

Roxbury Newsy

PO Box 95
Roxbury, VT 05669

Field Notes, Vol. 2

by Rachel Field

There is an allure to these hills that is as timeless and rugged as the people who live here. For ten thousand years people have made a home in this area of what we now call the Green Mountains. Some come here, some pass through, and some were born here and have remained a steady presence through the changing seasons and landscape for generations.

One such Roxbury resident is Wendy Cashman. One afternoon, as the roads heaved and sloshed with melting snow, I sat down for a cup of orange juice and a conversation with Wendy about the town she was born in and loves. She told me stories of walking to the one-room schoolhouse on Rt 12 near Baker Pond (uphill both ways, of course!), of smelling wild game like skunk cooking on John Ladd’s stove across the road, and of a family of loggers who attended the school with her—a heaping collection of boys who were pulling logs, built like



Artwork by Heidi Albright

oxen, and covered in hair all before the age of 10.

Through these stories is woven a thread of community. This thread is nowhere more apparent than in the story of the East Roxbury Goodwill Club. This rotating monthly potluck provided a chance for neighbors to spend time with each other, share food, stay in relationship throughout the year, and offer support when needed. Wendy remembers the Goodwill Club rallying to provide meal trains and childcare to folks when they were sick, had new children, or just needed a helping hand. At first glance the hills here are empty and quiet—still from the visible presence of humanity. But with a few questions, a glass of orange juice with a neighbor, the strong and deep threads of community begin to emerge. These are the threads, woven by woods and home cooked foods, that bind us together and define

Vermont’s incredible small communities, like the one we have here in Roxbury, Vermont. 🏠

How did you come to live in Roxbury? We want to hear your story!

Why do you live in Roxbury? Were you born here, or did you fall in love with it? If you have a story to share, contact Rachel at rachelf2000@gmail.com, or the RFL at librarian@roxburyfreelibrary.org.

Roxbury Newsy

Your community newsletter

April-June 2025, Vol. 10 No. 2

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Photos in this issue were contributed by VCRD, ROCORA, RCC, Heidi Albright, and Hannah Bryant. Artwork by Deb Rogler and Heidi Albright.

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



There was a fantastic turnout for the first meeting of What’s Next, Roxbury? Community Visits by VCRD. Shown here are some of the community members who attended the “Town Pride and Identity” topic.

What’s Next, Roxbury?

What’s Next, Roxbury - 1st and 2nd Meeting Recap, and Meeting April 28
By Alyssa Johnson, Community Visit Program Manager,
Vermont Council on Rural Development (VCRD)

The “What’s Next, Roxbury?” Community Visits are off to a strong start! The Community Visit process brings community members together in a neutral and facilitated structure to actively participate in examining issues, deciding top priorities, and developing action plans for the future of the town.

On February 18, over 70 Roxbury community members joined forums at the Village School to share ideas for the future of Roxbury. Participants also enjoyed music from the Northfield Fiddlers, pizza dinner, a community photo display, and connection with neighbors. In addition to the input shared at the meeting, community members provided ideas through paper and online surveys, and two youth forums with middle school students. On March 24, community members gathered for the second step in the process. Neighbors reviewed the ideas brainstormed at the first meeting, chose top priorities for the future, and brainstormed points of vision for Roxbury. Through a two-round voting process, the two top priorities determined by community members were:

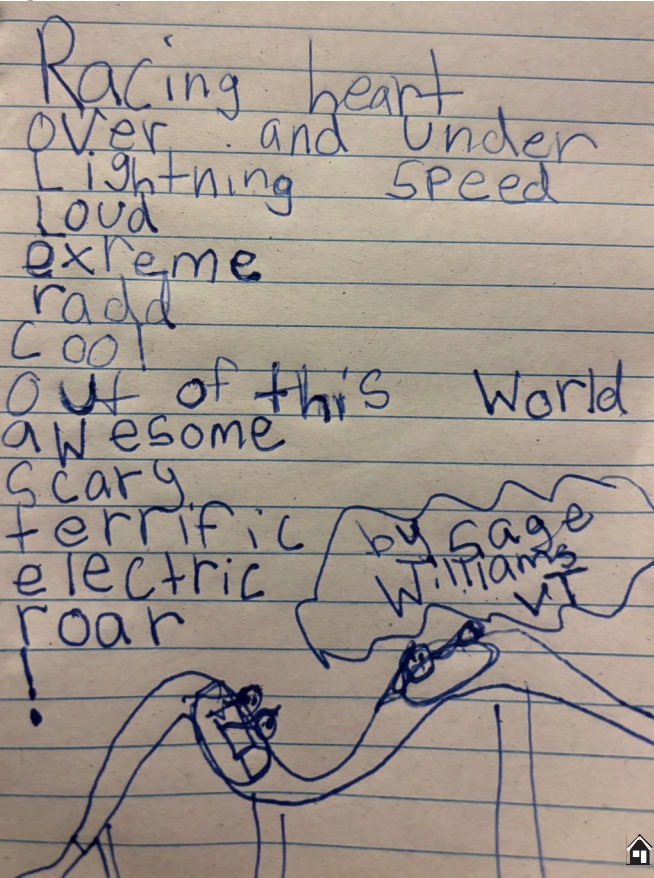
- Re-Imagine the Village School Building
- Collaborate to Share Skills & Resources, Boost Community Connection, and Support Neighbors and Places to Gather

Local task forces are now forming to move each item forward. Community members are welcome and encouraged to join a task force, regardless of whether or not they have participated in the process so far. Notes from the forums and surveys, the list of ideas and priorities chosen, along with photos and information about the process can be found at bit.ly/WhatsNextRoxbury.

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Poem

by Sage Williams



“What’s Next, Roxbury?” continued from front page...

The work of these first two meetings set the stage for the third and final step in the process. You are encouraged to join on Monday, April 28th from 6:00-8:30 at the Roxbury Village School to build action plans and vote on points of vision for Roxbury. At this meeting, community members will break into groups to define next steps and develop concrete plans for each of the chosen priorities with help from statewide and regional experts and resource providers. All are welcome, including those who were unable to attend the earlier meetings. Childcare and pizza dinner will be provided. If you need a ride, you can call Susan D’Amico at 802-485-5590 to make arrangements. For other accessibility requests, contact Alyssa at alyssa@vtrural.org or 802-222-6896.

The Vermont Council on Rural Development (VCRD) was invited by the Roxbury Selectboard, and provides the overall structure and neutral facilitation throughout the What’s Next, Roxbury process. VCRD is a non-profit, non-partisan organization dedicated to the advancement of Vermont communities, and has worked in over 90 Vermont towns. For questions or more information, you can visit <https://bit.ly/WhatsNextRoxbury>, or call VCRD at 802-223-6091, or email alyssa@vtrural.org. Thank you for being part of the future of your community! 🏠

From the Town Clerk

2025 DOG LICENSES

It is time to license your dog(s). The deadline is April 1st. The cost is \$11.00 for a neutered dog and \$15.00 for an un-neutered dog. After April 2nd the cost will be \$13.00 for a neutered dog and \$19.00 for an un-neutered dog. **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. Pursuant to 20 V.S.A. § 3581 of the Vermont Statutes, a dog must be licensed by six months of age at the Town Office to be legal. Proof of a rabies vaccination within the past year is required.** Dogs NOT licensed can be seized and euthanized per State Statutes. 20 V.S.A. § 3621 states a warrant can be issued to impound. The Town of Roxbury adopted an amended Dog Control Ordinance.

TAXES

The next property tax installment is due on May 9, 2025. The office will be open until 5 p.m. on Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday. The Town accepts postmarked envelopes.

SUMMER HOURS

Summer hours will begin May 2nd. The Town Office will close at noon on Fridays (except for the day property taxes are due, which happens to be the week of May 9th). Summer hours will end the last Friday of September.

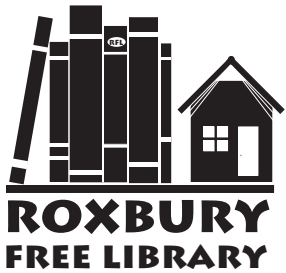
2025 TOWN MEETING

Town Meeting was on March 4th at the Roxbury Town Hall (Village School). Eighty-eight voters attended the annual meeting. One hundred and seventy-eight voters voted for Town Officials, as well as the Montpelier Roxbury School District and Central Vermont Career Center articles. All articles voted on the floor passed, though some were amended, and all articles for the Montpelier Roxbury School District passed in both towns. You can see the results on the Town’s website: www.roxburyvt.org

Officers that were elected on March 4th are:

- Town Moderator – Jackie Frazier
- Town Clerk – Tammy Legacy
- Town Treasurer – Anne Maxham
- Selectman for 3 years – Donna French
- Selectman for 2 years – Nate Donahue
- Selectman for 2 years – Jeremy Reed
- Collector of Delinquent Taxes – Bill Hansen
- Library Trustee – Jeanne Beckwith
- Cemetery Commissioner for 3 years – Sue Nevins
- Cemetery Commissioner for 1 year – Bill Cecil
- First Constable – Andy Apgar
- Second Constable – Bill Hansen

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Roxbury Free Library Notes

Happy Spring, Roxbury!

What will you find in and around the RFL this spring? First, a new Strategic Plan providing insight and direction for the RFL’s future. The RFL Trustees expect to adopt a 3 yr. Strategic Plan at their April 10 board meeting. The plan will be available on our website and we encourage you to check it out. Thank you to those who provided feedback during the process.

During the months covered by this issue of the Newsy, many of the seasonal museums and parks we offer admission passes to will be opening for the season (if they’re not already open). Take advantage of this cost-saving opportunity and get out to see some new or old favorite Vermont places. When you receive this issue it will still be tax season, so please note that the RFL has basic tax forms, computers, fax machine, and helpful staff ready to assist with your needs. We’ve been making inquiries into potential programs for the spring, but unfortunately don’t have many confirmed in time to share here. This spring, you can expect to find the RFL book club discussing poetry on April 14th, a Roxbury geology program, a chance to connect with Roxbury’s favorite reading dogs, the history of Windridge presentation, a Green Up Day Book Sale, and more. On the program planning theme, we have hosted a July Roxbury Garden Tour for three years now and would like to keep it going. So, we’re looking for new gardens to add to the tour. Please let us know if you’d like to get involved.

We would like to remind folks that there are all kinds of ways to get involved and share your talents and skills by volunteering at the RFL. A couple new faces have recently gotten involved at the RFL, and we’re excited to see the new energy and support. If you have any interest in getting involved, please reach out to talk about what options might exist. Let us conclude by acknowledging the positive support from Roxbury voters for the RFL and its operating budget at Town Meeting. With reliable support from the community and focused fundraising by the Trustees, we have much to be thankful for.

On that note, the RFL Board has organized a 2025 fundraiser raffle. You can purchase tickets at the RFL for \$5 each, or 5 for \$20. Raffle prizes include: 5 Peony roots from Third Branch

continued next column...

Flower Farm (\$100); 4 Shiitake mushroom logs from Moonlight Mountain Farm (\$100); and Gift cards to Hunger Mtn Coop (\$100), Frazier’s Greenhouse (\$100), Fernandez Hardware (\$100), Roxbury Country Store (\$120), Woodbury Toys (\$200), and Bear Pond Books (\$100). All fundraiser proceeds go to support library initiatives, like the Newsy you’re reading here! The winners will be drawn at the Roxbury July 4th Celebration Book Sale.

Your RFL staff: Ryan, Caitlyn, and Lisa, and the RFL Trustees 🏠
roxburyfreelibrary.org | librarian@roxburyfreelibrary.org
(802) 485-6860



“Town Clerk” continued from page 2...

There are two vacancies: Town Auditor and Town Lister. If you are interested in applying for one of those positions, please contact the Town Clerk at townclerk@roxburyvt.org or 802-485-7840.

SELECTBOARD

Roxbury Selectboard Members are René Bouchard, Tim Martin, Nate Donahue, Donna French, and Jeremy Reed. The Board will re-organize at their meeting on March 17th.

Longtime Selectboard Member David McShane resigned in January, and unfortunately for us, moved to another state. Jeremy was appointed to take Dave’s place. Dave McShane was on the Selectboard for 19 years, and served as Road Commissioner. Dave gave a lot to the Town; his knowledge about roads was very valuable to us and he worked hard to get us many grants to improve our roads.

2025/2026 PROPERTY TAX DUE DATES

At Town Meeting, the voters approved the dates the property taxes will be due. The due dates are August 15, 2025; November 14, 2025; February 13, 2026; and May 8, 2026. If payments are not received by the due date or postmarked by due date, a 1/2% interest will be charged on late taxes and 8% penalty will be charged after the May 8th payment is due.

GREEN-UP DAY

Green-Up Day is May 3rd. Please consider participating on Green-Up Day to keep Roxbury as clean as we can. Bring the trash that you pick up off the ground to the Town Garage. Green-Up bags will be available at the Town Office. There will be tire collection at the Town Garage. Cost for tires is not known at this time. If another site is added to Green-up Day, the notice will be advertised. The Roxbury Selectboard is still working on details. 🏠

ROCOR

by Debra Rogler

On February 25th, ROCOR (Roxbury Outdoor Committee on Recreation) members scouted out another potential area for hiking, XC skiing, or snowshoeing around Roxbury. The small pull off area (enough room for 2-3 cars) is located on the southern side of the Warren Road, just above the Roxbury/Warren line. The seven of us snowshoed in a short ways (1/4 mile) to a high mountain pond, located in the Roxbury State Forest. After trekking through some woods, the landscape opened up to a beautiful open area containing the pond. The scenery was spectacular with the ridgeline in the background. Please keep in mind that the Roxbury State Forest is for non-motorized use only. After our snowshoe, we all gathered at a member's home for a lively lunch! 🏠



photo contributed by ROCOR

Members and friends of ROCOR explore the pond at the top of the Gap.

Ice Rink Update

by Ryan Zajac

Did you miss the community ice rink this winter? The ice rink project took a break this year, as we didn't anticipate much usage without the RVS kids around to take advantage of it. Were you hoping to see it return in the future? Please reach out to Ryan Zajac if you'd like to see something happen with the Community Ice Rink next winter, or to get involved. 485-4278 🏠

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

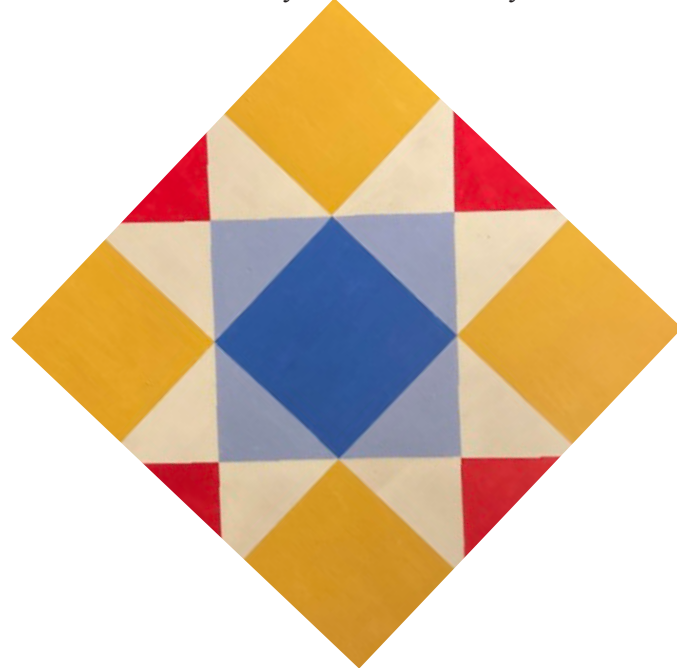
Roxbury Community Crafters

by Debra Rogler

The Roxbury Community Crafters 3rd Season offered 22 different classes with an attendance total of 202 participants from Roxbury and surrounding towns. That's 66 hours of classroom time, not including all the prep time leading up to the classes. That's amazing!

We learned all sorts of crafts, from felting, glass blowing, sewing, knitting, card making, basketry, embroidery, to corking and beyond... all while the camaraderie was flowing between old and new acquaintances. We thank all instructors who donated their time and materials, and for the support we receive from our community. Visit www.roxburyvt.com to see more.

RCC also held a Barn Quilt Demo Day to encourage folks to sign up for the 2025 Roxbury Community Barn Quilt Project scheduled for the end of March and sponsored by a generous grant from the Vermont Arts Council. We can't wait to see the results of this community-wide event intended to add to the positive momentum already started in Roxbury. 🏠



An example of a Barn Quilt by the Roxbury Community Crafters. Photo contributed by RCC

SPRING ROXBURY FREE LIBRARY HOURS

TUE 10:00 – 6:00
WED 8:00 – 11:00
THU 2:00 – 5:00
SAT 10:00 – 3:00

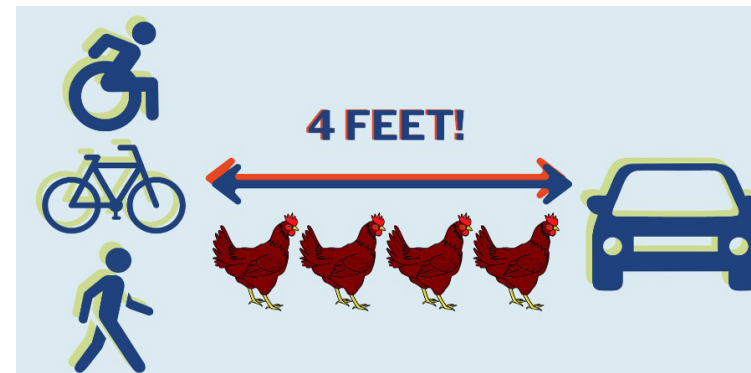
Road Safety

from *Watch for Me VT: a Statewide Driver, Pedestrian, and Cyclist Safety Program* website: <https://safestreets.vermont.gov>

We all share the responsibility to keep our roadways safe. To save lives, we have to watch out for each other!

Motor vehicle crashes are a leading cause of injury in Vermont. People walking, biking, and rolling are more vulnerable to injuries and death from vehicles when using our roadways. In Vermont, an average of 6 pedestrians die on our roads each year, and around 130 are hospitalized. An average of 1 cyclist dies on our roads each year, and around 171 are hospitalized. These deaths do not impact populations across Vermont equally. From 2011-2020, 51% of pedestrians killed on our roadways were 60+.

But these injuries and deaths are preventable. *Watch for Me VT* is a statewide campaign aimed at reducing the number of bicyclist and pedestrian injuries and deaths on our roadways through awareness, education, and enforcement. Learn more about the *Watch for Me VT* program and find more information on how to walk, drive, and ride your bike safely by checking out crash data, toolkits, and resources on these webpages (<https://safestreets.vermont.gov>)



Updates to Vermont laws, effective July 1, 2024:

23 V.S.A. § 4(67) The term "pedestrian" now includes people operating manual wheelchairs or assistive devices such as crutches or a walker, and they have right of way in cross walk.

23 V.S.A. § 1033- Passing motor vehicles and vulnerable users drivers are required to provide 4' of clearance when passing a vulnerable user. Vulnerable users are just about everyone not operating a motor vehicle: people walking, biking, and rolling; including people in wheelchairs, using walkers, road workers, and equestrians.

23 V.S.A. § 1055- Pedestrians on roadways

Any pedestrian can walk on the road (even when there are sidewalks present) as long as they walk only on the left side of the roadway, facing the direction of oncoming traffic.

Now that Spring is here, we can expect to see more cyclists and pedestrians on our roadways. Let's keep everyone—kids, elders, and each other—safe!

Driver Safety Tips

- Yield to pedestrians at crosswalks—it is the law!
- Speed kills! Obey all speed limits. A pedestrian hit by a car going 40 mph has an 85% chance of being killed. At 20 mph the risk is reduced to 5%.
- Avoid distracted driving, aggressive driving, and driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- Come to a complete stop at stop signs and red lights.
- Stay alert and share the road.
- Updated Law: Give bikes a mandatory distance of at least four feet of passing distance when it is safe to do so.
- Don't rely on eye contact to confirm that a cyclist or pedestrian sees you. They might not. It's safer to assume they don't see you.

Walking/Rolling Safety Tips

- Use sidewalks whenever possible.
- If there are no sidewalks, walk facing traffic and as far from the roadway as you can.
- Be bright at night with reflective gear and flashlights.
- Limit distractions and impairment while navigating roadways.
- Cross in well-lit areas with the best view of traffic.
- At a bus stop: cross behind the bus or in the crosswalk.
- Watch for cars, bikes, and other vehicles—because they might not be watching for you.

Biking Safety Tips

- Follow the rules of the road as though you were in a car.
- Be predictable and use hand signals.
- Ride in the same direction as vehicle traffic.
- Wear a helmet correctly on every ride to help prevent head injury.



An early morning ride in Roxbury.

- Helmets work only if you wear them correctly.
- Ride as far to the right as is safe. If there's no bike lane, ride in the travel lane when necessary for your safety.
- Be bright at night with reflective gear and bike lights. 🏠

MRPS Update, Spring 2025

By Kasey Kathan, MRPS Board Member for Roxbury

We find ourselves moving past the March 2025 Town Meeting day with a budget in place for next school year, an initial plan for ongoing discussion between the board and the town regarding the RVS building, and two members sitting on the board from Roxbury. Overall, a good position for what may, again, prove to be chaotic times for our statewide educational systems.

The 2025-26 budget passed, including funding for the afterschool Bridges program at RVS, with the possibility of increasing it from a three-day-a-week to a five-day-a-week program. The school board also included funding for operation and maintenance and/or leasing of the RVS building space to ensure that this valuable program for our community continues.

The MRPS Board is also paying attention to activities within the State Legislature where significant educational questions are being discussed. The components of funding our State educational systems while ensuring positive learning and social outcomes for our youth are complex and varied. Reducing the number of school districts, implementing a minimum class size, changing public funding for private schools, ceasing universal meal programs, and a variety of funding models have all been proposed and discussed. Regardless of what the outcome of these discussions winds up being, these changes are sure to have significant impacts on board activities in the coming year(s) and ultimately on our schools, families, and children. We will continue to let our community know what we know and remain open for discussion should you have thoughts on school board activities within this changing landscape.

The school board has also started planning for a discussion forum at RVS, for community members to reflect on the successes and challenges of integrating Roxbury's elementary school children into Union Elementary school over this past year. Look for future announcements confirming this opportunity, but it will likely be May 21st.

Outside of any planned forum discussion, please remain curious, and engage with us and the community. More information on school board activities, meetings, and discussions can always be found at: www.mrpsvt.org/school-board.

Meetings continue to be held at 6:30 p.m. on the 1st and 3rd Wednesday of each month, with every 4th meeting being held at the Roxbury Village School (March 19th and May

continued next column...

Roxbury Roots

by Jillian Abraham, Roxbury Roots Coordinator

Thank You, Roxbury!

It was wonderful to see everyone at Town Meeting Day! A big thank you for the amazing support Roxbury Roots received to keep our monthly community events thriving! There are many plans percolating for additional events for this Summer and Fall! We welcome ideas, requests, volunteers, and all else—so please reach out and share.

At the end of March, we hosted a Roxbury Roots Community Lunch on Saturday, March 29th and Sunday, March 30th, from 12–2 p.m. at the Roxbury Town Hall. Roots volunteers made tasty sandwiches, baked goods, and drinks. Did you see the quilt boards in the Roxbury Country Store windows?! The March lunches happened during the Roxbury Crafters Barn Quilting Workshop hosted in the Town Hall, where participants created beautiful, colorful painted boards to hang as “barn quilts”!

Monthly Suppers are back to our regularly scheduled programming, starting in April! Join us on the last Friday of each month from 5–7 p.m. at the Roxbury Town Hall for a delicious community meal. Want to be part of the fun? Help prepare the food at the Roxbury Community Center on the last Thursday of each month from 3:30–7 p.m.

To reach Roxbury Roots you can always email us: roxbury-rootsvt@gmail.com

To make a donation visit <https://roxburyrootsvt.weebly.com/>, or write a check to VFFS (Roxbury Roots) and mail to PO Box 48 Roxbury VT 05669.

We look forward to seeing you soon! 🏠

“MRPS Update” continued...

21st). Public comment is welcome at all meetings, typically at the beginning of the agenda. You can also stay up to date with MRPS news through the principal's newsletters and the monthly district newsletter. There's also opportunity to reach out directly to the principals and superintendent, or you are welcome to contact either/both of us to discuss your thoughts, comments, or concerns.

Kasey Kathan, kaseykathan@mpsvt.org
Rhett Williams rhettwilliams@mpsvt.org 🏠



Donation jars as seen at Town Meeting. All donations supported Roxbury Roots and Roxbury Rising.

Jars created by Hazel, photo by Hannah Bryant

The Community Comes Alive!

A snippet of town history, by Aggie Smee

This announcement, tucked in a scrapbook belonging to Jane Pincus, is from 1988. It describes the efforts to save the building now known as the Community Hall/Senior Center.

What's that? You are driving, biking, walking past Roxbury's historic community building (formerly the Grange). You stop in amazement. You see a rebuilt porch, a new ramp, Hallowe'en decorations on the windows, and a lot of activity, especially on Monday (Whist) and Wednesday (Bingo).

Who was responsible for bringing this building to life again? Grace Messier, for one. “The town was going to tear it down because it wasn't being used.” She got the Fire Department and the Ladies Auxiliary involved. They approached the Selectmen and convinced them that the building provided great space for community activities to take place. The Selectmen said “Prove it.” And so they did.

Who is “they?” Well, volunteers did the renovations. Norman Smith, Carmie Messier, and Tom Frazier donated time and materials. Don Randall, Louis Messier, Tim Martin, Reginald Dopp, Dot Danner, Lillian Garner, Kim Martin, and Michelle Farina—all worked hard. The waterpipe and lumber were donated. The town paid for the lumber for the ramp, as well as fuel and electricity.

What has happened in the community building so far? Whew! A lot! Whist parties every Monday night, Bingo every Wednesday night, and public suppers. Roxbury held its primary election there and we'll vote for the next president there on November 8th [1988]. The building is host to Historical Society meetings, as well as the PTO-sponsored Hallowe'en party. In short, the place is humming.

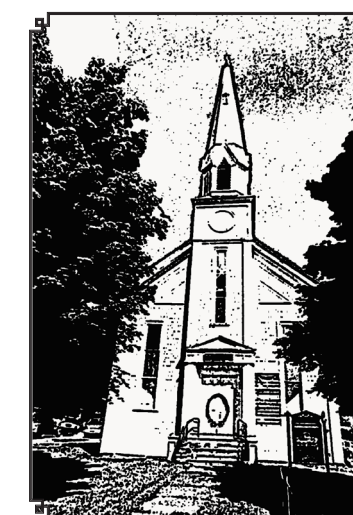
November plans include a potluck dinner (Saturday, Nov.5th)—ask for Grace's baked beans—with a drawing for a cord of wood, and a Hunter's Supper (Saturday Nov 12th). These dinners benefit the Fire Department. December will bring another potluck and a Christmas party.

Donations are always welcome, as are card tables, folding chairs, and dishes. Says Grace, who can be found at the Town Clerk's office (485-7840) or at home (485-7928), “We welcome any event that invites the community to get together.” 🏠

An announcement celebrating the Roxbury community spirit in 1988!

Congregational Church

by Claire Chomentowski



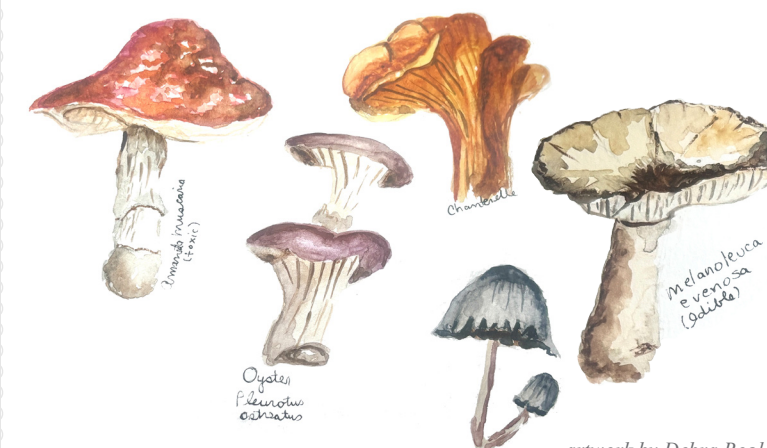
The Roxbury Church will once again sponsor our free community lunch at noon on Green Up Day, Saturday, May 3rd. You needn't be part of the green up effort to partake of great food and company.

And in June, we'll start collecting gently-used items for our annual July 4th rummage sale, a fundraiser we depend on every year. So please, if you've been waiting for someone to cart away stuff

that's been collecting dust in a corner over the years, you are in luck! Call 802-485-7779 for pick up service. (And if you're greeted with the trombone when you call, leave a message with my cat.) 🏠

Roxbury Green Up Day Saturday, May 3rd.

The bags can be picked up on Claire Chomentowski's front porch (red house next to the Post Office), and we'll have our traditional lunch at the church at noon. Please join us!



artwork by Debra Rogler

Roxbury Food Shelf: open every Wednesday from 12 p.m.-1:30 p.m. Individuals in need of food can contact Claire Chomentowski at (802) 485-7779.

You can find town documents, meeting agendas and minutes, meeting warnings, and town governance information at the official town website: www.roxburyvt.org