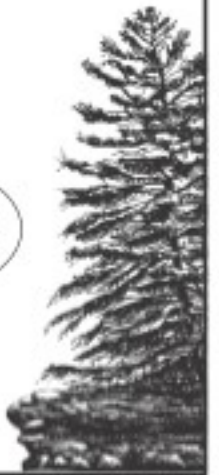




New Marlborough 5 Village News

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Clayton • Hartsville • Mill River • New Marlborough • Southfield

THE MBI-WIREDWEST SMACKDOWN

Fiber takes a shocking detour en route to New Marlborough

by Barry R. Shapiro

The march of WiredWest to become the fiber optic service operator in New Marlborough and elsewhere came to a screeching halt on December 1 with the stunning announcement from the Massachusetts Broadband Institute (MBI) that it would refuse to fund the construction costs of any town that uses WiredWest's services as currently proposed.

Here's the background.

MBI was formed by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in 2008 to invest up to \$40 million of state money for broadband-related infrastructure and improvement projects, such as the construction of a fiber optic network in our town. MBI works with towns to design and construct "last mile" broadband service to residents and businesses, to provide construction management services and to assist with the selection of an operator, such as WiredWest, to run the network once built. Estimates are that between thirty-three and forty percent of the cost of constructing the network would be paid by MBI, significantly reducing the cost to be incurred by the towns.

WiredWest was formed in 2011 to create a cooperative of forty-four towns in western Massachusetts, to



provide education and outreach to the towns and to operate the network once constructed. WiredWest has worked closely with MBI to this end and has enrolled over 7,000 residents in its plan for a regional network, with more than forty percent of New Marlborough households showing their support for the system by sending WiredWest a refundable \$49 deposit. According to WiredWest, twenty-four towns have voted to approve a total of \$38 million in debt to proceed with the construction with a cooperative such as WiredWest owning and operating the network, or with an as-yet unselected owner/op-

erator. (Some towns have elected not to go with WiredWest and are using other operators.)

All seemed to be moving along relatively smoothly, and recently WiredWest introduced an agreement (called an Operating Agreement) for the participating towns to sign by early January, 2016. This fairly complex legal document describes how the towns would collaborate to own and operate the system, once constructed, through WiredWest.

And that's when MBI, in the most unequivocal language, dropped the hammer.

Their December 1 press release states, "...the operating agreement...is not compatible with the best interests of the Commonwealth, the towns or their residents. The operating agreement coupled with the business plan would require substantial, in some ways fundamental, revision in order to succeed as a reliable framework for the startup and operation of broadband..." Among the

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provisions deemed offensive by MBI are those which provide that the network is owned by WiredWest “in perpetuity” while the towns retain “ultimate responsibility” to repay the debt, and that the towns lose all rights to the network if they leave WiredWest with no assurance of repayment of the debt they incurred to build the network. Also cited is the absence of a clear means to resolve financial shortfalls which could lead to the sale or mortgaging of the network without any return of funds or control to the towns. MBI also objects to the towns losing direct control over their network, the loss of flexibility and the fact that the WiredWest model, “...creates unnecessary financial and operating risks for the towns.”

MBI and some “industry experts” also examined the WiredWest draft business plan, which MBI found unacceptable for a variety of reasons including that, “...the current draft plan understates challenges and expenses and overstates the amount and timing of anticipated revenues.” MBI also objects to WiredWest’s plan to operate independently rather than relying on professional and technical partners, an “expensive and very challenging” staffing model and a plan to repay the towns’ debt which “...will be difficult or impossible to achieve at reliable subscription rates.” MBI also refers to its so-called “Last Mile Broadband Policy,” adopted on July 30, 2015, which contains many “guiding policies” which the WiredWest plan contradicts.

MBI’s bottom line to WiredWest: You need to fix these problems which are “substantial” and “fundamental.”

MBI’s bottom line to the towns: Go with WiredWest under the proposed operating agreement and business plan terms and we won’t give you a dime.

Response from WiredWest: unbridled fury.

“We’re furious because we feel betrayed. MBI has indicted us in the court of public opinion without cause,” said Tim Newman, New Marlborough’s representative on the WiredWest board. “They have not privately articulated their concerns as they should have. They are only now discussing setting up meetings to see if we can reach common ground. I can only speculate that their intention was to weaken us so we need to give in to their demands. We completely disagree with their position and strongly believe that our business model and operating agreement proposal are sound and in the towns’ best interests. I’m hopeful that we can reach an agreement with MBI so we can move forward. We’ve put too much work into this, it’s too important to the towns and we’re not prepared to simply give up.”

WiredWest has issued a detailed press release which responds to MBI’s claims, accuses MBI of throwing the project into “chaos,” and charges that MBI is ignoring the will of the towns and trying to control the project. WiredWest points out that the towns will actually own and control WiredWest and cites a study

from a leading consultant which concluded that the WiredWest financial model “...has been well designed and is a reasonable portrayal of its business.” WiredWest further asserts that if a town leaves WW after the ten-year minimum commitment, “...it will be reimbursed in full for its outstanding debt for the project,” an assertion directly at odds with the claim made by MBI.

This contentious dispute, where MBI says that the WiredWest model is not in the best interests of the Commonwealth and WiredWest says that it is, has created a dilemma for all of the towns which had been having discussions with WiredWest, including New Marlborough, and the Board of Selectman has written to MBI requesting its guidance and opinion. For more information on the position of the Board of Selectman, please see *The View from the Board*, on page 7 of this issue.

The only thing that seems certain for now is, barring a change in position by MBI or WiredWest, towns will be unlikely to select WiredWest as their operator because of MBI’s criticism and its refusal to fund any town which signs on with WiredWest. Whether MBI has sounded the death knell of WiredWest, a venture into which so many have poured so much hard work, or whether MBI and WiredWest can resolve their dispute are questions which remain to be determined.

Stay tuned. □

Editors Note: As this issue was being readied for printing, and just four days after the above article was written, some hope of a resolution to the conflict between MBI and WiredWest has indeed appeared on the horizon. On December 19, WiredWest issued the following statement: ‘Last week, several WiredWest Executive Committee members participated in a meeting hosted by MBI in Westborough, and it was agreed that the two organizations would address the specific issues of contention in breakout committees on finance and governance, with meetings in the very near future. WiredWest is also asking for a committee on technology, to work closely with MBI on network design, to ensure operational efficiencies are taken into account.’

‘Monica Webb, Chair of WiredWest, said: “I am confident that with genuine, open-minded collaboration, the two groups can resolve our differences in last-mile plans, and get the process of bringing desperately-needed broadband to the unserved back on track. We are all vested in the expeditious achievement of that goal.”’

So again, stayed tuned.

LET THERE BE LIGHT

If you've driven to Great Barrington on Routes 57 and 23 after dark during this holiday season, then you've seen it: the amazing lighting display covering the grounds of Eagleton School. In essence it's a gift from the students and staff of Eagleton to all who pass by.

Eagleton is a residential psycho-educational treatment center for boys and young men ages nine to twenty-two with behavioral, emotional, and developmental disorders. It was founded in 1977 and is still directed by Bruce Bona, a New Marlborough resident. Mr. Bona said that the lighting decorations began very modestly around 1980, a natural part of the home atmosphere of the students' residences. The students have taken a great interest in creating and constructing the lighting, so the display has gradually increased through the years.

A couple of years ago, a "waterfall" appeared toward the northwest edge of the display, over a open rock face. Mr. Bona noted that this year, some of the students were trying to figure out how to add fish to the waterfall. (That attempt evidently didn't work out, but now there are several "small animals" in the pool at the base of the waterfall.)

This year a menorah was added on seven trees close to the south side of Route 23, and a gigantic Star of David is in the center of the field. In the past, an American flag has been woven into the backstop of the baseball field. This year the students and staff created a much larger flag on a wooden frame that is propped against the backstop.

The cost? Mr. Bona wasn't specific, but observed that, "The advent of LED lighting has made it possible to continue the expansion. Our cost now is about ten percent of what it would have been otherwise." For the students, the challenge of creating and constructing the displays and the pride in the results justify the cost.

When asked how long the display would remain, Mr. Bona said they usually leave it up for a week or so after New Year's Day, so there's still time for those who haven't seen it. Color versions of these photos and a short video of the waterfall can be found on the *New Marlborough 5 Village News* website, www.nm5vn.org. □

Barbara Lowman



Giant Menorah on the third night of Hanukkah



The flowing waterfall, with wildlife



Trees sculpted in lights



The Star of David, standing amidst colorful Christmas trees

photo by Larry Barke

photos by Larry Barke

Town Business Is Your Business



BOARD OF SELECTMEN

November 23: With all three members present, the Board set a date of **December 10 for its annual budget kickoff meeting with the Finance Committee.** The date is subject to confirmation by Finance Committee Chairman Dave Herrick.

Selectman Yohalem reported on the latest shared services meeting, held the previous Tuesday at the Sheffield Town Hall. In addition to New Marlborough, there were selectmen attending from Sheffield, Sandisfield, and Monterey. According to Mr. Yohalem, the group discussed the possibility of sharing in the purchase of three pieces of road maintenance equipment, a roller, a paver, and hot box for transporting asphalt for total cost of \$200,000, or \$50,000 per town. The selectmen said they would take

it back to their full boards for further discussion. Mr. Yohalem said he also brought up the idea of sharing either a conservation commission or board of health position, pointing out that both positions can be difficult to fill given the amount of time and expertise required.

The Board approved the request for information, or RFI, document drafted by Tom Stalker, for distribution to potential broadband system operators. Mr. Stalker said he would post a notice of its availability on the state's procurement website, the Goods and Services Bulletin, while the Town Hall staff will send out notices to a number of system operators who have indicated an interest in bidding.

The Board approved a memorandum of understanding drawn up by the five towns of the Southern Berkshire

Regional School District with their **proposal for resolving the school budget assessment impasse.** Once approved by the boards of all five towns, the memorandum will be presented to School Superintendent David Hastings and to the School Committee's Finance Subcommittee for review and possible action.

In setting its end-of-year holiday schedule, the Board said there will be no meeting on Monday, December 28, and that it may also cancel the December 21 meeting, depending on the agenda.

The Board voted to appoint **Gina Campbell to the position of assistant treasurer for tax title.** This is in addition to her current position of tax collector. Her appointment parallels that of Town Clerk Kathy Chretien, who is also an assistant treasurer, responsible for payroll and receivables. This latest move reflects the Board's decision to keep looking until it finds "the right person" to replace former Treasurer Peter Gay who resigned the position as of October 27. The Board is also considering hiring an outside contractor, Baystate Municipal Accounting Group of Maynard, Massachusetts, to take over some of the other treasurer duties.

December 7: After approving the minutes from the meetings of November 9 and 16 and the joint meeting with the Finance Committee October 22, the Board discussed the latest developments in the School District's budget assessment impasse. As reported by Chairman Shalaby, the Finance Subcommittee of the School Committee declined to endorse the memorandum of understanding put forth by the five district towns, stating that on the advice of counsel it would not recommend signing the document "because of items in it that are not legal." Instead, the subcommittee agreed to introduce a series of motions at the December 9 meeting of the full School Committee that incorporate "pertinent terms" from the memorandum and that hopefully that will lead to a resolution of the crisis. "While this appeared acceptable to us and to Monterey," Selectman Yohalem said, Sheffield and Egremont were no longer at the meeting, having walked out because, "they didn't like the tenor of the conversation." But, as Ms. Shalaby noted, resolution of the issue really depends on what Sheffield and the School Committee decide to do, and

'The Board approved a memorandum of understanding drawn up by the five towns of the Southern Berkshire Regional School District with their proposal for resolving the school budget assessment impasse.'

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that the other four towns are merely bystanders to the process. "It all hinges on Sheffield," she said.

(Editor's Note: Subsequently, the subcommittee's motions were made and carried by the full School Committee at the December 9 meeting, which reduced Sheffield's assessment deficit to approximately \$89,000, while maintaining the assessment credits of the other four district towns. The committee also agreed to monthly budget reviews and to recertify the budget every 38 days through March 2016, so Sheffield can continue to pay its original assessment based on the budget certified last March, while the other four towns pay revised assessment amounts based on the most recently certified budget – essentially the same terms comprising the memorandum of understanding.)

Reporting on the latest shared services meeting, with Monterey and Sheffield also in attendance, Mr. Yohalem said Monterey is only interested in sharing in the purchase of the \$40,000 hot box, but not the paver and the roller. This effectively eliminates the paver and roller from further consideration, since, as Highway Superintendent Loring noted, they're really too expensive to be shared by just two towns. "You'd want to share those with four or five towns," he said. Separately, Sheffield said it would like to invite seniors from other towns, including New Marlborough, to use its Senior Center, and indicated it had a van that could provide transportation to and from the center for seniors that need it. The Board said it would refer the matter to Council on Aging Chairman Prue Spaulding.

Reporting on the latest Route 57 meeting in Tolland, Selectman White said that Granville Selectman Ted Sussmann, Jr. has drafted a letter making the case for why the state should take over maintenance of the road and proposing ways in which a partnership with the Office of Transportation and the five towns through which Route 57 passes might work. The letter is being circulated to the other four towns – Monterey, New Marlborough, Sandisfield and Tolland – for their

review and comment, and will be finalized at the group's next meeting January 22. The towns are hoping their local legislators will be able to attend and advise them on how to approach the state.

In the absence of any strong candidates to fill the vacant treasurer's position, the Board said it is giving serious consideration to hiring Baystate Municipal Accounting Group to handle most of the town's treasurer functions for the balance of the current fiscal year, overlapping into the first month of fiscal 2017. As Town Administrator Enoch noted, the firm can do most of the work remotely with occasional onsite visits and that the cost of the contract, \$11,000, will fit within the existing treasurer's budget, but will require an extra \$1,000 for the first month of fiscal 2017. The Board said it wants to review a copy of the contract before voting to retain the firm.

Ms. Enoch said the Town has received seventeen requests for the broadband Request for Information, or RFI, since making it available for distribution two weeks ago. The Board also discussed the possibility of building a hybrid broadband system that makes use of both fiber and wireless technology to distribute Internet and phone service. Such a system, it was noted, would be cheaper and faster to build but wouldn't have the ultrahigh speed of a full fiber system. It also wouldn't be able to provide TV, but would be considerably faster than current DSL service, and could evolve over time into a full fiber implementation, if the need was there. Such a system is currently being piloted in the town of Royalston, northwest of Worcester, in cooperation with Massachusetts Broadband Institute (MBI), which is funding the technical design work.

In the wake of a directive from MBI to western and central Massachusetts towns not to sign an operating agreement with WiredWest, with the warning that it will not authorize state funding for any towns that do, Chairman Shalaby drafted a letter to MBI Director Eric Nakajima requesting guidance and clarification

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on how a regional broadband network would work without a common operator like WiredWest. After thanking him for MBI's involvement in the discussions between the towns and WiredWest regarding the proposed WiredWest operating agreement, she states that it is New Marlborough's preference to be part of a regional network and asks in effect how or even whether a regional network would work without a common operator. She also makes note of "the tremendous effort" WiredWest has put into creating a regional model, and says she hopes it can modify its organizing concept and business plan sufficiently "to qualify for state funding." (For further details on the MBI-WiredWest imbroglio see The MBI-WiredWest Smackdown on page 1.)

Town Administrator Enoch reported the Town has finally received the necessary permits from the Army Corp of Engineers to replace the Clayton Mill River culvert and has indicated the work can be done any time, meaning it doesn't have to wait for the low water season next July.

Before adjourning, the Board approved the installation of a railing along the walkway leading from the Town Hall parking lot down to the front door of the town offices. As was noted, the walkway often gets icy during the winter. Separately, the Board voted to remove Susan Cane as a member of the Cultural Council, at the council's request because she has been unable for personal reasons "to fulfill the obligations of her position." She was appointed to a three-year term in October 2014.

December 10: The Board met in joint session with the Finance Committee for a ninety-minute-plus budget kickoff meeting that started at 7:00 p.m. All three Board members were present, as were Finance Committee Chair Dave Herrick and members Prue Spaulding, Mark Carson, and John Pshenishny. The first order of business, after a brief update from Chairman

'Chairman Shalaby drafted a letter to MBI Director Eric Nakajima requesting guidance and clarification on how a regional broadband network would work without a common operator like WiredWest.'

Shalaby on the school budget assessment situation and the Board's efforts to find a new treasurer, was to review and approve the newly formalized financial policies for the town (For further details, see Board of Selectman Report in the December issue of the NM5VN). This was followed by a review of the current state of the fiscal 2016 budget and look ahead at the upcoming fiscal 2017

budget process. There was also a discussion of the large capital requirements facing the Town including road repairs, possible construction of a broadband network and the Town's share of School District's boiler and roof replacement projects. Ms. Shalaby said she would like to hold a public presentation of the Fiscal 2017

budget prior to the Annual Town Meeting in May.

December 14: Because of holiday-related schedule conflicts the regular portion of the meeting was moved up to 11 a.m., with all three members attending. There was also a tax rate classification hearing held at 6:00 p.m., with two members present, and the Board agreed to defer the Alcohol Beverages Control Commission hearing scheduled for 7:15 p.m. until Monday, December 28, at 10 a.m.

After approving the minutes of the November 23 and December 7 meetings, the Board voted to authorize Selectman White to sign the Baker-Polito Administration's Community Compact Agreement in which seventeen Southern Berkshire towns, including New Marlborough, agree to collaborate on shared services initially involving the towns' school districts but later expanded to include public works, public safety and human services. The signing will take place Tuesday, December 22, at 1:30 p.m. at the Great Barrington Town Hall.

The Board approved the contract with Baystate Municipal Accounting Group to take over all Town treasurer duties except tax title, weekly payroll and receipts. The \$11,000 contract runs from December 14, 2015, through July 31, 2016, and also covers the training of a new treasurer, which the Board hopes to have in place by the July 1 start of the next fiscal year.

Chairman Shalaby, who, along with Selectman White, attended last week's two-and-a-half hour School Committee meeting, gave a brief synopsis of how the committee finally resolved the budget assessment impasse, approving a series of motions that essentially mirrored the terms set forth in the towns' memorandum of understanding. "Everything is settled for now," Ms. Shalaby said, "as long as everybody sticks to what they said they'd do." The net result to New Marlborough is a \$20,000 reduction in the Town's school budget assessment.

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Town Administrator Enoch said she's planning to file an application for a District Local Technical Assistance (DLTA) grant from Berkshire Regional Planning Commission (BRPC) for help in developing a model for structuring agreements with other towns for sharing benefits of part-time employees who also work for the other towns. While the immediate beneficiary of such an agreement would be New Marlborough's animal control officer John Springstube, who also serves six other towns, including West Stockbridge, the model will prove useful as the trend towards shared services by local towns gains momentum. Later in the meeting, Chairman Shalaby said the Planning Board will be filing for two DLTA grants, one for assistance in updating the town's open space and recreation plan, which she noted is now three years out of date. The other is to develop a comprehensive assessment of housing in the town.

The Board approved the hiring of Pete Wilson as a full-time permanent Highway Department employee. Mr. Wilson, a New Marlborough resident, joined the

department in September as a full-time temporary employee, filling in for Lynn Reineke-Kelsey, who'd been out on leave since July. He'll be earning \$19 per hour plus benefits. His appointment is effective immediately.

The Board held a property tax classification hearing with Chairman Marsha Pshenishny and Wendy Miller of the Board of Assessors. Two selectmen were present, Chairman Michele Shalaby and Selectman Tara White. **As in the past, the assessors recommended a single tax classification for both residential and commercial properties and proposed a tax rate of \$9.60 per \$1,000 of valuation.** That's a sixteen cent increase over the previous year's rate and would mean the owner of an average \$250,000 home would see a \$40 increase in their annual property tax. The Board approved the single tax classification, and the new rate is subject to verification by the state's Department of Revenue. The rate will be reflected in the tax bills going out later this month and due February 1, 2016. □

Peter Schuyten

THE VIEW FROM THE BOARD

The broadband effort continues on several fronts. Most publicly, you may have seen disagreements between Massachusetts Broadband Institute and WiredWest. You may have also noticed that the Board is relying more on the regional press as a way of exchanging information with the other towns that are confronting the same questions we are facing. We are finding this to be an effective way of engaging with other towns in information and idea exchange. Many readers are taking part in their own exchanges and debates through print and digital media. Sometimes it feels like we are going backward, but actually, challenging each other's ideas can bring us to a more informed, confident position at decision time (Special Town Meeting).

As the Board continues its due diligence, we will be asking for a resolution between the conflicts of MBI policy and the WiredWest operating agreement and business model. This will require flexibility and leadership from both organizations and we are willing to be partners to this end. We feel that an examination of financial and operational efficiency, as well as of risk mitigation, must include the regional network model as an option.

Wired West has been an invaluable advocate for bringing broadband to our towns. Its efforts have influenced the Commonwealth to finance and build the Middle Mile and now WiredWest has created a regional plan for building and operating a Last Mile network. Many wonder why, if WiredWest represents towns and has done this work on behalf of the towns, we would continue to ask questions and revisit some of its efforts. We are taking extra caution because the amount of money

and complexity of this effort is unprecedented. It is also an industry in which our town has no experience. A few months of careful examination may be exasperating but is absolutely warranted.

Please join us in this examination. We will be all the better with greater numbers of thoughtful, informed citizens. While engaging and asking some difficult questions, I ask you to be mindful especially of our WiredWest volunteers, who likely feel exasperated far more than the rest of us. While the questions are necessary, we can pose them respectfully.

MBI will be holding community meetings in December and January to give detailed presentations about its analysis of the WiredWest Operating Agreement and business plan. We'll be there. □

Michele Shalaby, Chairman, Board of Selectmen

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WHO YA GONNA CALL? (PART 2)

by Larry Burke



Chief Chuck Loring



Deputy Chief David Smith



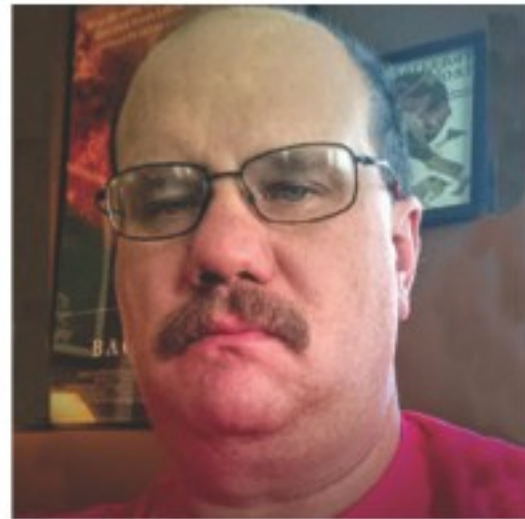
Assistant Chief Robert Dvorchik



Engineer Jim Redman



Captain David Herrick



Captain Ed Harvey



Lieutenant Mark Lane



Winona Carpenter

In last month's issue of *The New Marlborough 5 Village News* we gave you an update on the emergency medical side of New Marlborough Fire & Rescue, and, as promised, we are back to talk about the good folks who aid and protect us in times of danger and loss caused by fire, storm, or unforeseen accidents – our firefighters.

Deputy Fire Chief and President of the New Marlborough Fire Company David Smith sat down with us on a recent Sunday morning to discuss the current status and plans for the near future of New Marlborough Fire & Rescue. The first topic up was personnel – who exactly are the men and women volunteering their time to keep us safe? Beginning with the officers, they are: Chief Chuck Loring, Deputy Chief David Smith, Assistant Chief Robert Dvorchik, Engineer Jim Redman, Captain David Herrick, Captain Ed Harvey, Lieutenant Mark Lane; these men are backed up by firefighters Karisa King, Mathew Wright, Travis Weigle, Bill Ruane, Rob Scott, Shane Riiska, Winona Carpenter, Eli Dvorchik, MacKenzie Loring, Courtney Davis, Harrison Newman, Brittney Lane, Michelle Dawson, and Bob Litchfield. Most of these men and women have been serving as firefighters for a very long time, many of them having put in more than twenty years service, so the depth of experience is remarkable.

Along with experience goes continuing training, which occurs every Tuesday of the month except the first, which is the business meeting. The head of the training program is Captain Ed Harvey. His approach is

to emulate as closely as possible the training regimen of the Massachusetts Fire Academy, with weekly units on all aspects of fire ground tactics and methods, including instruction on ropes, ladders, airpacks, hoses and nozzles, rural water supply pumping, and CPR. In Ed's words, "It is really a matter of life and death in some cases. For instance, if we don't train new firefighters and EMS responders about the dangers of something as simple as a downed power line, the result could be a line-of-duty death. Skills need to be automatic when responding to emergencies, skills like donning a self-contained breathing apparatus, knowing the many miles of roads, and being able to safely drive the apparatus and then operate the pump or other equipment. New Marlborough Fire & Rescue members commit to a combined 2,500 hours of training each year. This volume of dedicated time prepares us to respond to everything from the proverbial cat in the tree to a fully-involved structure fire."

As with the EMTs, a good number of our firefighters work out of town during the day. Response to daytime calls is, as Deputy Chief Smith says, "always a challenge, but we never hesitate to call mutual aid when there is the need." Recruitment of new members is never far from anyone's mind, but Smith thinks the current roster is highly capable of getting the job done, as evidenced by their efficient knockdown of a recent chimney fire in Mill River and the excellent save on a well-involved structure fire in Southfield last spring.

On the subject of the buildings that house NMF&R,



Junior Firefighter Brian Dillon



Eli Dvorchik



Courtney Davis



Michelle Dawson



Karisa King



Brittney Lane



Bob Litchfield



Michaela Loring



Harrison Newman



Shane Riiska



Bill Ruane



Rob Scott

Photos by Ed Harvey



Travis Weigle



Matt Wright

passersby will have noticed that the old fire house has received a badly needed fresh coat of paint, but that may be just the first step in a desired plan to renovate that building. While a review of the various options is still underway, the current leaning is toward an extensive fix to the building, shoring up the foundation, reconfiguring the upstairs rear of the building with office and storage space for the NMPD and First Responders, and setting up the downstairs as a training area. The garage of the building would be home to the police cruiser and the

ambulance. With much of the work being contributed by the volunteers themselves, David Smith estimates that the renovation could still run to \$300,000 or more. The details for raising the funds remain to be worked out, but will certainly involve the participation of the Emergency Services Fund, which is currently dedicated to paying off the debt incurred in the construction of the new firehouse.

Speaking on behalf of the entire membership, David Smith wanted to express to the public the gratitude felt for the extremely positive support over the years in funding the critically important equipment, turnout gear, and vehicles. He thinks the department is in very good shape, and will be in even better shape in late February or early March, when the new Engine One arrives in Southfield. That event will be an occasion for celebration and sharing with the townspeople. In the meantime, anyone wishing to join these committed volunteers may do so by visiting the firehouse in Southfield on any Tuesday at 7:00 p.m. □

A TALE OF TWO FARMS

by Jodi Rothe

There's a saying, "If you ate today, thank a farmer." Folks around town might want to remember that when they see John Miller of Brookmede Farm on the Hartsville-New Marlborough Road or Jan Johnson of Mill River Farm on Brewer Hill Road. Each sells locally to residents and restaurants – but they have two very different styles of farming.

John Miller explains his laid-back approach like this: "Once you jump out of the plane you look for your parachute. Eight years ago we were told we were going into a depression, so we purchased some Boer goats, some chickens and everything else is now history."

John has a very loyal following, many of whom are second homeowners who call as soon as they arrive in the Berkshires to ask him to set aside eggs or pork. The day of this interview, John was busy unloading twenty-one bags of feed at his farm, which is enough for two weeks. The feed is not organic (which John finds prohibitively expensive) but is fine, hand-milled quality from Wirtes in Lanesborough. He recently received a delivery of twenty-five laying chicks - Black Lace Wyandottes - that were happily ensconced under a heating lamp in the barn. Fifty Ameraucanas are also on the way. He picked up a new breeder hog the other day, "because the other one wasn't being a good boyfriend" to his two female Berkshire two-hundred-eighty-pound girls. The new hog is now in a separate pen, but is busy



Part of the growing poultry population of New Marlborough
photo by Larry Burke

eyeing the females. John's sows produce large litters, from six to twelve piglets – and, amazingly, their gestation period is highly predictable – "three months, three days and three hours," says John. He generally gets two litters a year and says that commercial breeders many times get three, which is stressful for the sows, he notes. Berkshire pork is highly coveted by the Japanese who hold it in the same esteem as the best sushi tuna. Berkshire pigs are slower growers and therefore demand higher prices.

Brookmede Farm also raises a breed of Afrikaans goats called Boers. Prairie Whale Restaurant in Great Barrington, among others, has purchased goat meat from John – and Gedney Farm bought Brookmede ham for its

recent Christmas party.

John's chickens (approximately one hundred) are free-range. The different varieties produce different colored eggs: the Araucana, and Ameraucana chickens lay blue, the Brahma and Leghorns lay white, and the New Hampshire Reds, Orpingtons, and Silver Laced Wyandottes produce brown.

Prior to farming, John was an advertising producer who shot commercials with the likes of Jean Stapleton and Marsha Mason. He also had a real estate business. But after awhile John was drawn back to his family's farm and the country life. His parents had purchased the farm in the 1940s. He owns twenty-five acres on the west side

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of the road and more acreage on the east side where he lives in a two-hundred-year-old house with his wife Wendy.

John sums up his farming life this way: "Like all farmers, our life is 24/7 with never a dull day because every morning when you open the barn there is always a surprise. Sometimes they are good surprises and sometimes they are oh, s**t! But no matter what, the interaction with the animals, the education of how to take care of them, and the interfacing with the many people who appreciate what you are doing and the products that you are providing, somehow seems to make it all worthwhile."



John Miller and two of his Boer goat kids
photo by Wendy Miller

Although pragmatic, Jan has a large visionary streak. As she surveys the property, which had extensive grassy areas when she bought it, Jan says her first goal was "to eliminate the lawn," and she now has a vision for every square inch. So far she has constructed a huge greenhouse and, for her laying hens, a movable chicken coop that gets rotated every four days, as suggested to her by Joel Salatin, a leading advocate of holistic farming approaches. Chickens enhance soil fertility by working their manure into the soil, and they help manage crop pests by grazing on weeds

On the other side of town, Jan Johnson has created an extensive organic farm known as Mill River Farm from a homestead formerly belonging to her long-time friends, the late Herb Abelow and Betsy Colhoun. The house is situated on a hill with incredible views to the south and west, which Jan remembers admiring when she visited there not that many years ago.

Like John, Jan also worked in the entertainment field (in Business Affairs at Walt Disney Studios in Los Angeles) but was ready for a big change. When she decided to take up farming, she looked for flat farmland, but when Herb and Betsy put their house on the market, she couldn't resist. She knew it had enough acreage for a good size farm and with the right planning, she decided she could turn it into a working farm.



The Mill River Farm crew: l. to r., Codey Mead, Mitchell Finn, Matt Arseneu and Jan Johnson photo by Linda Lis

and insects. Also, poultry can be rotated into pasture following other livestock.

Jan has pens for pigs and meat goats, another giant pen for broiler chickens, the beginnings of a shitake

mushroom growing operation beneath a canopy of trees, and thirty beehives. Proudly, she shows off a washing area, complete with a giant "salad spinner" for the salad greens. She has acquired an unusual harvesting tool with a rotating blade that cuts and scoops plants into a basket, much faster than the traditional back-breaking bending and picking. It was invented by Jan's "vegetable guru" Elliot Coleman, who

resides in Maine and is a proponent of growing food year round in the Northeast. Elliot reasons that, since the latitude lines of the Northeast are similar to those of Southern France and parts of Italy where they grow

**Effective January 1, 2016,
the hours at the Transfer Station
will be changed as follows:**

**Sundays 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.
Wednesdays 9 am. - 1 p.m.
Saturdays 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.**

Happy New Year!

SUSAN M. SMITH
Attorney At Law

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crops year round, there must be a way to do that here. As a result, he came up with two different cover layers and Jan is trying out his method with carrots in the fields this winter.

Jan envisions endless possibilities for the farm. As she walks around the property, her eyes alight on an area to the left of the house and she points, "Up there will be the orchard with apple, peach, pear, cherry, and nut trees." She continues, "And over there will be the organic blueberry and raspberry bushes." Although she's had to wait three years for the soil to be ready to plant organically, it's clear that she's already seeing the bushes fully grown and producing luscious fruit just waiting to be picked.

Jan's attention to detail comes into even more focus as she describes the long and arduous process of creating and running a Certified Organic Farm. She says that the paperwork she fills out each year amounts to the size of a phone book. Every time she adds a new crop, it requires more forms. But she firmly states, "We are facing a health crisis and an environmental crisis – and organic farming addresses both issues."

Jan has taken classes at Cornell University about organic farming and enjoys sharing knowledge. "There are creatures in the soil, underneath the plant, that actually attract the critters that feed on them – and they secrete the right nutrients. Herbicides and pesticides destroy this whole process and take away the nutrients that Mother Nature intended us to have. We are not as smart as Mother Nature."

Even with her precise and careful planning, creating a new farm from scratch is expensive, and there is a lot of trial and error. This year Jan decided to add chicken processing to her operation, and she found out she needed ice in a quantity that would be prohibitively expensive to buy off-site – so an ice machine was purchased, then she needed freezers, a trailer to house the operation, and so on. She's had to learn what customers value. For example, she started out with heritage chickens for broilers, which take longer to mature and have more dark meat. She realized people want more white meat, so she switched to the cheaper and faster-growing white chickens. She discovered the same about heritage turkeys, so she switched to regular turkeys.



Brookmede Farm denizens enjoying the warm weather
photo by Wendy Miller

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One additional cost of organic farming that Jan finds difficult to deal with is that the Organic Certifying Agency charges a three percent fee on her gross income. "Gross!" she exclaims. This agency is Federal, but is run by each state and the fee is charged for administration and on-site inspections. Anytime she sells to the public or to her various clients such as Gedney Farm, Elixir, Allium, Prairie Whale, or Café Adam, three cents of each dollar is taken off the top. No wonder organic food is much more expensive! However, Jan is determined to make this farm profitable or, as she somewhat jokingly puts it, "I'm going to take up golf again."

The humble honeybees have been profitable, however. Ironically, they cannot be certified organic because they fly beyond the boundaries of the property, so the honey is labeled "natural." In addition to honey, Jan has a line of beeswax skin care products and candles available at the farm or online.

Jan has three full time workers and four part-time, plus an intern from Mt. Everett high school. Students from Eagleton School come from time to time to learn and help out. She's invited local schools to have field trips at the farm, and would very much like to encourage schools to get involved with their local farms so that children

will see their local farms as sources of healthy food and as anchors for the larger community. She would love to be a provider of healthy food to kids – and that is a major part of her mission.

Although John and Jan have different approaches – John's is more "seat of the pants" style and Jan's is carefully planned and thought out – it is clear that running a farm and getting healthy food to the people gives each of them satisfaction and a sense of purpose. It is also clear that the future of their farms relies on the support of the local community.

Jan's farm website is www.millriverfarm.org 413-229-6650. Honey products are sold online at www.berkshirehoney.com. She also sells at local farmer's markets, including the Saturday market in Great Barrington where she makes a mean omelet. Mill River Farm is at 282 Brewer Hill Road.

John's e-mail is brookmedefarm@gmail.com 413-229-8708. Call or e-mail for egg and meat availability. Three seasons a year, John has a cooler of eggs set at the edge of the road, at 812 Hartsville-New Marlborough Road (which is Route 57). □

UPCOMING: *Events Calendar for January and February*

January 17: Winter House Concert, Metropolitan Opera musicians, playing clarinet, cello, and piano, perform the Brahms Clarinet Trio and other chamber works, in the warmth of a private home; call (413) 229-2785 for tickets — \$25, \$20 for members of the Village Association

February 14: Winter House Concert, Larry Wallach, Lucy Bardo, and Anne Legene perform French and Berman baroque music for violas da gamba and harpsichord. Call (413) 229-2785 for tickets — \$25, \$20 for members of the Village Association

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WINTER HOUSE CONCERTS ANNOUNCED

The New Marlborough Village Association will present the first of two Winter House Concerts on Sunday, January 17, 2016. This concert will feature musicians from the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra, Linda Hall, piano; Steve Ballou, cello; and James Ognibene, clarinet. Their program will include two wonderful piano trios by Johannes Brahms and Max Bruch, as well as a Brahms cello sonata.

For the second concert on Sunday, February 14,

returning artists, Larry Wallach and Lucy Bardo will be joined by Anne Legêne in a program of lush French and German baroque music for two violas da gamba and harpsichord.

The Winter House Concerts begin at 4:00 p.m. and last an hour with wine and hors d'oeuvres served afterwards. Both concerts will take place in private homes. Seating is limited so please make reservations by calling 413-229-2785 or by going online at www.newmarlborough.org. □



Winter Field by John Manikowski



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THE MINDER-IN-CHIEF

by Barbara Lowman

Lilianna Zyszkowski is rapidly becoming an inventor of note at the ripe old age of fifteen. Currently a sophomore at Phillips Exeter Academy in New Hampshire, she is the daughter of Lori Fena and Edward Zyszkowski of Foley Hill Road in Southfield.

Lilianna's first invention was a practical response when her grandfather was hospitalized because he didn't take his medications on schedule. The result, developed when she was in the sixth grade and refined since, was the Pill Minder, a pillbox that tells people when to take their medications, and then tweets a notification to their caregivers. She is currently working with Gatekeeper Innovation, Inc., to bring Pill Minder from prototype to product.

Her second invention was another personal response when two of her swim teammates suffered concussions from backstroking into the wall. Dolphin Swim Goggles uses sensors and LEDs to warn swimmers when they are nearing the pool wall.

The third personal response was the Baby Minder, a wearable device containing moisture, temperature, and location sensors to help parents know if the baby's diaper is wet, if he/she has a temperature, or if the baby is too far away from a parent.

Last March, Lilianna was one of twenty-six groups or individuals invited to exhibit at the White House



photo courtesy of the Smithsonian Institute



Lilianna on stage to receive the Youth Award in the American Ingenuity Awards, from Smithsonian magazine. photo by Lori Fena

Science Fair in Washington, D.C. Attendees at the fair included many leaders in scientific and technological innovation – the ultimate networking experience for a promising young inventor.

In November, Lilianna was selected as one of twelve winners of the American Ingenuity Award, established four years ago by *Smithsonian* magazine. Winners represent nine broad categories of endeavor, such as technology, performing and visual arts, natural and physical sciences, education, history, social progress, and youth achievement. Lilianna received the Youth Award, which noted all of her inventions

designed to help people in a variety of ways. The ceremony honoring the award winners took place on November 12 at the National Portrait Gallery in Washington, D.C. Lilianna is the subject of a four-page article in the December issue of *Smithsonian*.

Her intelligence, creativity, and desire to help others with her talents all point to promising and productive years ahead for Lilianna. She summed it up thus: "I hope that coverage of these awards

will help to generate support for programs encouraging young children to use their creativity to solve real problems. For me, growing up in New Marlborough, New Marlborough Central School and Flying Cloud Institute provided that impetus." □



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NEIGHBORS



Anita Ormsbee, longtime resident of Mill River, passed away on December 1 at the age of ninety-one. She and her husband John had been married for fifty-five years at the time of his death in 2012. Anita was known throughout New Marlborough for her warmth and graciousness. She was an active member of the United Church of New Marlborough for fifty years.

At the service in her memory on December 6, treasurer and forty-year choir member of the church David Hastings offered this remembrance:

“If the Southfield Church had saints, Anita would be one of them, along with her great friends Nell McKenzie, Henry Eggenberger, and

Bob Decker. Anita served the Southfield Church for many, many years. She was a Sunday school teacher and a member of the Ladies’ Aid Society...and until a few years ago, was the person who decorated the church each winter for Advent and Christmas. Through all of these years, Anita had a warmth about her that touched everyone she met. In the last few years, Anita was not always able to come to church on Sunday mornings for health reasons. Her daughter ‘Little Anita’ and her grandson Eli stepped in and made sure that she was able to rejoin the congregation on Sunday mornings, even though she was not always able to hear what was being said. As a choir member, I found it inspiring and fun to sing to Anita. There seemed to be a warm glow that radiated from her every time the choir sang...especially when we sang her favorites. That part of Anita will be with the members of the Southfield Church for many years to come, as we remember what she brought to us and taught us through her loving and courageous life. We will miss her very much, but are happy that we have her memory.”



photo courtesy of MeadEagle Studios



Larry Burke, of New Marlborough village, provided the post-production work for the video “Ambush in the Pantanal” by Sally Eagle of Great Barrington, with still photography by Dan Mead. This was the winning video for the 2014 Windland Smith Rice International Awards by Nature’s Best Photography. It is on display for a year at the Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History in Washington D.C. Larry traveled to Washington in November to attend the award ceremony. This stunning video can be seen at the MeadEagle website: <http://meadeaglephotos.com/awards/>. It’s worth taking the time to view it. □

Compiled by Barbara Lowman: deeuell@yahoo.com

OUR WILDLIFE NEIGHBORS

Maybe the unseasonably mild temperatures have something to do with this, but an abundance of happiness has been visited upon **Don Beauchamp** in the form of **bluebirds**, many, many bluebirds: “On Sunday morning, November 21, I looked out to see bluebirds on their house, two pair at least. In and out they went, and on the following Thursday I had at least five pair, maybe six, crowding into the box, flying around. All Thanksgiving week I had bluebirds, as many as a dozen or more, all hanging around and going in and out of their house. I’ve also been seeing them up in the fields here and other spots in Clayton along the roadways.”

And not just bluebirds, Don reports: “I’ve also had a dozen or more **cedar waxwings** on my apple trees on November 28, pecking at the leftover apples for about half an hour. Twice here, there have been a **half-dozen crows** chasing and actually flying into hawks. The hawks would perch in trees while the crows all lined up close by, waiting for the **hawks** to take off, and then gave chase, finally driving them from area.”

Oh, and more **bluebirds**! Don writes On December 16, “Larry, I don’t know if you want to hear of more sightings, but if you do, everyday I still have bluebirds, seldom one pair, more like three pairs hanging around their house. It seems like they’re having a teaching workshop for youngsters – how to enter and exit the house, or how many birds can get in the house at one time. Also, three landed on my open-sided black oil seed feeder and took off without eating. I’ve never seen that before. Also on the lawn were robins, but I noticed different ones, young females of different colors. I hadn’t paid much attention to robins before.”



photo by Don Beauchamp

photo by Cornelia Webster



Interesting that Don should have taken note of the differently colored robins, because his Clayton neighbor **Liz Goodman** wrote the following: "On December 10, I was returning to my yard after a lengthy walk with my dogs when I spotted a white robin-sized bird in the pines. Turns out it was an **albino robin**! It flew off with several other robins but by the time I returned with binoculars it was long gone. I Googled albino robins and sure enough they exist, and albinism is more common in robins than any other bird. One in 30,000 Robins are albino or part albino... so, not THAT common! I am going to keep my eyes peeled and hopefully I will spot it again."

And then, amazingly, on December 13, Liz's good friend **Cornelia Webster** was looking out the window of her home in Hartsville, and there in a bush on the other side of the driveway sat an **albino robin**! The same one that Liz saw in Clayton? Maybe flew up along the Konkapot? Cornelia took a picture of it, from a good distance away, but if you look at the cropped photo shown above, you will see the white robin in the middle of the frame.

A little earlier in December, on the 7th to be precise, **Liz Goodman** had another extraordinary encounter: "My husband Don and I were driving south on Clayton Mill River Road when Don spotted a **red-tailed hawk** standing on the side of the road. Don stopped the car and the hawk flew a short distance, sporting a beautiful red tail, and landed down the road a bit. I got out of the car and walked up to him and saw he was missing a leg. We drove home and retrieved a blanket and a large box and returned to the hawk. I threw the blanket over him, scooped him up, and drove him to All Caring Animal Hospital. They are the only veterinarians in the area with a license to treat wild animals. The vet seemed optimistic that the hawk was mostly just weakened from dehydration and hunger, because his wound was an older injury and appeared healed over. But it turns out after x-raying his "good" leg he was suffering from a severe infection and was likely in a lot of pain. The vet decided he needed to be put down to end his suffering. This same hawk had been seen around Mill River attempting to prey on people's chickens for the past few weeks. My guess is he was unable to hunt wild prey anymore and had desperately resorted to going after chickens (not that hawks need a lot of incentive to raid a chicken coop!). I wish the story had a happier ending, but at least he is no longer in pain."



photo by Liz Goodman

We, and our wildlife neighbors, are fortunate to have such caring folks as Liz and Don in our midst.

photo by Joe Poindexter



Just so we can say that this page isn't entirely for the birds, let's end on this note and photo from **Joe Poindexter**: "I realize these prickly critters are a dime a dozen around here, but this one has been making an appearance at pretty much the same spot just behind our house almost daily. Perhaps a small seam of underlying minerals flavors the clover or cinquefoil it grazes on. In any case, we feel privileged to have been included in its daily orbit. (Of course, not having a dog makes the visits a good deal more amicable.)"

That is quite the soulful little **porcupine**, even from this dog owner's point of view.

Compiled by Larry Burke, lburke2@me.com

HIBERNATION ON HOLD

By Angus Kerr

So far, the season's weather has not been up to the usual brisk, snowy Berkshire standards, and it hasn't just been the plowmen that have noticed.

Bears are usually elusive around this time of year, as they cozy into their dens preparing for the depths of winter. But numerous residents have reported bear sightings during the last month, from walking along the road, to crossing into yards to eat the remains of fallen apples.

Bears never go into a true hibernation, but instead take on a semi-dormant state, called a torpor, during which they eat little food for weeks on end. By contrast, during autumn, bears are often the culprits in the thefts

of nuts, fruits, seed, and berries, which they hide in their dens by December, or eat for fat storage.

The fall harvest was bountiful this year, and, while there were hundreds of acorns laying around on one day, squirrels, rodents, or bears had cleared them all away by the next. This new warm weather has allowed a longer scavenging season, and so bears are rushing to find the best food while humans are rushing to find the best holiday deals.

With the warm weather acting as an invitation for bears to extend gathering time, it is important to be aware that our giant, furry neighbors may still be on the prowl – so keep an eye on your bird feeders! □

Thank You to Our Contributors!

We on the editorial staff of *The New Marlborough 5 Village News* send along holiday greetings and a huge THANK YOU and a WOW! for the generous response to our current fund-raising campaign.

To date we've received contributions from 217 readers. Happy New Year!

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THE LOG

POLICE DEPARTMENT (SELECTED ENTRIES)

- | | | | |
|---------|------------|--|--|
| Nov. 2 | 12:10 p.m. | Motorist reports being run off a sharp curve on East Hill Road to avoid an SUV approaching her at an excessive speed | originated in its jurisdiction, the Sheffield police take over the investigation |
| Nov. 3 | 1:04 p.m. | Resident reports an attempted scam from a caller claiming he represents a veterans charity | |
| Nov. 5 | 3:32 p.m. | Investigation of a reported suspicious vehicle at a Rhoades and Bailey Road residence reveals that it belongs to a workman repairing a fence at the property | |
| | 4:29 p.m. | Clayton Mill River Road resident reports an injured deer, possibly with a broken leg, on his property; five days later, the deer, located on an island in the Konkapot River, is euthanized by an attending police officer | |
| Nov. 7 | 6:36 a.m. | A Black Angus cow reported loose on Route 57 near the Old Inn on the Green | |
| | 4:11 p.m. | A Winsted, Connecticut, driver, who locked himself out of his Prius on Sisson Hill Road, is helped to re-enter his car, then given a warning for an expired registration | |
| | 5:59 p.m. | A Great Barrington owner of a property on Clayton Mill Road, having been alerted by a neighbor, reports that her sister and a niece have burgled the property; two Great Barrington residents are later issued summonses for breaking and entering | |
| Nov. 17 | 11:23 p.m. | A resident from the Sheffield side of County Road, whose car was clipped as he was pulling into his driveway, follows the presumed hit-and-run vehicle to New Marlborough Central School; no damage is found on the other car, whose operator claims he was not involved; since the incident | |
| Nov. 18 | 8:15 p.m. | Clayton Mill River Road resident asks that, until they can be turned over to a properly licensed new owner, eight firearms left in the family home after the death of her father be put into police custody | |
| Nov. 19 | 11:46 a.m. | Cross to Canaan Valley Road resident reports he has received excess payments in the form of money orders, for an item he is selling on Craig's List and that he has been asked to cash the money orders and return the overpayment to the buyer; money orders, found to be fake, are seized | |
| Nov. 20 | 3:05 p.m. | Cross to Canaan Valley Road resident reports a second incidence of the money-order scam | |
| | 5:32 p.m. | Clayton Mill River Road resident reports the theft of a lawn tractor and a stove by a family member, though investigation reveals that the property is jointly owned and under the consideration of a probate court | |
| Nov. 22 | 11:02 a.m. | A ninth firearm owned by a deceased resident of Clayton Mill River Road turned over to Police Department | |
| Nov. 28 | 10:00 a.m. | After a Hartsville Mill River Road resident reports her concern that dogs at a nearby home may be improperly cared for, animal control officer determines that intervention is unnecessary | |
| Nov. 30 | 10:27 a.m. | Officer conducts a well-being check on a Clayton Mill River Road resident after he complains of being locked out of his car by a family member concerned about his fitness to drive | |

FIRE AND RESCUE

- | | | | | | |
|---------|-----------|--|---------|------------|---|
| Nov. 4 | 3:51 a.m. | Hayes Hill Road Medical Call | Nov. 17 | 1:01 a.m. | Norfolk Road Wires Down |
| Nov. 5 | 9:52 p.m. | County Road Motor Vehicle Accident | Nov. 21 | 8:05 a.m. | Norfolk Road Medical Call |
| Nov. 13 | 7:57 a.m. | Brewer Branch Road Medical Call | Nov. 24 | 12:11 a.m. | Norfolk Road Medical Call |
| Nov. 14 | | Mutual Aid to Great Barrington Medical Call | Nov. 24 | 12:37 a.m. | Mutual Aid to Monterey Medical Call |
| Nov. 14 | | East Hill Road Fire Alarm | Nov. 27 | 4:04 p.m. | Mill River Great Barrington Road Medical Call |
| Nov. 14 | 9:30 p.m. | Shea Lane Chimney Fire | Nov. 27 | 8:19 p.m. | Cross Road to Canaan Valley Road Medical Call |
| Nov. 15 | 3:25 a.m. | Church Road Medical Call | Nov. 29 | 6:12 p.m. | Hartsville New Marlborough Road Fire Alarm |
| Nov. 15 | 4:30 p.m. | Rhoades & Bailey Hill Motor Vehicle Accident | | | |



photo by Larry Burke

SCHOOL NEWS

By Jane Burke

The Consolati Performing Arts Center was nearly full for all three performances of “The Lion King” on December 4 through 6. Parents and friends were treated to the exuberance of the cast of forty-nine children from grades 3 through 6. Seen in the photograph are, left to right: Joe Giumarro (monkey) from New Marlborough, Ben Shannon (grown-up Simba), Hudah Ngoyinuly (Rafiki), Maggy Sarnaki (monkey), Gwen Brady (giraffe), Diana Colitis (Antelope), Emma Spitz (monkey), Noah Williams (monkey), Kaylee Cohen (monkey), Maple Webster-Ben David (lioness) from Hartsville, and Bella DeLuca (monkey). Others in the cast from New Marlborough were Caroline Haiss, Evie Kerr, and Leah Ruane. From youngest to oldest, the quality of the acting was high thanks to the director Kathy Jo Grover, who inspired great energy from the cast members. Music Director Courtney English helped the kids master those beloved songs. Choreographer Tom Masters, after long days in the classroom at New Marlborough Central, taught the big group how to move together. Our Selectman Michele Shalaby estimates that she spent about 100 hours putting together the costumes and making sure every character

was properly attired from the antelope, to the monkeys, and, of course, the lions. This was her third year helping with costumes but the first year that she did it without help. She said, “This was a fun show to be part of because kids and adults alike love it.”

Berkshire Makerkids ribbon-cutting and open house at Mount Everett High School on December 8 was a celebration of the new, improved workspace. There was a big turnout, including Superintendent David Hastings, Curriculum Coordinator Kerry Burke, and Elementary Principal Stacy Burgess. The stars of the afternoon were the students in grades 5 and 6 who are in their third year of the after-school program. They were eagerly showing visitors, including school leaders and Vice Principal Deanna LeBlanc, the new equipment they have, thanks to a \$10,000 grant from Sabic Innovative Plastics in Pittsfield. A favored station in the room is the flight simulator that they mastered in short order. They also showed the games they had invented, the programming station with new micro-computers, and the models created with the 3-D printer.

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Photos by Larry Burke

Above, Posing for the camera at the Makerspace open house, along with one of the star Makerkids, are, left to right, Chris Thompson, Tim Newman, Sandy Lanning, Paul O'Brien, and Peter Lindstrom. Right, a group of Makerkids watches intently as the flight simulator is taken on a shakedown cruise.

Sandra Lanning of the Sabic Volunteer Board was there to enjoy talking with the kids and staff about how they were using the space. She posed with the proud founders of the program Paul O'Brien and Southfield resident Tim Newman. The soft spoken Peter Lindstrom, a tech professional who has volunteered to mentor in the program, was full of enthusiasm about his work with the kids each week. Current technology director Chris Thompson grew up in New Marlborough and is lending his support to this makerspace.

On December 12 the New Marlborough Monterey PTA Holiday Fair drew a huge crowd. The basement was decorated more beautifully than ever. The basement walls were elegantly draped with blue. A multitude of stars made for a very festive feeling. The children had spent many Fridays after school working on making ornaments and small gifts to sell. The effort yielded some wonderfully inventive baubles, trivets, pouches, and notecards that were very impressive. A performance by the Mount Everett Madrigals was a lovely culmination of a



high-spirited day. It was moving to see that New Marlborough School graduates were among the performers. In the photo, they are, fourth and fifth from the left, Celeste Harshbarger and Samantha Twing, and Simon Salzmann second from the right. □

Mount Everett Madrigals

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NEW ACQUISITIONS AT THE LIBRARY

Adult Fiction

Tricky Twenty-Two, by Janet Evanovich
Everland, by Rebecca Hunt
Golden Age, by Jane Smiley
The Promise, by Robert Crais
Ashley Bell, by Dean Koontz
Thin Air, by Ann Cleeves
My Brilliant Friend, by Elena Ferrante

Adult Nonfiction

Windows 10 for Dummies
Windows 10: Step-by-Step, by Joan Lambert
The Invention Of Nature: Alexander Humbolt's New World, by Andrea Wulf

Children's Fiction

Bear & Hare: Snow! by Emily Gravett
The Snow Rabbit, by Camille Garoche
Thankful, by Eileen Spinelli
Lost. Found., by Marsha Diane Arnold
The Nuts: Sing and Dance In Your Polka-Dot Pants, by Eric Litwin
Love Monster and the Last Chocolate, by Rachel Bright
The Goddess Girl Series, by Joan Holub

Children's Nonfiction

How Machines Work - Zoo Break! by David Macaulay
Bow-Tie Pasta: Acrostic Poems, by Brian P. Cleary
When the Earth Shakes: Earthquakes, Volcanoes, & Tsunamis, by Simon Winchester

Books on CD

Crimson Shore, by Douglas Preston
The Truth According To Us, by Annie Barrows

DVD

Under the Dome Season 3 *Ant-Man*
Meet the Coywolf *Pan*



Library Hours

Mon. Wed. Sat.
10 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.

Tues. Fri.
1:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.

Thurs. 1:30 – 5:30 p.m.

► Book Discussion Group

Join us Saturday, January 30, at 10 a.m. for bagels, coffee, and a lively discussion of the book, *The Orphan Master's Son*, by Adam Johnson

Don't forget that you can see the
 New Marlborough 5 Village News
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www.NM5VN.org

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Town Times

- * **Board of Selectmen:** Every Monday at 6:00 p.m.
- * **Town Administrator:** Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, 8:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.
- * **Planning Board:** Second and fourth Wednesday at 7 p.m.
- * **Board of Health:** First Tuesday of the month at 7 p.m.
- * **Conservation Commission:** Last Saturday of the month at 9 a.m.
- * **Board of Assessors:** Monday through Thursday, 9 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.
- * **Fire Department training:** Every Tuesday at 7 p.m. at the fire station
- * **Building Inspector:** Monday 5 - 7 p.m., Wednesday 8 - 10 a.m.
- * **First Responders:** meeting/training: First and third Wednesday at 7 p.m. at the fire station
- * **Cultural Council:** Second Thursday at 4:15 p.m at the library
- * **Town Treasurer:** Monday & Tuesday 8:00 a.m. -2:00 p.m.
- * **Tax Collector:** Monday through Friday 8:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.
- * **Selectmen's Administrative Secretary:** Monday - Friday, 9 a.m. - 2 p.m.
- * **Dog and Animal Control Officer:** John Springstube 413-232-7038
- * **Town Clerk:** 229-8278; 8 a.m. - 4 p.m. weekdays; Saturday by appointment
- * **Town Hall:** 229-8116
- * **Police:** Business office: 229-8161

Emergency calls: Police, Fire, and Medical: 911

Transfer Station hours:

Wednesday: 9 a.m.- 1 p.m.

Saturday: 9 a.m.- 3 p.m.

Sunday: 9 a.m.- 1 p.m.

PERMITS ARE DUE ON JULY 1

They are available at
the Town Hall in Mill River
for July 1, 2015 - June 30, 2016
FEE IS \$105, AFTER AUGUST 15, \$130

CAN BE PAID BY MAIL,
PLEASE ENCLOSE A SELF-ADDRESSED
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New Marlborough Highway Department

Located on Mill River-Southfield Rd.
Hours: Monday - Friday 7 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.
PO Box 99, Mill River, MA 01244
(413) 229-8165

We welcome advertisements from businesses owned by New Marlborough residents.

Other businesses can be listed in the Service Sector (see back page). Questions, rates? Call Barbara Lowman: 229-2369

NM5VN Editorial Team

Larry Burke, issue editor; Diane Barth, designer;
Martha Bryan, Jane Burke, Kenzie Fields,
Barbara Lowman, David Lowman, Joe Poindexter,
Jodi Rothe, Peter Schuyten, Barry Shapiro,
Pam Stebbins, Jon Swan, Marianne Swan
Contributing writers: Ann Getsinger,
Mary Richie Smith, Tara White. Index: Donna Weaver

New Marlborough 5 Village News

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also online at our new website! www.NM5VN.org

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For advertising, contact Barbara Lowman, tel: 229-2369
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- ♦ **Berkshire Environmental Research Center (BERC):** Thomas Coote. Lake & pond management, wetland delineation, ecological research, rare/invasive species assessment. 413-644-4509. tcoote@simons-rock.edu
- ♦ **Campbell Falls Carpentry:** Licensed and insured contracting at campbellfallscarpentry@gmail.com (413)229-6097 and (413)429-7677. Mass Contractors # 7614140, HIC# 170377
- ♦ **Corashire Realty:** Serving New Marlborough for 40 years. Let experience, knowledge, and personal attention work for you. 528-0014
- ♦ **Dellea:** Dellea.biz provides on-site Windows computer services to local residents, small businesses, town governments, and nonprofits throughout southern Berkshire County. (413)528-1141.
- ♦ **Design+Planning:** Christopher Blair; Since 1986, creative, budget aware design. Achieve your goals for additions, alterations to an existing home or new construction. 413- 528-4960. chris@design-planning.com.
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- ♦ **Project Bee** meets on the last Saturday of every month from 10:30 until noon at the New Marlborough Library in Mill River. See www.projectbeeline.org or Project Bee on Facebook.
- ♦ **James Edelman:** General Contractor, Real Estate Sales. Best Results. Construction License #090773. Home Improvement Registration #152035. Real Estate Sales License #9086247. 413-528-0006 or cljvedelman@aol.com
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- ♦ **Woodruff Mountain Landscaping:** Excavation and landscape contracting, all forms of stone work and masonry, and outdoor services, including lawn mowing and yard work. 413-229-2919 woodruffmountain@aol.com

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