grant opportunities, is available on the Town of Roxbury website.

Thanks,

The Planning Commission: Lucinda Sullivan, Elizabeth Carney, Dotti Guiffre, Mike French







Park Celebration, with gold stars for goals met, and the gazebo grand opening! Thank you, everyone!

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 Newsy Vol. 8 No. 1 January-March 2023



Roxbury Free Library Notes

Happy New Year, Roxbury!

We made it to 2023 and are excited to share a few highlights about upcoming happenings and other services at the RFL. Please note, final details about these, plus other forthcoming events, can be found on our website (roxburyfreelibrary.org). If all goes accordingly we will see some website renovation work during the coverage period of this issue. Don't forget the new year is a great time to be browsing the shelves. We've had half of the fiscal year to fill out the collection with new materials, and we're topping it off this time of year with some of the "best of" books we might have missed earlier. Stop in sometime and find your new favorite book (winter and spring hours: Tue. 10:00-6:00, Wed. 8:00-11:00, Thur. 2:00-5:00, and Sat. 10:00-3:00)

- **Jan. 16th** RFL Book Club is meeting at 7 p.m. to discuss Geraldine Brook's latest book *Horse*. Extra copies of the book are available at the RFL now.
- Jan. 17th Join us at the RFL, starting at 5 p.m., for a digital-platform open house. There are a lot of names and acronyms floating around the RFL these days (Palace, Libby, Hoopla, Kanopy, Overdrive...). This evening we'll spend time walking through how the different platforms work, how you can access each, and ensure you are maximizing your RFL account to its fullest potential.
- **Feb. 11th** Mobile Planetarium stops in Roxbury. This is a tentative date at the time of print. But we expect to be hosting a traveling planetarium that will set up in town and offer two different celestial shows for us to participate in.
- Tentative programs: Assuming the planning goes accordingly, we'll be hosting a Central Vermont Council on Aging presenter, providing guidance on avoiding phone and internet scams appropriate for everyone. We are expecting to be hosting a presenter from the VT. Partnership for Fairness and Diversity to lead participants through a program related to antiracism and implicit bias. More details coming soon.

We look forward to seeing you at these events. Nothing of interest to you? Please let us know what you'd like to see more of for RFL programming, so we can build better programs for the entire community.

We have another picture story ready to go up around the com-

munity ice rink later this winter. We hope you enjoy that contribution. Related, remember we do have a small assortment of kid's skates available to borrow. Please contact the RFL with any questions about borrowing them.

Finally, COVID-19 testing kits are now available at the RFL for pickup at no charge. Please let us know if you would like free COVID-19 testing kits.

From all of us at the RFL, all the best to you in 2023! Ryan, Caitlyn, Lisa, and your RFL volunteers and Trustee Board.

"From the Town Clerk" continued...

The Town Clerk is responsible for making sure the land records are recorded and indexed correctly. If land records are not done correctly, it could hinder the process of selling your property or getting a mortgage. As we scan the records, we must make sure no social security numbers are on the pages. In the old days, social security numbers were on mortgages and other types of records. Someone asked why they aren't online. The answer to that is I don't think it is necessary at this time. All land records are public records, and any one can come into the office and look at them. I think we have a wonderful town and I don't see why someone wouldn't want to come into the office to look at Roxbury's books. I also want to make sure the documents are indexed correctly and that no pages were missed when scanning them. An error could be unpleasant to the Town and the property owner. The State may mandate it someday, but not now. I wonder why we would want to put people's records online for so many people to look at and maybe use the information for illegal reasons. I know that many Towns have put their land records online for a variety of reasons, so maybe my concern is not warranted. As most of us know, Towns do things differently; what may work for one town doesn't mean it will work for all towns.

Per State law, copies of land records are \$1.00 per page, except for certain situations. People coming in to research the land records are charged \$4 per hour, which is prorated when less than an hour. The funds received for copies and researching are deposited into the Town's general fund as income received.

In time, things may change and the records may be online for people to access from their home or office, but for now I think it is best to keep the records offline and to continue backscanning the old documents and putting the new ones into the computer.

Be safe this winter & may 2023 bring you much happiness.



Roxbury Newsy

PO Box 95 Roxbury, VT 05669









Roxbury Ice Rink

Happy winter all.

Weather permitting, we hope to have the community ice rink filled and ready for skating in the first week of 2023. General reminder, the rink is open to everyone and anyone. The school tends to use the rink in the mornings or afternoons, but usually not five day a week. So, there is plenty of ice time for you and yours. As the saying goes, it's a good problem to have—last year was the first year we saw consistent high use of the rink. As we go into this next season, please be cognizant of your time on the ice and share the space with others if it ends up busy while you are there. Do not park in front of the Fire Dept. while using the rink. Parking is available either in the small area in front of the rink or at the Town Office. Please be respectful and clean up the ice and benches area after you finish. We had a long run of good ice last winter and are optimistic, weather cooperating, to make it even better this year.

If you have any questions or interest in getting involved, please reach out to Ryan Zajac at 485-4278. Embrace winter and enjoy some local skating!

Wonderful things happen when we work together! Building the ice rink in December 2022