



New Marlborough 5 Village News

VOL XXI
NO 10

February 2021

Clayton • Hartsville • Mill River • New Marlborough • Southfield

NEW MARLBOROUGH'S RESTAURANTS ADAPT TO SURVIVE

By Barry R. Shapiro

The reknown of New Marlborough's restaurants has now reached an international audience with recent articles in *Travel and Leisure* and *Condé Nast Traveler* highlighting the culinary adventures awaiting travelers willing to take the time to drive to this bucolic town. Despite this growing fame and the consequent difficulty (pre-pandemic) to get a reservation at peak times, local restaurateurs suddenly found themselves in a struggle to adapt to the world of Covid-19 and at least two of them have now made the hard choice to close for the winter. A closer look follows.



photo by Josh Irwin

A socially-distanced Woodstock at Cantina 229

Cantina 229

On a beautiful evening last summer, chef/owner Josh Irwin looked out the upstairs window at Cantina 229 during dinner service and smiled at the huge, colorful crowd of people, sitting at tables, on folding chairs and on blankets, all appropriately separated, with kids running all over. "It looks like a socially distanced Woodstock out there," he said. "People were showing up in the summer an hour before we opened and setting up their blankets and chairs. It was wild."

The journey, however, from Governor Baker's March 15, 2020, order that closed all restaurants, and the festival on the back lawn of the Cantina in the summer, was far from easy for Irwin and his staff.

"We actually shut a week before the order came down," said Josh. "We had a meeting with the front- and back-of-house staff and made the decision to close. It just wasn't safe for our valued customers or staff. Literally overnight, and it was a very late night, we set up a streamlined 'to go' system and did a great job of pivoting, pivoting being the

word of the year for us. We designed a great takeout menu and even added pantry items to support our customers who needed things but didn't want to go to the store. We also implemented a 'family meal' option, which our customers loved and which we changed every week depending on our supply options."

Once permission came from the governor to open outdoors, Josh and the staff moved quickly to accommodate their diners.

"Our servers probably did 25,000 paces every day serving our customers. We had lots of people here in the summer, dining outside and ordering drinks from the trailers we set up for that purpose, so no one came inside. It was an enormous team effort with lots of stress for everyone. It was also fortuitous that we had built an expanded deck for dining the year before."

Even with the large crowds at the restaurant in the summer, 2020 was not a financial success compared with 2019.

"We had lots of additional expenses over the year," Josh explained. "We spent

INSIDE:

Board of Selectmen	4
View From the Board	9
Conservation Commission..	10
Planning Board	11
Pandemic Update.....	14
Going Solo	16
Neighbors	18
Wildlife Neighbors.....	19
In a Time of Covid	20
The Log	22
School Report	24
Library News	26

continued

Restaurants, continued

at least \$1,000 per week on 'to go' boxes, the tent cost over \$16,000 and, of course, the weather was always a factor. I also worked hard to take good care of my staff. I made sure that they knew that their efforts meant something. It was important for me to keep the staff intact."

Once the weather got cold and outdoor dining was no longer an option, Josh again pivoted to a different dining format: private dining offered on weekends, limited to a single "pod" with a ten-course tasting menu served at a premium price.

"I was thrilled with the response to this concept and we booked all of our openings within two weeks," said Josh. "Our diners were so pleased to finally have a dining experience, which they described as close to normal!"

At year end, however, Josh chose to close the restaurant for the winter, to rebuild his strength, and take the time to determine the direction of his next pivot.

"After an earthquake hits, you need to take a break and try to decide where you want to land. I'll be reassessing the incredible four and a half years since we opened, spending time with my family, contemplating how we can improve for ourselves, our staff, and our customers, and helping out at Mooncloud, our Great Barrington operation, where we have great drinks and charcuterie, all from The Farm New Marlborough's pork, and all to go. I'll also be starting a new barbecue company, a mobile venture, with my sous chef, Lorenzo

'Ren' Price. We'll be going down to Austin to pick up the cookers soon."

"Although I'm not optimistic about 2021, I will be reopening in the spring. I don't know what the light switch is going to look like, but I am planning what I can to be creative and work out as many options as possible. I'm so appreciative of the support we've received from the community. It means so much."

Gedney Farm

Like neighboring Cantina up the road, Mike Smith, general manager of Gedney Farm, made the decision to close the restaurant a week before Governor Baker's order mandated it.



photo by Mike Smith

Gracious outdoor dining at Gedney Farm

THE WHIP SHOP



OFFICE & STUDIO SPACE

High Speed Fiber Optic Internet

- In Southfield Village Center
- Cell Phone Service
- On site US Post Office
- Steps from the Southfield Store

FOR AVAILABILITY, CONTACT:

413-229-3576

“We are pretty seasonal, so things were quiet anyway in March,” said Mike. “People were a bit hesitant to go out and it was unseasonably slow. We stayed closed until June 10 when we reopened both the restaurant and the lodging side of our business. We did our homework and provided worksheets and detailed binders for all personnel to comply with our strict safety protocols.”

The wedding side of Gedney’s business took a catastrophic hit, however.

“We had a full schedule of weddings planned for the summer, as is usual for us. All were re-booked and we hope to be able to accommodate all these parties in 2021. The bright light, however, is that the restaurant, which was rarely opened on weekends due to the weddings we usually have, could now open on weekends and the results were great. We have some really gorgeous outdoor space and people embraced it. The weather was good, our customers were happy, and we had lots of new people come and join us.”

“Our great kitchen crew responded in kind, our outdoor grill was busy, and we added lots of fun items to our menu. Even when the weather turned colder, our customers stayed outside as long as they could, and we added fire pits and did what we could to make our space comfortable. We also kept our dining room sliding doors open when possible to provide ventilation.”

Unfortunately, as the weather made it impractical to dine outdoors, and Covid-19 levels began to creep up in the area, customers became less comfortable dining indoors. Mike then reluctantly decided that it was no longer advisable to keep the restaurant open and closed the restaurant’s doors for the winter right after Thanksgiving, although the lodging side of the business has remained open and is expected to continue to be.

“We didn’t feel right about being open and didn’t want our staff to be uncomfortable, so we are now in a holding pattern,” said Mike. “Sadly, we had to lay off our staff but will recall them when we can. Of course, our priority is their and our customers’ safety. We’re grateful for our community and their support, particularly for the wine sales we’ve been having. Lots of people came by to stock up on bottles from our great selection.”

As for 2021? Mike is optimistic.

“I think it will be a year of transition but a good one. We are all ready and optimistic for progress on all fronts, economic, political, and personal. We just need to get through the next months and getting better, busier, and back to normal. We continue to be ever so grateful to the New Marlborough community, which has supported us again and again.” □

(Next month: *The Old Inn on the Green and The Southfield Store*)

Correction: The January article on the haiku craze on Maggie’s List notes that the initial invitation to contribute was made in March, 2020. A few people sent in poems, but it quickly died out. In mid-November it was revived by Doug Kutney, and became wildly popular. The article attributes the revival to Laura Endacott, but while she has been an enthusiastic contributor all along, it was Doug’s “Haiku Redux” email of November 15 that revived the thread.

PRECISION AUTOCRAFT INC



- PPG Paint Guarantee
- BBB Accredited Business
- Eco-Friendly Waterborne Paint
- Laser Frame Measuring
- Plastic Welding
- We Arrange For Rental Cars
- Open Mon-Fri 8:00-5:00

PERFECTING THE ART OF COLLISION REPAIR SINCE 1979

1939 N Main St (Rt 7), Sheffield MA 01257
(413) 528-1457

www.precision-auto.com


email: precision.auto@roadrunner.com



Kenzie Fields Realtor

call/text 413 854 4404

Fairground Real Estate 631 S Main St Great Barrington MA

www.fairgroundrealestate.com 

Town Business Is Your Business

BOARD OF SELECTMEN



January 4: The Board, with all three members attending by teleconference, convened tonight's meeting at 6:01 p.m. The first order of business was to form and appoint members to a new capital planning committee. **The purpose of the committee, according to Selectman Richard Long, would be to create, update, and maintain an ongoing capital plan for the Town.** However, as he noted, it will have to be set up initially as an interim advisory group until a formal bylaw establishing the committee can be enacted, as required by state law.

Seven people indicated an interest in serving. Two are from the Finance Committee, Chairman Steve Klein and Michele McAuley; also former selectman Nat Yohalem, plus Town residents Beth Reynolds, Mark Walker, and John Halbreich; Mr. Long will represent the Board.

All seven were appointed to terms that expire on June 30, 2021, by which time the bylaw should be in place. Mr. Long said the Committee will report to the Board, but Mr. Klein, who was also on the call, thought it more appropriate that it report jointly to the Board and the Finance Committee.

The next item on the agenda was to have been a discussion of the FY22 budget goals, put there at Mr. Long's request in anticipation of an upcoming joint budget meeting with the Finance Committee. But instead, at Chairman Tara White's suggestion, **he agreed to work with Mr. Klein on an outline of the goals to be distributed to members of both groups in advance of the meeting, scheduled for Thursday, January 7.**

After nearly an hour of discussion, the **Board adopted a Recycled Product Procurement Policy that establishes standards for the purchase of environmentally preferred products by the Town.**

The policy document was brought forward by Tom Stalker of Hartsville New Marlborough Road, who said it's based on similar documents available on the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) website. He said that by adopting such a policy the Town would then be eligible to apply for DEP grants.

Among other things, it recommends that the minimum content standard for the purchase of all printing and writing paper for in-house use shall be no less than thirty percent recycled materials, and that all printing contracts must include the following language: "Printed on thirty percent post-consumer recycled content."

The policy also recommends the implementation by Town departments of paper reduction techniques through the use of double-sided copying, the sharing and circulating of printed materials, and the use of email. In addition, purchases of all office and electronic equipment must adhere to energy efficient standards, such as Energy Star ratings or EPEA — for Electronic Product Environmental Assessment Tool — rankings.

And finally, it recommends the use of re-manufactured laser-printer toner cartridges and inkjet cartridges, re-refined antifreeze, lubricating and hydraulic oils, and re-manufactured paint.

To measure the success of the program in meeting the recycling goals of the commonwealth, each department must report on its purchases of recycled products to the town administrator by July 30 for the previous fiscal year, while an annual notice providing guidance on the policy must be sent out to department heads and anyone else purchasing products for the Town.

In response to an email from KP Law, which is serving as Great Barrington's town counsel, the **Board voted to permit KP Law to represent the Town in the cre-**



SunBug Solar

Ned Wilson

NABCEP PV Technical Sales #TS-102415-004308

NABCEP PV Installation # PV-041115-004308

413 854 1453

ned.wilson@sunbugsolar.com

P: 413 884 1000 | F: 413 417 2225

66 Westfield Industrial Park Road | Westfield, MA | 01085

www.sunbugsolar.com

**Call today to join our family
new customers welcome**

KIMBALL FUEL

FUEL OIL • PROPANE • BIO FUEL
• SERVICE & INSTALLATION

168 Main Street Great Barrington 413-528-1410

ation of a regional agreement that would provide elderly transportation services to replace Sheffield-based Southern Berkshire Elderly Transportation Corporation, which ceased operation on October 1, 2020.

New Marlborough is considering joining the consortium comprising Great Barrington and at least three other area towns to support and operate the service. As the email points out, there's a potential conflict in having a single law firm represent multiple towns in creating such an agreement and also because KP Law once served as special counsel to New Marlborough. But as Mr. Long noted, it represented the Town in some of its broadband dealings and that he didn't see a conflict. The rest of the Board agreed.

The next step in the process, according to Town Administrator Mari Enoch, will be for the Board to review a Memorandum of Understanding, which should be coming out shortly, she said.

Under town administrator updates, Ms. Enoch reported **two Highway Department trucks are temporarily out of service.** One of them suffered a fire in the engine compartment as a result of a mechanical failure, and that a claim has been submitted to the Town's insurance company. In addition, the recently purchased 2020-550 truck is back at the dealer because of a problem with the power takeoff. She also noted the Fire Department's Engine No. 1 is currently awaiting repairs to a compartment door that was damaged while the truck was being taken out of the fire house.

She also had some good news to report, saying the **Town received three grants from the state.** The first is from the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency, for \$2,700 to purchase emergency lighting for use by first responders and other Town departments during emergencies. The other two grants are both from the Massachusetts Office on Disability. The first is for \$7,425

to deal with ADA issues at the Highway Department garage, while the second, for \$8,745, is a planning grant to update the Town's ADA Self-Evaluation and Transition Plan. That plan, which addresses the physical barriers limiting access to programs, activities and services in the town, must be updated every three years.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:54 p.m.

Peter Schuyten

January 7: With members attending via Zoom, a joint meeting of the **Board of Selectmen and the Finance Committee laid the groundwork for handling departmental FY22 budget requests,** the budget that runs from July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022. Finance Committee Chairman Steve Klein began by reviewing guidelines in a budget memo prepared by Town Administrator Mari Enoch.

Regarding the number one item, procuring budget requests from each Town department, Mr. Klein emphasized the need for information on expenditures in FY20, the last complete budget year. If a department spent less than was budgeted, said Mr. Klein, he would want to know whether a request for the full amount in FY22 was warranted. He also wanted to see justification for any requested budget increase.

In a discussion of whether to include employee compensation in budget requests, Mr. Klein opted for inclusion. "I'm not comfortable ignoring compensation," he said. "In the past, this has led to controversy about pay." The memo notes that the Board and the Committee have agreed to hold compensation increases to 2 percent — and that they be documented, showing either an increase in hours or the addition of staff. To this, Finance Committee member Michele McAuley urged that the compensation request be made diplomatically. Robert Miller, also of the Finance Committee, concurred.

With a recommitment to the Recycled Procurement Policy, a program initiated at the National Institute of Health to minimize the environmental impact of

A new capital planning committee was established.

**Heating Systems and Tank Installations
Repairs and Services**

"We don't sell oil, we save oil!"



**License# 059667 MA
License# 392664 CT
413-229-2370**

**James Lane
Southfield, MA 01259**

**MAHAIWE
& CHIROPRACTIC
HEALTH
SERVICES**

*Dr. Lawrence Bronstein
Chiropractor, Board Certified Nutritionist*

15 Mahaiwe Street
Great Barrington, MA 01230

(413) 528-2948
www.DrBronstein.com

materials purchases, the Finance Committee and then the Board of Selectmen voted to accept the guidelines spelled out in the memo.

Barbara Marchione, a member of the Finance Committee, reminded the joint meeting that a financial policies document, set forth by the then-Board of Selectmen in 2015, recommended that it serve as a foundation for current recommendations. Selectman Richard Long suggested that budget policy — “to outlive changes in personnel [on the Board of Selectmen and the Finance Committee] should be codified in a bylaw.” Mr. Klein responded that codification need not go all the way to a bylaw. To general agreement that a written policy was sufficient, Ms. McAuley added that codification in a bylaw might be attempted at a later date.

Discussion, at last, turned to the **nuts and bolts of the FY22 budget.** Ms. Enoch reviewed the calendar: Department budget requests are due to be submitted to the town administrator by February 11, which is the same deadline for a preliminary budget from the Southern Berkshire Regional School District (SBRSD); a public hearing on the SBRSD budget is scheduled for March 4, and a final School District budget is due March 11. The deadline for warrant articles is March 19, non-Proposition 2½ ballot questions, March 29, and Prop 2½ questions, April 5 — all of which must be received by the town clerk no later than 3:30 p.m. of the deadline day. The deadline for posting the warrant is April 26, to be followed within the week by a public meeting to present the budget. The Annual Town Meeting is May 3 and the election, May 10.

The participants in the meeting then reviewed a spread sheet outlining the levy limit for FY22. A limit of 2½ percent of the FY21 budget of \$5,329,113 would add \$133,228. The addition of \$40,733 in estimated new growth would result in an FY22 budget of \$5,503,074. The assembled agreed that, though the school budget was, in

Mr. Klein’s words, “something of a wild card,” they were comfortable with the notion that there would be a fifty-fifty split of proceeds between the Town and SBRSD.

To the question of excess capacity — the amount that a Massachusetts town can legally tax but does not — Ms. Enoch said that **growing excess capacity provides flexibility in dealing with debt service.** Ms. McAuley said that a breakdown of what each department spent last fiscal year would provide the Committee and Board a ready reference to consider changes in FY22 budget requests. Ms. Enoch said this information was regularly provided annually.

As discussion moved back to compensation, Mr. Klein suggested that a comparison of New Marlborough pay with that of adjoining towns would be useful. Ms.

McAuley said that comparable figures were hard to get, an analysis made more complex, said Ms. Marchione, by differences in benefits, such as medical insurance. Mr. Klein, while granting the caveats, pointed out that somehow Town employees were able to show comparisons.

Two other budget factors — a probable decrease in state aid and income from solar fields still under construction in town — came up for discussion. Mr. Klein speculated that the income from PILOT agreements with the two solar field companies in town may offset the \$60,000 per year obligation to the state for its financing of the town’s fiber-optic installation. An agreement with the installer of the solar field off Knight Road is for \$45,750 a year; there is as yet no agreement with the solar array installer of a field opposite the Highway Garage on Mill River Southfield Road. And the Town has no information as to when these installations will come online. At the same time, payback to the state, in the form of a reduction in state aid will begin only when Spectrum has completed its wiring of the town. If that

The Recycled Products Procurement Policy was adopted.



Reiner White & Sons, Inc.
Remodel - Additions - New Construction

New Construction • Remodeling • Siding • Windows • Interior Finishes
Decks & Porches • Sunrooms • Kitchens & Bathrooms • Roofs

(413) 229-8450 | www.reinerwhiteandsons.com
MA Lic #20390 • MA HIC #137599 • CT Lic #4485 • CT HIC #578070



MERCIER STONE

FINE STONE MASONRY
BRICK OVEN
FIREPLACE
HARDSCAPE
RESTORATION

508.560.7844
MERCIERSTONE.COM

were to stretch beyond July 1, the reduction would not begin to kick in until July 2022.

Finally, Ms. Marchione said that **the Highway Planning Working Group (HPWG)**, on which she serves as chair, **has begun work on a three-to-five-year plan that targets roads most urgently in need of repair.** (A draft plan presented to the HPWG estimates costs of more than \$1.5 million over the next three years.) Ms. Enoch emphasized that these projects were identified in an initial look at the Highway Department's long-range spending and were subject to change.

Other Highway Department expenses, some of them less attention-grabbing than pot-holed roads, were also discussed. Selectman Mark Carson mentioned the cost effectiveness of maintaining roads that were in good shape. Board of Selectman Chairman Tara White said that road edges and the creation of swales on roads that were too flat to drain well needed attention. Finance Committee member John Pshenishny requested a list of all highway equipment, with their dates of acquisition and anticipated useful life-span.

With a bit of house-keeping on how best to record and communicate up-to-date budget decisions, the meeting adjourned.

Joe Poindexter

January 11: With all three members present, the meeting of the Board of Selectmen convened at 6:01 p.m. on a conference call with participants Town Administrator Mari Enoch, Administrative Secretary Sharon Fleck, Highway Superintendent Chuck Loring, Dave Herrick, and Dick Herrick, his brother.

First item on the agenda was a request from Dave Herrick for the **Board to write a letter to the United States Postal Service supporting the reopening of the Mill River Post Office** located in his Mill River General Store. Mr. Herrick stated his efforts have not

been successful and he would appreciate help from the Board. Ms. Enoch added she had contacted the Postal Service to invite them on tonight's call and was advised during that call that the Postal Service was still awaiting an inspection. Mr. Herrick responded the Postal Service has done three inspections, coming up with something each time for Mr. Herrick to fix. Chairman Tara White offered to draft a letter, which the Board agreed to send once it is reviewed and approved.

Highway Superintendent Chuck Loring was next on the agenda providing a status report to the Board about department issues. He stated that repairs done to a couple of the town trucks are complete and they are both back and working. He said he is still waiting for the truck that caught fire to be repaired; the dealership has advised it will take some

time for parts to arrive. The insurance adjuster is also in contact with the dealership and Mr. Loring expects it will be a while before the truck is repaired.

Mr. Loring, responding to Selectman Richard Long's question regarding the status of town roads, stated all the roads are normal for this time of year. Moving onto the fire truck, Mr. Loring, who is also the fire chief, said he has been waiting for a part which is expected today.

Ms. White then said that although the curb cut issue is not on tonight's agenda, maybe the Board could discuss it a little bit so the issue doesn't get lost. Mr. Carson stated he and Tom Stalker are working on a bylaw that would help address the issue. Mr. Long suggested checking with the Conservation Commission to see whether they have any jurisdiction, since the Department of Environmental Protection regulates storm water runoff; there might be some recourse through regulatory storm management. Ms. White agreed it was a good idea as it could also take some of the pressure off Mr. Loring's time following up with these people and, in addition, the Commission might be able to issue fines.

The Board of Selectmen and Finance Committee met to discuss a range of large and specific issues related to the FY22 budget.



**CERTIFIED
ORGANIC**
MEAT, EGGS
& PRODUCE

FARM STORE OPEN EVERY DAY

282 BREWER HILL ROAD
MILL RIVER, MA 01244

LEISURE POOLS

DESIGN • CONSTRUCTION • SERVICE

Pools • Spas • Saunas

208 Norfolk Road
P.O. Box 112
Southfield, MA 01259

Tel: {413} 528•1765
Fax: {413} 528•3039

www.leisurepools.net

The discussion then moved to the dirt road study, with Ms. Enoch stating it was her understanding the study is in the final stage and a report could be expected in the next month or two.

Moving past the next agenda item, Elderly Transportation, because paperwork from Great Barrington had not arrived yet, Ms. White discussed a meeting she attended with surrounding towns regarding sharing a Human Resources employee. Not all towns were present at the meeting, but those which were reviewed services that are already being shared, and scheduled a meeting next week to go into more detail how sharing this position might be handled.

Town administrator updates began with Ms. Enoch announcing the CARES Act (Coronavirus, Aid Relief, and Economic Security Act) deadline for expenditure of money awarded last spring towards the Town's Covid-19 expenses was extended from December 31, 2020 to December 31, 2021; **expenditures related to Covid-19 are still being covered.**

Ms. Enoch then informed the Board that Emergency Management Director Monica Zinke called, stating she is resigning from her position. Ms. Enoch asked Ms. Zinke to submit a formal letter of resignation so that the Board can move ahead to find a new person for that position.

Under Board of Selectmen updates, Selectman Mark Carson said he spoke with Erin Rodgers of Trout Unlimited regarding the Hartsville Riverbank remediation. With engineering costs already paid, he said the cost for remediation looks like it would probably be somewhere around \$50,000. Mr. Carson added that there is erosion going on in two places now and they may find they need to go further up the river to address the erosion. Mr. Long stated it could be difficult to obtain a grant for this work when private property is involved.

Mr. Herrick, Ms. Enoch, and the Board of Selectmen are all trying to get a response from the United States Postal Service regarding the Mill River Post Office.

The Board then asked Ms. Enoch, who will attend the next Housatonic Watershed meeting, to bring up the Hartsville Riverbank erosion problem at the meeting.

Ms. White then advised that the **Regional School District Planning Committee** is meeting tomorrow night, January 12. She reminded everyone that last year \$50,000 was granted to this Committee which provided for a facilitator and reports, but the funds are now used up. There are still many issues to be studied and more costs will be incurred. **The Committee plans to go back to the state for funding, look to private third-party funding groups, and approach the eight towns involved.** Ms. White said the Committee leaders would like to set up a meeting with New Marlborough's Board of Selectmen and Finance Committee to present the Committee's plans and ask for funding. (See the School Report on page 24.) The Board agreed to recommend two dates to the Committee, Monday, January 25, and Thursday, January 28, for a joint meeting with the Board and the Finance Committee.

The Board then approved business licenses for the following: Ormsbee Gas Co, Inc., DBA Ormsbee's Garage, Peerless Since 1945 Inc., O'Connor Brothers, Flying Cloud Institute, The Inn at Freeman Elms Farm, ABA Appalachian Trading Post, JML James Mullen Landforms, Michael White Contractors Inc., Little Store Antiques, Windemere Lake Corp., PJM Maintenance LLC, Law Office of Susan M Smith PC, Les Trois Emmes Vineyard & Winery LLC, Mount Everett Landscaping & Construction Inc., Berkshire Wildflower Honey LLC – DBA Mill River Farm, BDL Enterprises — Barbara & David Lowman, MacKenzie Excavating, and Johnston America-Rob Johnston.

Board members were not ready to review the minutes as changes are still being made and not all members have submitted their changes. Ms. White asked if revisions to minutes could please be submitted by Friday so they can be sent out Friday afternoon. This would allow time over the weekend for members to review them ahead of the Monday night meeting and be ready to approve them at the meetings. Ms. White stated the next meeting of the Board of Selectmen will be January 25.

With no public comment, the Board then entered executive session to strategize negotiation for collective bargaining at 7:05 p.m., advising they would not be returning to public session. □

Sandra Fusco Walker



BILMAR
VETERINARY SERVICES

📞 413-528-1180
 ✉ Hello@BilmarVet.com
 📍 776 Main Street
📞 413-528-1763
 🌐 BilmarVet.com
 📍 Great Barrington, MA 01230

VIEW FROM THE BOARD

As we enter February and the weather and Covid-19 keep us all indoors, the Town's boards and committees continue their work. If you have the time, why not listen in on the meetings and learn more about how town government works? All the meetings are open to the public and the agendas are posted on the Town's website.

The Capital Planning Committee has been discussing the funds available for capital purchases and improvements. What are the Stabilization Fund and Free Cash and what are the guidelines for using this money for capital purchases or improvements? When should borrowing be done for capital projects or equipment? What are the projects that the Town will need to address in the next five or ten years?

New Marlborough is also in discussion with surrounding towns, to provide transportation to our elderly or disabled residents. You will be able to take this transportation from your home to appointments or errands. A small fee will be charged for the service and,

at this writing, that is still being discussed. Covid-19 protocol is being observed to keep everyone safe. If you or someone you know is interested in this service, please call Town Hall for further details.

Lucy Prashker, chair, and Peter Taylor, vice chair of the Regional School District Planning Board, are meeting with the eight towns' Boards of Selectmen and Finance Committees to update them on the progress of the District Planning Board. The meeting for New Marlborough will be on Thursday, February 11, at 6:00 p.m.

The New Marlborough Planning Board and Finance Committee are looking for someone to prepare the minutes of their meetings. It would be best if you could be on all the meeting calls but if that's not possible, the meetings are recorded and you could write the minutes up from the recordings. These are both paid positions, so if interested, give Town Hall a call to get further information. □

Tara White, Chair, Board of Selectmen

Berkshire Groan

As Goldie lay on the counter, her entire life flashed before her eyes.



Sachs Reisman, Inc.



jewelry design & fabrication
 appraisers & diamond brokers
 buyers of gold, platinum,
 & bulk silver

25 Maple Avenue ~ Sheffield, MA.
 413-229-0050
 www.sachsreisman.com

SUSAN M. SMITH Attorney At Law

38 Mahaiwe Street, Suite 1 Telephone: (413) 528-4300
 Great Barrington, MA 01230 Facsimile: (413) 528-4306
 email: ssmithlaw@barringtonlawoffice.com

CONSERVATION COMMISSION

January 16: Commission members John Schreiber, Nanci Worthington, and Dave Herrick conducted the month's meeting via conference call.

First up was the continued hearing for the Request for Determination (RDA) for Cornelia Lenherr of 167 Hartsville Mill River Road. Thom Lipiczky, general contractor for the project, joined the conference call on behalf of his client and explained the plan to demolish and rebuild a garage roughly sixty-five feet from the Konkapot River. After a brief discussion, the Commission agreed to continue the hearing pending receipt of additional engineering information.

Forester James Kelly next addressed the Commission to explain the RDA and the plan to remove and trim trees that are threatening the driveway at 14 Norfolk Road, the residence of Jane Kurzman. The Commission reviewed the extent of the tree removal within 200 feet of the Umpachene River. Mark Stinson, circuit rider for the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection, joined the discussion and noted that the work involved a stream crossing. After much discussion about the number of trees to be removed and recognizing the risk that the trees pose to safe travel on the driveway, the Commission agreed to approve the RDA with a negative determination including two conditions. They were to replace the loss of tree canopy with one hundred square feet of native vegetation in the open area on the property and to submit verification of and compliance to the Notice of Intent (NOI) for the stream crossing.

Finally, Jack Alberti of Foresight Land Services presented the Notice of Intent for Mike Carmona and Kerri Tatlock of 141 Brewer Hill Road. Mr. Alberti explained the work to install a new gravel driveway which will involve two stream crossings and extensive site work. The driveway will be for a new residence which has not yet been built. Discussion focused on the 12 percent grade of the driveway and the proposed finish surface for the drive in the interest of minimizing the impacts of run-

off and erosion. Mr. Alberti verified that the route of the proposed driveway was designed to minimize the disturbance to the site. The Commission agreed to continue the hearing and requested additional information to clarify the impact to hydrology at the proposed house site, to submit a formal construction sequence considering seasonal stream flow, and to include a condition in the permit that the driveway surface be permeable.

The Commission then addressed new business. An emergency permit had been requested at 2290 Canaan Southfield Road to remove a tree hanging over a covered bridge. Mark Stinson assisted the review of the permit and informed the Commission that the removal is in an area designated as rare species habitat under the Natural Heritage Endangered Species Program (NHESP). The Commission agreed to contact the property manager and request that he seek review and approval from NHESP, that he give more detail on how the tree will be removed, and whether the stump will be removed. Before the emergency permit can be ratified, the additional information from the property manager must be received by the Commission.

The Commission announced that Douglas Hyde has formally submitted his application to join the Commission. The Commission noted that he comes highly recommended. Separately, they agreed that the Commission welcomed and would reply to the invitation to join a newly-formed consortium of Conservation Commissions in Berkshire County.

Lastly the Commission revisited the consideration for ridgeline protection in New Marlborough. The Commission agreed that they would propose to meet with the New Marlborough Planning Board to further discuss the possibility for the town.

The minutes from last month's meeting were approved and the meeting adjourned. □

Martha Bryan



BERKSHIRE HATHAWAY
HomeServices
Barnbrook Realty
Mary White and her team
are here to help you sell
(413) 528-4423
BarnbrookRealty.com



photo by Diane Barth

PLANNING BOARD

January 13: With the full Board dialed in, including Paul Marcel calling from southern California, Chairman Mark Carson began the meeting at 7:02 p.m. by returning to the case of Carla and David Hoffman's property at 120 Hillside Avenue, overlooking Lake Buel. The hearing had been tabled at the December 9 meeting, pending modifications of the building plan that might make the level of non-conformity more palatable to the Planning Board, and eventually, to the Special Permit Authority – the Board of Selectmen.

Robert Levesque of R. Levesque Associates in Westfield, Massachusetts, walked the Board members through the changes that had been made to the plan, including a reduction in the size of the garage and a resulting shift of the house's footprint away from the western, lake-facing, boundary. Setbacks on the other sides of the house were increased enough to allow equipment such as lawnmowers to be able to pass through. A short discussion followed, after which Mr. Carson polled the members on their willingness to approve the revised plan. The vote was unanimous in favor; Mr. Carson then thanked the Hoffmans for their cooperation, and wished them well in securing the special permit from the Board of Selectmen.

The Board then briefly considered the problem of finding a secretary to record minutes of each meeting.

Tom Stalker, who had signed on to do the minutes, had informed Mark Carson that he would no longer be doing that. Bob Hartt had been volunteering to do the job in the absence of an official secretary, but he stated clearly that he would prefer not to go back to that. Mr. Carson said that other Town boards are having similar problems, and that, at the very least, there are audio recordings of each meeting. The question of who would transcribe those recordings or take notes in real time remained unresolved.

The topics that have been on the Board's agenda for the last several months – a Dark Sky bylaw, a junk car bylaw, and a regulation on future curb cuts – were reintroduced briefly, mainly to say that things are status quo on each. Bob Hartt and Tom Sebestyn said they had not seen any feedback from the public on the posting of the Dark Sky notice, but would continue to work up some language specific to New Marlborough for the February 10 meeting. Paul Marcel said that he plans to circulate material on the junk car bylaw in a few weeks, and Mark Carson said he is working on language for the curb cut issue for the next meeting. With that, the meeting adjourned at 7:45 p.m. □

Larry Burke

Thank You to Our Contributors:

Hope Schreiber; Katherine Bouton; Melissa Elstein & Eric Katzman; Jayne M. Kurzman; John Potoski; The Edith MacGuire Charitable Trust; Dan Alden; Pam Bosworth; Ginny Dawson; Thomas O'Connor; Anne & William Tatlock; Eugene & Maria Cleary; Scott MacKenzie; Gary Skeggs & Susan Griffin; Jane Beers; Sandra Sullivan; E. Patterson Scarlett; Lisa & Tony Nasch; Gary Shelto & Michael Buchanan; Ann Getsinger; Elaine & Irving Wolbrom; Sharon & George Fleck; Stuart Lawrence & Diane Nerwen; Linda & Maurice Brazie; Marilyn & Elie Katzman; Meta Levi; Dr. & Mrs. Martin Glassman; and Charles & Janice McSpirtt

Your Local Family Owned Propane Company for over 60 years

We provide friendly, prompt & reliable service for all your propane needs



839 Mill River-Southfield Rd.
New Marlborough, MA

413-229-2800

Low Prices
Budget Plans
Bulk & Cylinder Deliveries



Please call to join our family of satisfied customers!

Attorney General's Notice

Pursuant to G.L. c. 40, § 32, as amended by Chapter 299 of the Acts of 2000

Town of New Marlborough — Case No. 9913
Annual Town Meeting of August 15, 2020
Articles # 32 and 33

Attorney General's Limited Authority to Waive Procedural Defects in the Notice of the Planning Board Hearing

Pursuant to the provisions of G.L. c. 40, § 32, as amended by Chapter 299 of the Acts of 2000, if the Attorney General finds there to be any defect in the procedure of adoption or amendment of any zoning by-law relating to the form or content of the notice of the Planning Board hearing prescribed by G.L. c. 40A, § 5, or to the manner or dates on which said notice is mailed, posted or published as required by that section, then instead of disapproving the by-law or amendment by reason of any such defect, the Attorney General may elect to proceed under the defect waiver provisions of G.L. c. 40, § 32. Under those provisions, the Attorney General is conditionally authorized to waive any such defect.

Defect Determined in Notice of Planning Board Hearing

The Attorney General has determined that the planning board hearing notice relating to the above Article failed to comply with the notice requirements for such hearing established by G.L. c. 40A, § 5. Section 5 provides in part (with emphasis added):

No zoning...by-law or amendment thereto shall be adopted until after the planning board in a...town has...held a public hearing thereon...at which interested persons shall be given an opportunity to be heard.... Notice of the time and place of such hearing, of the subject matter, sufficient for identification, and of the place where texts and maps thereof may be inspected shall be published in a newspaper of general circulation in the...town once in each of two successive weeks, the first publication to be not less than fourteen days before the day of said hearing, and by posting such notice in a conspicuous place in the...town hall for a period of not less than fourteen days before the day of said hearing. Notice of said hearing shall also be sent by mail, postage prepaid to the department of housing and community development, the regional planning agency, if any, and to the planning board of each abutting city and town...

Based on the materials submitted to this Office, we have identified the following defect: the Planning Board Hearing notice that was posted did not include information regarding the subject matter sufficient for identification of the proposed zoning amendments, as required by G.L. c. 40A, § 5. Apart from this defect, the notice appears to satisfy the requirements of the statute.

Attorney General's Election to Proceed Under the Waiver Provisions of G.L. c. 40, § 32

The Attorney General has elected to proceed under the limited defect waiver authority conferred by G.L. c. 40, § 32, as amended by Chapter 299 of the Acts of 2000.

Suspension of Review of Zoning By-Law Amendments

The 90-day period prescribed by law for the Attorney General's review of local by-laws is therefore suspended in accordance with the provisions of G.L. c. 40, § 32, as amended by Chapter 299 of the Acts of 2000.

Posting and Publication of This Notice

The Town Clerk shall post a true copy of this Notice in a conspicuous place in the New Marlborough Town Hall for a period of not less than 14 days and shall publish a copy once in a newspaper of general circulation in the Town of New Marlborough.

Filing of Claim That Defect in Notice Was Misleading or Otherwise Prejudicial

Within 21 days of the date on which this Notice is published in a newspaper of general circulation in the Town of New Marlborough, any resident of the Town of New Marlborough, or the owner of any real property in the Town of New Marlborough, or any other party entitled to notice of the planning board hearing may file with the Town Clerk a written statement that the notice defect was misleading or otherwise prejudicial. The statement must include the reasons supporting the claim that the defect in the Planning Board Notice was misleading or otherwise prejudicial. This statement must be actually on file with the Town Clerk not later than 21 days from the date on which this Notice is published in the newspaper.

Town Clerk's Certification of Compliance with This Notice

After the expiration of the 21-day period, the Town Clerk shall submit to the Attorney General a true copy of this Notice with a certification of compliance with the publishing and posting requirements of the preceding paragraph, and a certification that either (a) no claim was filed within the 21-day period, or (b) one or more claims were filed within the 21-day period. The Town Clerk shall submit to the Attorney General true copies of any such claim(s).

Resumption of Attorney General's Review

Upon receipt of one original copy of this Notice with the Clerk's certification, the 90-day period provided for the Attorney General's review under G.L. c. 40, § 32, shall resume. If no claim is made, the Attorney General has the discretion to waive any such defect; if any claim is made, however, the Attorney General may not waive any such defect.

Note: By not filing a claim under this provision, a person shall not be deprived of the right to assert a claim of invalidity arising out of any possible defect in the procedure of adoption or amendment, as provided in G.L. c. 40, § 32, and in G.L. c. 40A, § 5.

Date: January 15, 2021

Very truly yours,
 MAURA HEALEY
 ATTORNEY GENERAL
 Nicole B. Caprioli
 By: Nicole B. Caprioli
 Assistant Attorney General
 Municipal Law Unit
 10 Mechanic Street, Suite 301
 Worcester, MA 01608

cc: Town Counsel Jeremia A. Pollard

To Our Readers

You may have been wondering why, of late, your *5 Village News* copies have not been showing up in your mailboxes near the first of the month. The easy answer is Covid-19 and its effect on the mail delivery system. The USPS is prioritizing delivery of first-class mail, so we, along with many other publications, are bumped to the back of the line. This compounds a long-existing situation where some of our monthly mailing is sent off to the Springfield Post Office, where it may languish for a week or so.

Until mail service is restored to its former level of efficiency, we suggest that, if you want to see the *New Marlborough 5 Village News* in a timely fashion, go to our website: nm5vn.org. We try to have the issue of a given month up online a few days before the first of that month.

The Staff

THE GOOD, THE BAD, AND THE HOPEFUL OF THE 2020-2021 PANDEMIC — PART 4

John Schreiber, MD MPH

As we trudge through the winter of 2020-21, I write my fourth installment of an infectious diseases physician's viewpoint on our still-ongoing pandemic.

First, the good news. A remarkable worldwide scientific effort has resulted in multiple vaccines that are very effective in preventing significant infections with the SARS CoV-2 virus, the cause of Covid-19. In the United States we now have two vaccines available under FDA emergency use authorization, one made by Pfizer, the other by Moderna. Both of these vaccines were found in clinical trials using thousands of volunteers to be 94-95 percent effective in the prevention of serious infection with the virus, and to have excellent safety profiles. Both vaccines use messenger RNA (mRNA is the genetic material that encodes the spike protein of the virus) to stimulate our own cells to produce this spike protein. The spike protein is the critical piece of the virus that binds to receptors in human cells and allows the virus to replicate and create havoc. After our own cells make the spike protein from the RNA in the vaccine, our immune system makes a strong immune response to the spike protein that protects against infection for approximately twelve months.

There are strong advantages to this mRNA technology compared to older vaccine technologies. Live virus is never used to produce this vaccine, which improves safety and ease of production. Should a change in the vaccine be required, replacing some of the genetic sequences of the RNA would be all that is required and is far easier than existing technologies to update, for example, the influenza vaccine. The down side is that mRNA is not very hardy and must be kept frozen until used, requiring the immunization centers to have the equipment required to maintain low temperatures, -80°C for the Pfizer vaccine and a much easier to manage -20°C for the Moderna vaccine.

Vaccination is well along in New England with health care and essential personnel being immunized now, and the elderly and at-risk soon to follow. We anticipate the general population would be immunized beginning in the spring. It is promising that the new administration recognizes that states will require organized federal assistance and personnel to effectively immunize millions of people in a short time.

Unfortunately, the pandemic is raging along with new peaks due to holiday travel, with the worst to come probably in February and March of 2021. What do I mean by the worst? Many states right now have rates of

new cases and deaths that are among the worst in the world. For example, in Rhode Island 1 in 10 people have had Covid-19 and 1 in 500 have died. These remarkable statistics are duplicated in a number of other states such as Tennessee and Arizona. Massachusetts, although not as bad as Rhode Island, has many more cases and deaths than during the first peak. More alarmingly, across the U.S. we now have 150,000 people hospitalized, and hospitals in many cities and rural areas are short on intensive care unit (ICU) beds. As the beds get tight, the death rate rises because the system is simply overwhelmed in managing so many very sick people.

One of our great challenges with this pandemic is the politicization of common-sense public health measures to reduce the spread of this respiratory virus. The virus does not belong to a political party nor does it respect state boundaries or ideology. It operates purely on mathematics. It has an "R" (Reproductive) value of 2-3, which indicates that each infected person on average infects 2-3 new people. Overall Covid-19 infection has a 1 percent mortality rate which soars to 9-10 percent if you are 65 or older, higher if you have risk factors, and more than 15 percent if you are older than 80. This pandemic is all about the math of spread, severity of illness, and fatality. We have been hampered by fifty different ways to control the pandemic, every state doing it its own way depending on ideology, not on the effectiveness of public health measures. Clearly a more comprehensive and centralized approach is required, as is usually the case for national crises. Unfortunately, we now have more than 400,000 dead and will easily hit 500,000 shortly. To get some perspective on this, this number of dead is similar to the 470,000 combat deaths in the four years of World War II.

The math of this pandemic is why the idea of just let it rip and get everyone infected to get herd immunity makes no sense. Many hundreds of thousands more would die and our health systems would be completely overwhelmed for many months. The best way to reach herd immunity will be to immunize as many people as possible as soon as possible. This should be our national goal.

In the meantime, everyone is exhausted with this pandemic. But for those many of you who have worked hard for almost a year to not get infected, we are in the last few miles of this marathon and now is not the time to give up. We know that proper use of masks results in a more than 75-90 percent reduction in transmission

of virus. That is just science and math. The mask is simply a public health tool to reduce the transmission of the virus in order to protect you and those around you. Since we know that much of the transmission of Covid infections is from asymptomatic people who do not know they are infected, don't let your guard down just because you know someone. It will be critical in the next few months when the pandemic is at its peak for us to double down on our common-sense public health measures. Wear a mask. Avoid crowds. Don't travel unless it is urgent. Physically distance yourself from others. Wash hands frequently. Do not have gatherings with anyone outside the family you live with. If you are immunized don't stop wearing a mask and observing distancing since we do not yet know if vaccination prevents low-level infection that can still be transmitted to others. The time to take off our masks will be when 60-70 percent of the population is immunized and community spread goes back down to very low levels.

Sadly, because we live in a time of malicious disinformation, the vaccine myths have already arrived on the internet. Let me list some of the myths and then respond with the facts we know.

1. The vaccine is micro-chipped so the government can track you — In fact, state of the art radio frequency microchips that are used for tracking (think the locator chip put under the skin of dogs and cats) are way too large to pass through an immunization syringe and needle.
2. The vaccine will get into your DNA and change your DNA — The vaccines are messenger RNA, not DNA, and RNA does not go into the nucleus of the cell where the DNA is located. In fact, the RNA is very easily broken down and only lasts for 24 hours in your body.
3. The vaccine will sterilize you — The vaccine has been given to thousands of volunteers of childbearing ages with absolutely no evidence that this happens.
4. The vaccine causes HIV — The Pfizer and Moderna vaccines (as well as the other Covid vaccines in clinical trials) have no relation whatsoever to the HIV virus and contain only RNA encoding the spike protein of Covid and a lipid capsule.
5. The vaccine will cause you to make spike protein forever and cause immune disease — Data from the blood of immunized volunteers shows that after immunization the spike protein production peaks at 48 hours, and is entirely gone by 72 hours.

There are many more myths out there, but it is important to deal with the facts. This is a new disease and effective vaccines have been made in record time and tested in thousands of people. A rigorous process

was used to examine the data from the clinical trials before they were approved. I personally sat through many hours of these virtual FDA meetings to hear the data and the questions asked, and can attest it was a robust and transparent process. But the time frame has indeed been short for vaccine development. Each person must weigh the risk/benefit, look at the known facts, and make their own decision. For me, the benefit of being immunized far outweighs any theoretical risk, since the data show vaccine safety and efficacy, and because getting the natural infection is so unpredictable, potentially severe and/or fatal. (I received the second dose of the Pfizer vaccine in late January.)

Finally, will this virus ever go away? Most of us think that this virus is here to stay. Indeed, mutations that are much more contagious have swept through the United Kingdom and are now in the U.S. The more chance the virus has to replicate in newly-infected people, the more chance we will get other mutations. This makes it all the more urgent that we avoid getting infected, stick to our public health measures, and get immunized. I think we can anticipate that we may need an annual immunization for Covid as we move beyond this pandemic, and that the vaccines may need to be periodically updated.

There is bright light at the end of the tunnel. I have no doubt we will see a waning of this pandemic as more and more people are immunized. We will not be wearing masks and physically distancing forever, and travel to see loved ones will once again be safe. I have been inspired by the members of our small community who have shown care for each other, and the respect for public health measures designed to minimize our chances of infecting each other. □

John R. Schreiber MD MPH lives in New Marlborough Village. He is Chief of Infectious Diseases at Connecticut Children's Hospital and Professor of Pediatrics at the University of Connecticut School of Medicine.

DOWNING & LANE, LLP
ATTORNEYS AT LAW

17 MAHAIWE STREET, SUITE 1
GREAT BARRINGTON, MA 01230

TEL: (413) 528-5040

FAX: (413) 528-5095

DENNIS J. DOWNING COURTNEY S. LANE
DENNIS@DOWNINGLANE.COM COURTNEY@DOWNINGLANE.COM

GOING SOLO

New Marlborough Musicians and the Sound of No Hands Clapping

By Joe Poindexter and Larry Burke

Variation and improvisation are terms that musicians often employ in their performances, but over the last year these same terms have become part of their everyday lives. Several of New Marlborough's music-makers spoke to the *5 Village News* about their experiences in this time of pandemic, especially about the greatest hurdle for any performing artist: the absence of an audience.

A year ago last January, classical pianist Manon Hutton-DeWys of Southfield played a 2020 Winter House Concert, sponsored by the New Marlborough Village Association, and then again in February at Simon's Rock. That was her last public performance. She misses an audience, and not simply because it buys tickets. "There is subtle feedback," says Manon. "You can feel the silence, the stillness," of an attentive audience. And, on occasion, "You can also feel their discomfort," she says.

Manon now fills her time by keeping fresh a performance of a piano quintet by early twentieth-century composer Amy Beach, canceled last April, that she hopes to present this spring. She conducts classes via Zoom with students at Simon's Rock, where she is professor of applied piano. And then there is Robert, her son, with husband Donald McClelland, a Simon's Rock biology professor. For some, that would be a full-time occupation: Robert is six months old.

The lack of upcoming performances "makes it really hard to practice," says cellist Lucy Bardo. But she has an advantage not available to most musicians: she is mar-



Manon Hutton-DeWys photo courtesy of the artist



Ben Harms and Lucy Bardo photo by Barbara Winters

ried to one. Five decades ago, she and her husband, percussionist Ben Harms, combined to form the nucleus of Calliope, a quartet of players specializing in Renaissance music. Lucy trained herself in the Baroque cello and the viola da gamba to produce a sound that fit Calliope's needs. The group won the prestigious Naumburg Award in 1975, performed at the presidential inauguration in 1977, and presented a musical theater piece, written for them by Peter Schickele (of P.D.Q. Bach fame), in 1983.

Calliope stopped touring in the early 2000s but has appeared in recent Winter House Concerts. The pandemic has curbed not only live performances but also Lucy's teaching career – even on Zoom. A viola da gamba student at Simon's Rock has dropped out temporarily for lack of a computer. Ben, who has been a percussionist with the Metropolitan Opera in New York City since 1968, says it is the orchestra pit that he most misses, "the spontaneity of playing, the sensuousness of being surrounded by the orchestral sound." The Metropolitan Opera is projected to be back on stage this fall. "I really miss playing," says Lucy, so, when things get a little too quiet around the Bardo-Harms household in New Marlborough village, Lucy pulls out her cello, Ben a recorder. Baroque duos ensue, to the pleasure, perhaps, of the next-door neighbors.

The New Marlborough musician possibly most affected on a daily basis by the pandemic is Rob Sanzone, a resident of Hartsville. Before February 2020

rolled in, the norm for Rob included, besides his teaching music at Miss Hall's School in Pittsfield, playing in four different bands, leading the Berkshire Ukulele Band, performing twice a week with Chris Merenda at Mission Bar in Pittsfield, and, if that's not enough, doing session work, weddings, and private parties. Rob's bands cover a range of genres, mostly in the bluegrass realms, but also including a Led Zeppelin cover band! His band Picky Bastards has performed at the Barn in Egremont and the Lion's Den in Stockbridge.

Opting for safety via social distancing, Rob has not performed with his fellow musicians since the pandemic arrived, except for a few not-very-successful attempts to play together online. Working with private students via Zoom has been an important fallback source of income, along with his continued teaching at Miss Hall's.

Rob says, probably understating, "It's odd not having

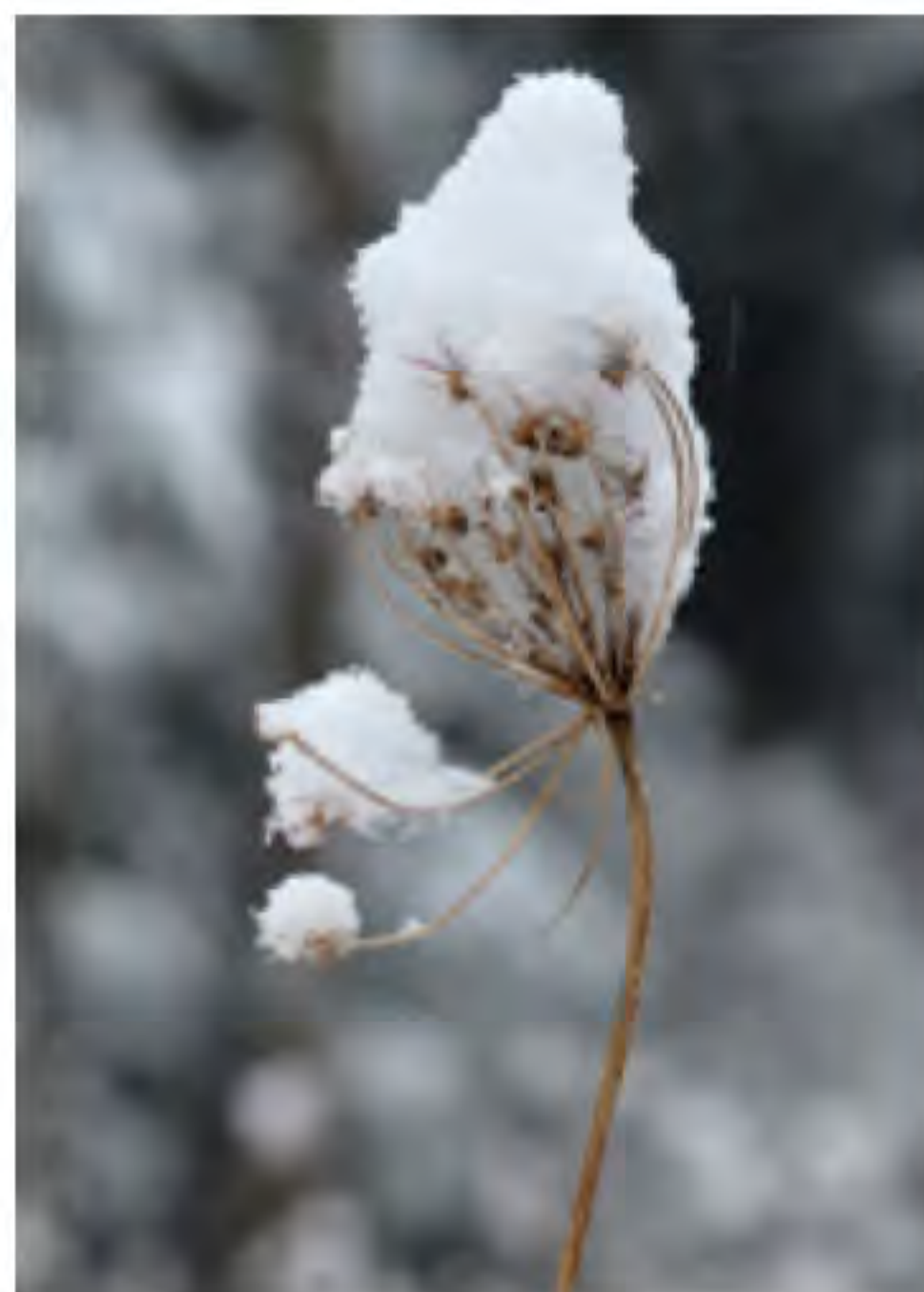


Rob Sanzone

photo courtesy of the artist

live performance, it's been such a large part of my life." Looking for a positive aspect to this huge absence, though, he says he is finding this to be a time to reset his perception of himself as a performer, a husband, a parent. It has been, for him, "a time of positive growth as a musician and a person." One result of Rob's time away from performance has been the opportunity to focus on his songwriting – creating new content, building an internet presence. Working with his neighbor Alex Vazquez, who happens to be a music producer, Rob has been recording new music, one example of which is a song called "Already Gone," available for your listening pleasure at www.robsanzone.hearnow.com.

At some point...maybe as soon as this summer or fall... applause from real, live audiences will once again ring out in the Berkshires. Hang in there, Manon, Ben, Lucy, Rob, and all our other musicians! □



HOLD MY SNOW

photos by Diane Barth

NEIGHBORS



Mary Richie Smith, a part-time resident of New Marlborough for more than forty years, passed away on Christmas Day at the age of ninety.

After graduating from Wellesley College, Mary traveled to Japan on a Fulbright scholarship, learning the language, exploring traditional and post-war arts and theater, and meeting her first husband, Donald Richie. After an amicable divorce, she moved to New York to pursue a career as a writer, and immersed herself in the arts and culture of the city.

Mary and her husband, Rutger Smith, married in 1978 and became part-time residents first in Southfield, and then in a 1795 farmhouse in Mill River. After Rutger's untimely death in 1981, the farmhouse, Lissadell, became a gathering place for her friends, musicians, artists, and artisans.

Mary was also active in local cultural activities. She was a member of the New Marlborough Cultural Council for many years. She helped to organize Council-sponsored trips to Tanglewood and various museums. She also actively participated, well into her eighties, in the physically strenuous aspects of transporting and organizing the hundreds of items donated for the annual White Elephant Sale at Elihu Burritt Day.

Mary was an original member of the *New Marlborough 5 Village News* Board of Directors, organized in 2002, and remained on the Board until her death. During those years she was also a contributing writer. She combined her local involvements by writing an article each year about the Cultural Council's nominee for the Elihu Burritt Award for community service.

Several friends share their remembrances of her:

Gloria Levitas has two shared experiences with Mary: "I met Mary a few years ago – at first startled and a bit put off by her manner, but later recognizing the vulnerability beneath it. She could be caustic and sometimes even hurtful, but I came to appreciate her skewed view of the world and we became friends. We had both worked as writers in New York City and discovered a shared admiration for some wonderful editors and an agreed disdain for others.

"About a year ago I offered to help Mary find a publisher for her many short stories. She presented me with a bag full of her writing, among which was a heartbreaking love story, a memoir thinly disguised as a novel. They were all creditable but written in a style not likely to appeal to today's readers. We planned to meet to discuss her work when Covid tragically intervened.

"I had another, different connection with Mary: I lived in Holyoke as a child and she was raised in nearby Chicopee Falls. Both were vibrant small towns, and we would often talk about our shared experiences – our families, our school days, and our recollections of a very different world and the nearby countryside – so changed today.

"Mary was not an easy person to know, but I really valued her unique and quirky turn of mind. I will miss her."

Librarian **Deb O'Brien** shares this memory: "Mary would often drop in at the library Friday evenings on her way back from New York to enjoy a cup of tea with our knitting group, always wearing her charismatic smile, while her Mill River home warmed up. We were unfailingly entertained with colorful descriptions of her week's adventures, and stories of her cultural life quests both in America and Japan.

"Our friend Mary led an unstintingly vibrant life. Her presence among us and her anecdotes will be greatly missed."

Susan Lewin has a variety of memories: "I used to love to hear Mary talk.

"She could go on and on about an incident or person that meant a lot to her. But she had a lovely speaking voice and a very regal accent.

"She could be guilty of telling the same story twice...but aren't we all?

"Quite a while ago, she would give wonderful dinner parties in the small folly behind her house. They were really fun. She was in her prime back then. She would festoon the miniature house with flowers and light candles everywhere. She even had a chandelier filled with candles. And she would have a wonderful meal prepared. It was magical!

"She was incredibly generous about putting up musicians who had come to town to play in Music and More, and would often do one of her dinners for the lucky cellist or violinist.

"But what I remember most about Mary was her love of music and her undying support for the Music and More series and my late husband, Hal Lewin.

"She was a treasure if you took the time to get to know her. She will be missed."



Mary Richie Smith

Mary's next-door neighbor in Mill River was **Robin Tost**: "On my first evening in Mill River, I was sitting outside at that hour when the sky is changing and the swallows are turning into bats, when I heard Pan piping in the woods. Magical! That was my introduction to Mary, playing her flute in the garden at sunset. Mary was one of a kind, very intelligent and beautiful, with a distinctive style, panache, and accent. Moving between New York, the Berkshires, and the worlds of travel, music, and dance, she realized a life filled with extraordinary, charming experiences and exceptional people (her adjectives.) She took her writing seriously, but her greatest creation was her self. I consider myself very lucky to have had a front seat at her show."

Mill River resident **Jackson Liscombe** has served as professor of computer science at Simon's Rock and an administrator at Bard Academy for the past six years. He is leaving Simon's Rock to commit himself fulltime as a research scientist at Modality. AI, a start-up company developing a conversational AI (artificial intelligence) system to aid in the treatment of patients with degenerative neurological diseases such as Parkinson's and ALS. The system will use automatic face and voice processing techniques to assist doctors working with these patients.

Jackson is excited about the opportunity to develop technology that can really help people, a diagnostic tool that can help overworked health professionals, and reach patients in rural or unserved communities. The possibilities of extending remote health monitoring systems are important, and we'll revisit Jackson's work as it develops further. □

compiled by Barbara Lowman: deeuell@yahoo.com



photo by Lisa Volmer

Jackson Liscombe

OUR WILDLIFE NEIGHBORS

On January 4, **Diane Nerwen** enjoyed the sight of a **ruffed grouse** on the patio of her home on Canaan Valley Road. "I was not quite fast enough to grab a camera." Wintertime does not seem to bother the grouse, and, in fact, according to a Nature Conservancy blog, they thrive in deep snow conditions: "The ruffed grouse flies along and bombs head first into deep, fluffy snow – completely submerging itself. Its body heat then creates a sealed dome under the snow: essentially, its own igloo. This structure allows the grouse to stay warm even in the most inclement conditions. Research shows that the snow shelter can warm to 32 degrees Fahrenheit and rarely drops below 20 degrees – even when it's much colder outside." So, for the grouse's sake at the very least, let's hope for some more snow!

In wildlife-adjacent news, **Betsy Colhoun** has been receiving bovine visitors to her home on Collins Hill. "Tom Brazie's cows love to get out here and frolic on the driveway, lawn, and gardens." By the looks of it, at least one calf enjoys licking the road salt off Betsy's car. And imagine her surprise at seeing a curious cow peering through her kitchen window as though asking, "What's for supper?"

Brian Mikesell, who divides his time these days between his home in Mill River and the residence he occupies during the school year on the campus of Simon's Rock, captured a remarkable photo on January 10. "I've been seeing solo bobcats off and on all fall/winter; this is the first time I've ever seen more than one! One was darker and looked heavier than the others, maybe mama?" It looks almost like a pride of lions!

Ann Getsinger has this to say about our state bird, the **black-capped chickadee**: "I have them landing in my hand every day, lining up sometimes – and I just gave my friend Bob a handful of seeds and they ate from his hand too! I've been working on this slowly, starting last year. I imagine lots of people are doing it around town. I know... we shouldn't tame wild things but they're so fun and friendly and used to being fed anyway, not like feeding deer or coyotes."

continued



photo by Betsy Colhoun

A truant calf on Collins Hill



photo by Brian Mikesell

A hat-trick of bobcats

Wildlife Neighbors, continued

photo by Larry Burke



A pert winter wren

Larry Burke saw, he thinks for the first time in his life, a solitary **winter wren**, with its tail sticking pertly up in the air, hopping around the base of one of his bird feeders. From what he could see, the wren was not interested in perching on the feeders, but happy instead to wait for the chickadees and nuthatches to drop bits of sunflower seed to the ground.

Don Beauchamp, down in Clayton, on January 10, also saw a **wren**, twice on the tube feeder, and that's the first time I've seen that. And a **white-throated sparrow** several times since, and of course bluebirds, including today." On January 16, Don wrote, "early yesterday morning, as I was making tea, a mature owl was sitting close by on a tree, just checking out the feeder area." □

Compiled by Larry Burke. Send your sightings to him at larryjburke@gmail.com

IN A TIME OF COVID

Challenges for New Marlborough Fire and Rescue

By David Smith, President, NMF&R

Fire Chief Chuck Loring highlighted notable successes in spite of Covid restrictions:

"Throughout the Covid-19 pandemic, the New Marlborough Fire and Rescue has continued to work to provide emergency services to the community. During these challenging times, it is important to focus on achievements. Over the summer, the Department had two major successes that stand out. The first was a CPR call in August, where a bicyclist suffered cardiac arrest while riding his bike in New Marlborough. The patient's companions were instructed in high-quality CPR by dispatch, which began almost immediately. When New Marlborough EMTs arrived on the scene, they took over performing CPR and were able to revive the patient, assisted by Southern Berkshire Ambulance. The patient is now currently recovering. The second incident was in September, where two hikers were lost in Thousand Acre Swamp. New Marlborough Fire and Rescue was called out at 11:00 p.m. and continued the search until 7:00 a.m., breaking briefly while a state police helicopter searched from overhead. The hikers were located in the early morning and thankfully were uninjured."

The pandemic has required numerous changes in procedures. Most important, if you dial 911, you will get service. Covid-19 doesn't affect whether we respond but how we respond. Ambulance Medical Director Maureen Krejci has detailed the rescue protocols (see



David Smith and Rob Scott practicing extrication of a child
photo by Maureen Krejci

January 2021 issue), but firefighters are responding masked in the fire engines and when we greet those who need help. We are limiting firefighter contact with homeowners. A masked firefighter will come to your door, ask about potential Covid exposure, and, when possible, limit the number of firefighters who enter your home.

Overall, we've adjusted to the guidelines and recommendations. We socially distance, though this can be hard to achieve on calls. We are masked, even when training. We were pretty diligent in the spring about cleaning and disinfecting the station. That probably got a little lax during the summer, but we've resumed increased cleaning. We have a system set up to spray the insides of the engines with disinfectant.

We wipe down surfaces regularly. We have wipes and hand sanitizer everywhere around the station. We have strongly encouraged members with underlying conditions or family members with underlying conditions to limit or avoid attendance. If someone is sick, DO NOT come to calls. Someone tested positive at my wife's work, so she had to get tested, and I avoided the fire department until her test came back negative. I know there are people who are not taking Covid particularly seriously, but frankly, we can't afford not to take this seriously. We can't have three or four members out on quarantine for two weeks, or the potential for exposure to other members, who then have to

quarantine. We simply don't have that many members.

As for training, it was a little easier in the summer, when the case numbers were lower and the temperatures were warmer, and Training Officer Ed Harvey set us up with mostly outdoor training. We have made adjustments now, moving away from training as a large group to individual training, more one-on-one or two to three people. We've considered taking a pause again on training, given the increase in case numbers.

The Fire Company suspended business meetings from mid-March until mid-July. Traditionally, we have had food at business meetings. When we resumed, it was without food, masked, and we've kept an eye on how many members gather. The meeting room can safely hold eight to ten members. When case numbers started to increase in October, we cancelled our November and December meetings. The First Responders

have met over Zoom, and we could do the same, but we've had nothing needing immediate attention. I've been keeping a running list of things to address, and we'll resume meeting as soon as it's safe.

In my mind, the biggest impacts are on camaraderie, connection, and engagement, just like everywhere else — schools, work, church. It's hard when you don't see people. It's hard to communicate everything via text and email. We would normally do many of those updates at a business meeting or even informally at training, but it's hard to keep people engaged if we have to limit training. It's hard to feel connected to something if you can't be there. We were fortunate this summer to be able to resume close-to-normal business, but this current surge is going to throw a monkey wrench into that. We'll continue to adjust and revise procedures as the situation requires. □



NMF&R firefighters practice using the jaws of life in a training session.

photo by Ed Harvey

SCOTT

MackENZIE
EXCAVATING

Email: excavatorscott@aol.com
 (413) 528-2921 TEL (413) 528-3864 FAX
 381 Adsit Crosby Road
 New Marlborough, MA 01230

A•C•R•E•S
 ALDEN COUNTRY REAL ESTATE SERVICES
 DANIEL L. ALDEN, TRANSACTIONAL BROKER
 413-335-9300
 PO Box 132, Mill River, MA 01244
 dan@berkshireacres.com berkshireacres.com
 RESIDENTIAL•LAND•COMMERCIAL

Health is in YOUR Hands

Wear a Mask, Wash Your Hands, and Social Distance
YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

Fairview Hospital
 BERKSHIRE HEALTH SYSTEMS
 berkshirehealthsystems.org

THE LOG

Police Department (selected entries)

- Dec. 1 2:18 p.m. A Southfield village resident reports non-permitted hunting on his property.
- Dec. 2 3:41 p.m. A school-bus driver reports that a thief, leaving behind cigarette butts and a lighter, has broken into her bus and taken a fire extinguisher.
- 9:26 p.m. Responding to a call regarding downed wires at the intersection of Hartsville Mill River and Caulkins Cross Roads, an officer discovers internet cable properly tied off to the side of a utility pole.
- Dec. 3 6:55 a.m. A caller reports that his vehicle is disabled after hitting a deer on Hartsville New Marlborough Road.
- 12:25 p.m. A caller reports her concern about the traffic hazard posed by a crane partially blocking Mill River Great Barrington Road.
- 12:55 p.m. A driver, stopped for running a stop sign at the intersection of Peter Menaker and Mill River Great Barrington Roads, is booked for driving with a suspended license.
- Dec. 5 11:23 p.m. A driver reports cattle on South Sandisfield Road.
- Dec.. 6 7:13a.m. A driver reports an injured cow at the side of Mill River Great Barrington Road.
- 7:21 a.m. A caller reports a deer, injured from a gunshot, in the road near her residence on New Marlborough Hill Road.
- 10:56 a.m. A officer reports that about five cows are loose on South Sandisfield Road near the Transfer Station.
- 2:31 p.m. Verizon is notified after a caller reports low-hanging wires on Hillingdon Road.
- Dec. 9 10:25 a.m. A tow is requested for a car damaged after hitting a tree near a driveway at a Hartsville New Marlborough Road residence.
- 1:43 p.m. The animal control officer, heading to a residence on Clayton Mill River Road to check out a porcupine said to be behaving erratically, asks for assistance in controlling the animal.
- Dec. 12 4:50 p.m. An officer assists in returning a loose dog to its owner in Mill River village.
- 5:39 p.m. A driver, stopped on Hartsville New Marlborough Road for a broken license plate light, is issued a criminal complaint following the discovery in his car of a large amount of marijuana and prescription drugs.
- 2:20 p.m. An officer assists in procuring a tow for a car involved in a collision on Norfolk Road.
- Dec. 14 5:39 p.m. The animal control officer is called to dispatch an injured raccoon near a residence on Mill River Southfield Road.
- 9:19 p.m. A Pine Road resident, complaining of harassment by his neighbor in a property dispute, is advised of harassment prevention and trespassing procedures.
- Dec. 15 7:47 a.m. A driver alerts the Department to an accident that has disabled his car on North Road.
- Dec. 16 6:31 a.m. A caller alerts the Department to the collision of a motor vehicle with a utility pole on Hadsell Street.
- 12:51 p.m. An officer calls in crime scene technicians when a caller reports an apparent breaking and entering at a residence on Canaan Southfield Road.
- 2:01 p.m. An officer is called to help settle a dispute between neighbors over an outdoor burn on Clayton Mill River Road.
- Dec. 17 1:03 p.m. A tow is called to remove a car parked and blocking traffic at the intersection of Hadsell Street and Lumbert Cross Road.
- 2:07 p.m. The Department is informed of a disabled car awaiting a tow on Mill River Great Barrington Road.
- Dec. 18 2:26 p.m. The animal control officer is alerted to eight sheep loose on Canaan Valley Road.
- Dec. 19 9:05 p.m. An officer helps calm an altercation at a residence on Old Hitchcock Road.
- Dec. 22 9:31 p.m. A tow is ordered for a vehicle, considered a safety hazard, after a stop on South Sandisfield Road for a broken headlight and broken brake lights.
- Dec. 25 9:22 a.m. National Grid is notified after a caller reports a tree on wires near his residence on Rhoades and Bailey Road.
- 11:18 a.m. A caller reports a tree on wires on Hartsville Mill River Road.
- Dec. 28 9:30 p.m. An officer checks on a Canaan Valley Road resident after his sister tells the

- Department that he had failed to make his regular nightly call.
- Dec. 29 11:10 a.m. Tree down on Cross Road to Canaan Valley Road.
- Dec. 30 11:11 a.m. A tow is ordered for vehicle with a suspended registration at the Transfer Station.
- 4:59 p.m. After a stop on Knight Road, a tow is ordered for a vehicle that is unregistered, uninsured, and operated by a driver with a suspended license.
- Dec. 31 2:36 p.m. A tow is ordered for vehicle with a suspended registration after a stop on Route 57.
- 8:30 p.m. Following a pursuit on Clayton Mill River Road, a driver is arrested under gunpoint for operating his vehicle recklessly and under the influence of alcohol.

Graham Frank, Chief of Police

FIRE AND RESCUE

- | | | | | | |
|---------|------------|-----------------------------------------------|---------|------------|---------------------------------------------|
| Dec. 2 | 6:46 p.m. | Canaan Southfield Road Medical Call | Dec. 20 | 11:22 a.m. | East Hill Road Medical Call |
| Dec. 6 | 7:08 a.m. | Knight Road Fire Alarm | Dec. 24 | 5:05 p.m. | Hartsville New Marlborough Road Fire Alarm |
| Dec. 8 | 10:34 p.m. | Deerwood Park CO Alarm | Dec. 25 | 11:47 a.m. | Hartsville New Marlborough Road Wires Down |
| Dec. 9 | 9:24 p.m. | Alum Hill Road Medical Call | Dec. 26 | 12:45 p.m. | Mutual Aid to Sheffield Medical Call |
| Dec. 10 | 1:30 p.m. | Hartsville New Marlborough Road Medical Call | Dec. 27 | 11:20 a.m. | Stratford Road CO Alarm |
| Dec. 11 | 1:50 p.m. | Norfolk Road Medical Call | Dec. 28 | 4:18 p.m. | Mutual Aid to Great Barrington Medical Call |
| Dec. 11 | 10:34 p.m. | Mutual Aid to Monterey Structure Fire | Dec. 28 | 8:31 p.m. | Mutual Aid to Great Barrington Medical Call |
| Dec. 12 | 11:24 a.m. | Norfolk Road Medical Call | Dec. 29 | 12:48 a.m. | Hadsell Street Medical Call |
| Dec. 14 | 2:51 p.m. | Norfolk Road MVA | Dec. 29 | 12:59 p.m. | County Road Wires Down |
| Dec. 15 | 6:13 a.m. | Hayes Hill Road Medical Call | Dec. 30 | 1:04 a.m. | Stone Manor Drive Medical Call |
| Dec. 15 | 7:39 a.m. | Mill River Great Barrington Road Medical Call | | | |
| Dec. 16 | 6:34 a.m. | Hadsell Street MVA | | | |
| Dec. 16 | 1:32 p.m. | Clayton Mill River Road Smoke Condition | | | |

Fire Company President David Smith

HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT NEWS

Burning Season:

Burning is permitted from January 15 through May 1. Permits may be obtained at www.bcburnpermits.com/ or via a link on the Fire Department page of the Town website: <http://newmarlboroughma.gov/pages/index>, where they will be available from 8:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. daily.

New Marlborough Fire and Rescue strongly recommends you complete your burning as soon as possible, as a dry April may require burning to be closed.

Reminders:

- Burn only brush; no leaves, grass, hay, stumps, building debris, or other material.
- Burning is allowed between 10:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. All fires must be extinguished by 4:00 p.m.
- Avoid burning on days with high winds.
- Keep fires at least seventy-five feet from structures.
- When possible, have a garden hose or other water supply available, as well as a rake and/or shovel.
- Do not leave fires unattended.
- Burn the fire down to coals and drown with water to extinguish.
- Call 911 to report any emergencies.

Fire Company President David Smith

THE SCHOOL REPORT

SHOULD ONE PLUS ONE EQUAL ONE?

An Eight-Town Board Studies Consolidation

The wheels of consolidation grind slowly. Should the Southern Berkshire Regional School District (SBRSD) join forces with Berkshire Hills Regional School District (BHRSD) to educate school-age kids in eight towns in the southwest corner of Berkshire County? The question was, perhaps, past due. The number of pupils in both districts has been in decline for a decade or more. In 2010, Berkshire Hills had 1,377 students; in 2020, 1,185; over the same period Southern Berkshire student population has gone from 900 to 675.

The issue gained urgency a year and a half ago, when Berkshire Hills, facing a need to replace its deteriorating high school, was told that, if it wanted state money to build a new one, it had to increase the size of its student body. A ready source lay directly to the south: the students of Mount Everett. So Berkshire Hills asked Southern Berkshire to consider combining grades 9 through 12 in a single high school. In September, elected officials in each of SBRSD's towns (Alford, Egremont, Monterey, New Marlborough, and Sheffield), declaring that they wanted to have final say in any consolidation, established the 8 Town Consolidation Committee, with representation from the five Southern Berkshire towns and the three from Berkshire Hills — Great Barrington, Stockbridge, and West Stockbridge.

So far so good. But SBRSD's initial response was that any consideration of consolidation needed to include K-12, not just the high schools. And in Massachusetts, combining school districts is mostly uncharted territory. The law states that school districts can decide to work together on consolidation, or towns can form Regional School District Planning Committees to take on the task. To get help in creating a road map, the Commit-

tee sought advice from the Massachusetts Association of School Committees, the Massachusetts Association of Regional Schools, and the state's Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE). Their advice: go slow and start by considering the financial impact of combining the districts.

The Committee decided in November to request that each of the eight towns form the required three-person Regional School District Planning Committee (RSD-PC), which would include a school committee member and two others. New Marlborough's representatives are Jane Burke, Tara White, and attorney Susan Smith.

In March the eight RSDPCs met to merge into a Regional School District Planning Board, the official public body empowered to investigate the pros and cons of consolidation. The School District superintendents are not voting members of this Board but serve in an advisory capacity. The Board's first action was to ask the superintendents to write a grant request to pay for consultants to help gather data and to facilitate a positive working relationship among its members. In April, it was awarded \$50,000 by DESE. With a deadline of June 30, the consultants laid out the statutory obligations facing the Board. These included:

- A study of the fiscal and educational advisability of establishing a regional school district;
- An estimate of construction and operating costs and methods of financing;
- An assessment of the educational soundness resulting from consolidation;
- Communication of the Board's findings to the selectmen of the eight towns.

CURTIS INSURANCE AGENCY

Serving Mass. and
Conn.
For 60 years

Office: 860 • 824 • 7327
Res: 413 • 229 • 2968

Paul Koneazny
Certified Insurance Counselor

49 MAIN ST. • P.O. BOX 748
CANAAAN, CT 06018



WEBSTER
design landscape horticulture

413-229-8124 websterlandscapes.com Sheffield, MA

In the summer and fall the Board reviewed reports detailing the decade-long decline in enrollment and the condition of district buildings, and formed five-member subcommittees to focus on educational impact, financial implications, and operations.

A year since the formation of RSDPB, the project still has a long way to go. At a January meeting, the Board elected to pursue additional grant money in the amount of \$125,000 and is awaiting a request for proposal from DESE. At the same time, it is asking that the eight participant towns contribute \$15,000 each toward the funding of the continuing study, a figure that could be reduced depending on the size of a grant.

According to Alford resident and RSDPB Chair Lucy Prashker, a lawyer with the western Massachusetts firm of Cain, Hibbard & Myers, phase two of the project should complete its fact-finding by the spring of 2022. It then plans to solicit, through a still-to-be formed community outreach subcommittee, reaction to a spectrum of op-

tions — ranging from full consolidation to the creation of a regional high school to such less ambitious goals as incremental consolidation, shared services, or combined educational services. “Regionalization studies of this type generally take at least two to three years,” writes Ms. Prashker in a letter to officials in the eight towns outlining the need for funds. After it digests what it learns from surveys, focus groups, and meetings with town officials, the Board will make a formal recommendation on consolidation.

No one will accuse this Board of a rush to judgement. □

Joe Poindexter

A MESSAGE FROM THE ANIMAL CONTROL OFFICER

Happy New Year!

Amid doing our taxes and trying to keep New Year’s resolutions, licensing your dogs is a good New Year’s chore to get over with as soon as possible. I want to take a moment to ask all part-time residents to consider licensing your dog here in New Marlborough, as well as in your primary residence. It is important to note that you are not legally required to do so. It is simply a suggestion.


The first reason why you might want to license here and your other home is that sometimes dogs run away or get away. If they are licensed here, the town will have your dog’s address and your name, so that the animal control officer (me), or anyone really, can find out where your dog belongs very quickly.

The second reason licensing would benefit you and your dog is that the state needs to have proof that your dog has been vaccinated against rabies. It makes everyone feel safer about handling your dog. If your dog gets bitten by a wild animal during its adventure, we know that we can handle your dog without contracting rabies, even if your dog has been bitten by an animal that has rabies.

Licenses can be obtained by contacting Town Clerk Kathy Chretien at 229-8278.

Please text or email me if you have further questions. □

*Cassie Keeley 413-429-7603
starbrightkeeley@gmail.com*



**ALL TYPES OF SERVICE
FOREIGN AND DOMESTIC
CARS AND TRUCKS**

- Tires • Oil • Brakes • Exhaust
- Mass Vehicle Inspection
- Commercial Inspection

ORMSBEE'S GARAGE 839 Mill River Southfield Road, Mill River 413-229-2515

THE NEW MARLBOROUGH PUBLIC LIBRARY

Adult Fiction

The Boy, the Mole, the Fox and the Horse, by Charlie Mackesy
The Law of Innocence, by Michael Connelly
Mystery of Mrs. Christie, by Marie Benedict
Fortune and Glory, by Janet Evanovich
Daylight, by David Baldacci

Adult Nonfiction

Promised Land, by Barack Obama
Dancing in the Mosque: An Afghan Mother's Letter to Her Son, by Homeira Qaderi
Margaret Fuller: A New American Life, by Megan Marshall
Quilting in No Time: 50 Step-by-Step Weekend Projects Made Easy, by Emma Hardy

Children's Fiction

Karen's Roller Skates, by Ann M. Martin
All the Greys on Greene Street, by Laura Tucker
Spy School Revolution, by Stuart Gibbs

Children's Nonfiction

Joe Biden: from Scranton to the White House, by Heather Schwartz
Kamala Harris: Rooted in Justice, by Nikki Grimes
Claudette Colvin Refuses to Move: Courageous Kid of the Civil Rights Movement, by Ebony Jo Wilkins
Ruth Bader Ginsburg: Iconic Supreme Court Justice, by James Roland

DVDs

Come Away
The Crown, Season 3
Irresistible
Misbehavior
The War with Grandpa
Yellowstone, Season 3



“Blind Date” Book Sale

February 13 from 11:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

What is a “Blind Date” book sale?

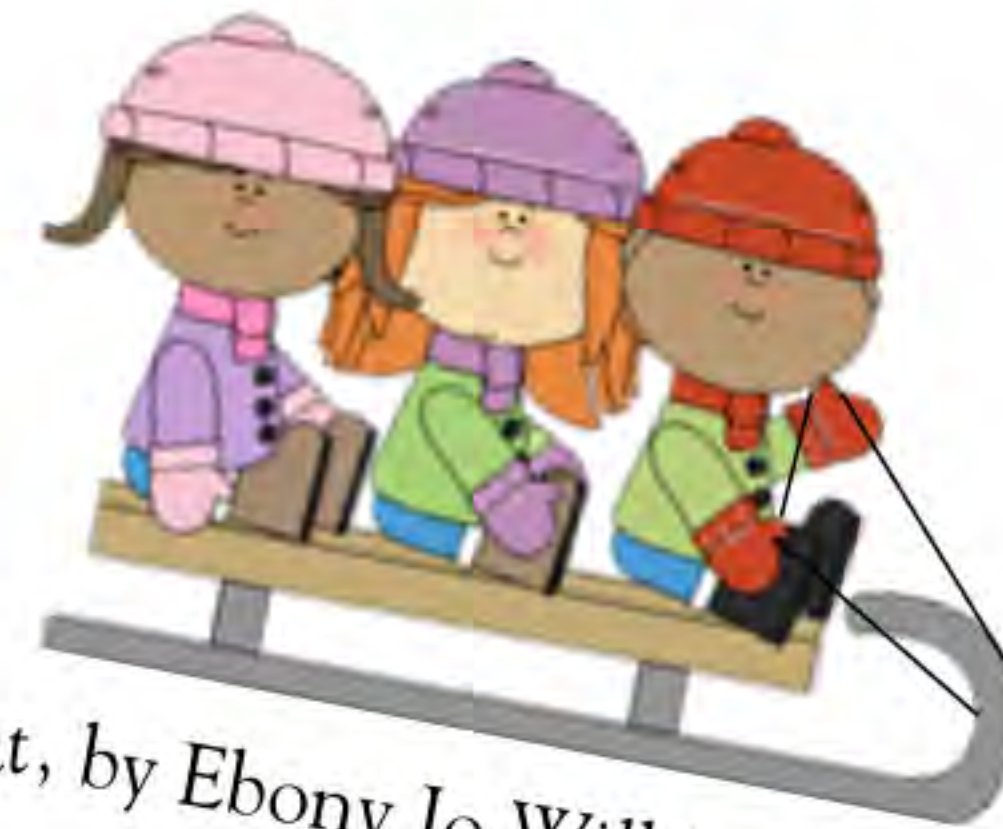
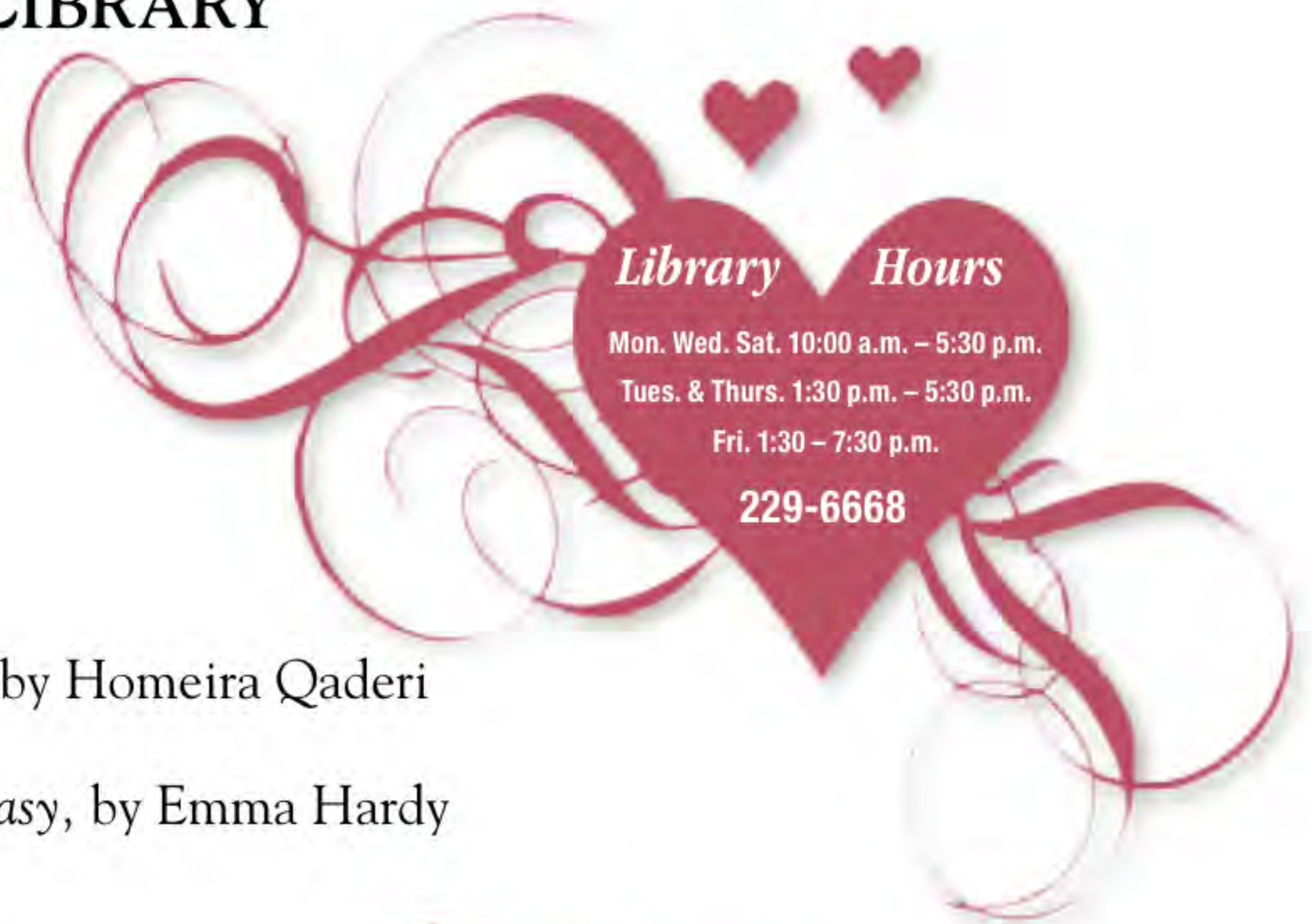
It's the new fundraising event
at the New Marlborough Library.

Here's how it works –
we will place five books in a sealed paper bag
and mark each bag with a heart
denoting its genre.

Come and choose from our selection of bags
placed on tables set up 6' apart in the parking lot.

All bags are \$5.00

Keeping COVID in mind,
please wear masks and social distance.



by Ebony Jo Wilkins



(413) 229-2544
Free Estimates



Contributions are needed to continue the paper!

Please fill in the form and send with your contribution to:

New Marlborough 5 Village News, P.O. Box 243, Southfield, MA 01259

YES, I WANT THE *New Marlborough 5 Village News* TO CONTINUE!

HERE IS A TAX DEDUCTIBLE CONTRIBUTION OF \$_____ (payable to NM5VN)

NAME _____

MAILING ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

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 7:00 p.m.

Board of Health: First Tuesday of the month at 7:00 p.m.

Conservation Commission: Last Saturday of the month at 9:00 a.m.

Board of Assessors: Monday through Thursday, 8:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Fire Department training: Every Tuesday at 7:00 p.m. at the fire station

Building Inspector: Monday 4:30 - 6:00 p.m.; or by appointment.

First Responders: Meeting/training: First and third Wednesday at 7:00 p.m. at the fire station

Cultural Council: Second Thursday at 4:15 p.m. at the library

Post Office: Mill River (413) 229-8582 — if and when it re-opens:

Window hours: Monday - Friday 11:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Saturday 9:00 - 11:30 a.m.

Southfield (413) 229-8476

Window hours: Monday - Friday 9:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. and 1:30 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Saturday 9:00 - 12:00 p.m.

Town Treasurer: Monday & Tuesday 8:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

Tax Collector: Monday 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., Tues and Thurs 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Selectmen's Administrative Secretary: Monday - Friday 9:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

Dog and Animal Control Officer: Cassie Keeley, (413) 429-7603

Town Clerk: 229-8278; 7:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. weekdays; Saturday by appointment

Town Hall: 229-8116

Police: Business office: 229-8161

Library: 229-6668

Transfer Station Hours:

Wednesday: 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Saturday: 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Sunday: 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

PERMITS ARE DUE JULY 6

and can be purchased for \$150

by mail or online at

www.newmarlborough.gov.

Please enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope. No admittance without a permit after August 15

Emergency calls:

**Police, Fire, Medical
911**

New Marlborough Highway Department

Located on Mill River-Southfield Rd.

Hours:

Monday - Friday 7:00 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

Barbara Lowman, issue editor; Diane Barth, designer; Martha Bryan, Jane Burke, Larry Burke, Robbi Hartt, David Lowman, Joe Poindexter Peter Schuyten, Barry Shapiro, Sandra Fusco-Walker.
Contributing writers and artists: Ann Getsinger, Fiona Kerr.
Index: Donna Weaver

NM5VN Board of Directors

Roy Blount, Jr., Larry Burke, Barbara Lowman, Deb O'Brien, Joe Poindexter, Peter Schuyten, Barry Shapiro, Nan O'Shaughnessy Smith, and Tara White

New Marlborough 5 Village News

appears monthly,

also online at

www.nm5vn.org

The next issue will be dated March 2021.

All copy must be submitted no later than February 17.
For advertising, contact Barbara Lowman, tel: 229-2369
PO Box 243, Southfield, MA 01259

5villagenews@gmail.com

New Marlborough 5 Village News
P.O.Box 243, Southfield, MA 01259
e-mail 5villagenews@gmail.com

U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Non-Profit Org.
PERMIT #95
GT. BARRINGTON
MA 01230

CHANGE SERVICE
REQUESTED

SERVICE SECTOR 2/21

- ♦ **Dellea.biz Computer Services:** has provided local residents with on-site Windows computer repairs and technical support since 1996. Book appointments online at <https://dellea.biz> or call (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.
- ♦ **Fine Jewelry:** Designers and manufacturers; custom orders/commissions welcome; expert repairs. 45 years experience. Sachs Reisman, Inc. 25 Maple Ave., Sheffield (413)229-0050
- ♦ If you are looking for short term rehabilitation, physical therapy, senior living, skilled nursing or memory care, look no further than **Noble Horizons**, proud recipient of Medicare's premier 5-star rating. Just over the border in Salisbury, CT. www.NobleHorizons.org 860-435-9851; 17 Cobble Road Salisbury, CT.
- ♦ **One call does it all!:** Vinyl siding cleaning; pressure washing; deck refinishing; floors refinished; window washing; odd landscape jobs; all odd jobs. David Goewey, (413)229-2787
- ♦ **Susan M. Smith:** Attorney At Law; Concentrating in the areas of Estate Planning, Estate Administration, Elder Law, Real Estate and Zoning Matters. ssmithlaw@barringtonlawoffice.com or (413)528-4300
- ♦ **Reiner White & Sons, Inc:** A family-run general contractor business serving the MA and CT area since 1988 - new construction, additions, remodeling, and more. Licensed and insured. Call (413) 229-8450 for free consultation.

To list your business here, contact Barbara Lowman (413)229-2369