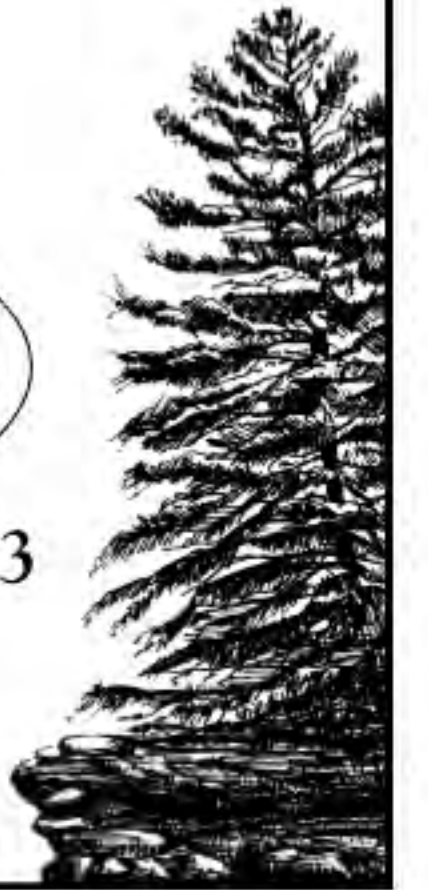




New Marlborough 5 Village News

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Clayton ♦ Hartsville ♦ Mill River ♦ New Marlborough ♦ Southfield

THE JOYS OF FARMING IN WINTER

By Tom Brazie



The Farm's beef herd posing for the camera

photo by Larry Burke

When asked if I would write some thoughts on the challenges of winter at the farm, I agreed, in an effort to sit down and start to write again. I have been thinking about this for the past week or so; to write about the challenges of winter could turn into a book rather quickly, possibly with a sequel well on its way. Instead, I'd like to talk about a single week that occurred just before Christmas.

Every day on the farm is different, and on most days, each moment changes your trajectory for the entire day. So, each day you plan for the worst and hope for the best.

I put my boots on and slurp back the remains of another strong cup of coffee; during the summer the sun gets up far too early to have "another" cup of coffee so I take full advantage of the sun sleeping in during the winter. Each morning's goal is to make it to my next cup of coffee as quickly and efficiently as possible. Just walking out the door and feeling the morning on my face can instantly suggest how far away that next coffee could be.

An ideal winter would be temperatures in the teens at night, warming to a balmy twenty degrees during the heat of the day. We don't need the wind – the wind can calm itself right out of the Northeast for all I care. But the cold, the cold is more than welcome.

A cold temperature offers consistency in a few areas. During the summer when there is work for the animals, we move them to a new job each day. There is work enough for all the animals, and we have jobs for sunny day and rainy days.

During the winter we lay everyone off by keeping them in one general area and only have cold weather jobs available, i.e. eat, sleep, and be pregnant. The idea is to offer a period of R & R before they get back to work in the spring. The cows' only responsibility during the winter months is to eat hay, incubate their babies, chew their cud, and poop. They like to lie in the hay and a lot of the time don't even stand up to use the bathroom. That is fine...it is winter...you're pregnant...do what you do. When it is cold, this is exactly what they do, each day, every day.

Our responsibilities as unemployment agents are to simply drive the hay truck into the frozen field, then unroll the hay on the field to spread the cows and their bad

continued

INSIDE:

Select Board	4
Town Hall Progress Report	7
Conservation Commission	8
Planning Board	10
Bill West	11
Personal Property Tax	12
Frank Twing	14
New Marlborough EMTs	16
The Night Sky	19
Neighbors	20
Wildlife Neighbors	21
Land Trust	23
The Log	24
Maggie's List	26
Recipe of the Month	27
School News	28
Library News	30

bathroom behavior out, and then we can get on with our day (meaning feeding the next group of animals...no more coffee until all the animals are fed). You'll see the cows up and about, but by around noon the majority of them are lying down, chewing their cud and staring off in the distance, thinking intently about things that only cows could possibly consider with such focus. If you're ever driving by and see a cow lying down staring off into the abyss, take a moment, without disturbing her, and watch as she chews her cud. I guarantee you'll be impressed with her focus and will walk away scratching your head wondering what could possibly be on her mind. Is she savoring each flavor of the partially-digested chew in her mouth? Is she wondering if it's true that squirrels can only find about 20 percent of the nuts they hide before winter? Or is she simply just thinking about all of the world's problems and perfectly content in knowing that she is doing everything she needs to be doing to make the world a better place?

If there is snow on the ground you can easily track the cows' movement, by a single-file trail that each of the sixty-plus cows follow every day to the local watering hole. The trail is narrow and it is precise. Food, water, bedding... wash, rinse, repeat.

Now let's visit a "nice" warm winter's day with the



New mom lying outside a calf hutch where her brand new calf is sleeping; Great Grandmother Harley, Tom's original beef cow, is making sure that both are okay.
photos by Tom Brazie



Baby calf with mom standing behind her

cows. I can tell you the "nice" part comes to a screeching halt right at the entrance to the field. First, we can no longer drive into the field with the hay truck, as we will sink out of sight. We need to leave the truck parked in the road. The four-wheel drive tractor needs help to feed the cows, which means we first have to load the hay in the truck with the tractor at the farm, and then drive both the truck and the tractor up the road. A fifteen-minute, one-person job just turned into an hour for two people. But that's okay because it is so "nice" out. Tell that to the rest of the animals impatiently waiting for breakfast! If we're lucky we'll get the cows fed before the pigs decide to take it upon themselves to find their own breakfast. If we are not lucky, we can easily kiss that next cup of coffee goodbye.

So here we are, driving the tractor up the road. I can tell you that one thing tractor tires don't like is pavement. At close to \$500 per front tire (the rears are closer to \$1,000 per tire), you can watch those big lugs disappearing with each rotation. The asphalt peels dollar bills off the tires as they disintegrate heading up the road to the cows. It hurts, a lot! When asked if you can ever have too many tractors, this is why the answer is always a resounding "No!" If I could dedicate a tractor to hang out in the field and babysit the cows

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all winter, I'd be saving a lot of money on fuel and tires! Not to mention that the second set of hands could be enjoying the "nice" day in the mud feeding the pigs.

Once we get the tractor to the cows, we need to unload the hay bales one at a time and drive them up into the field. Each trip in and out of the narrow entrance creates ruts that get deeper and deeper as long as the "nice" weather persists. Now keep in mind that we are carrying hay bales; with every bump we lose a bite or two of hay. As the ruts get deeper the bumps get bigger and the gentleness of escorting the precious cargo turns more into a "hang on for all your worth, bale, we're going in hot" situation. All we can do now is dread the day the ground freezes again because

those soupy ruts we are making are going to be the equivalent of driving the tractor up a frozen rocky riverbed that would otherwise be impassable.

Once we get the hay in the field, we need to carefully tread lightly so as not to make more of a mess of the field with the heavy tractor. Have you ever seen a ten-thousand-pound tractor dance across a meadow on its tippy toes? Me either! If the ground were frozen, we could drive a freight train across it and not leave a mark.

In addition to tippy-toeing across the field, we also need to unroll the hay in thick bunches. The cows are going to lie on the hay, and with the ground not being frozen and their 1,400-plus pound bodies, the hay is going to absorb a lot more of the moisture. The result is a lot of uneaten hay. The uneaten hay is not wasted hay, since the hay mixed with the cows' manure will offer a lot of nutrients to the fertility of the land, but when hay is in short supply, we are much more concerned with what nutrients are going into the cows as opposed to feeding the land. But there is also that fine line of having a place dry enough for the cows so they don't develop notorious problems like the ever pleasant "hoof rot."

Not only is the feeding more difficult on nice days, but the cows are much more active as well. They wander around looking for trouble and create mud almost



Wall-E shares his water with the chickens

everywhere they go. They also burn a lot more energy because they are moving around more. This makes them want to eat more. Perhaps we should suggest thinking about "don't trample in the hay until you're done eating it" the next time they are staring out into la-la land chewing their cud. The bottom line is, if you ask me, I'd say "nice" days are better saved until April.

I was asked to write about the challenges of winter on the farm, and I only made it through the first hour of one day. I didn't even get to tell the story of what happened a few days before Christmas. I guess you'll have to wait until next month for that installment!

Please don't get me wrong, I was asked to talk about the "challenges" of farming, which to me sounded like an invitation to complain. I feel as New Englanders it is our God-given right and privilege to complain. I love to complain! There is always something to complain about and makes for an easy conversation-starter. The weather is the obvious one, and if you are the daring type, you can even bring up politics. Every New Englander seems to have this in common: we always have something to complain about!

But, however much complaining I do today, tomorrow morning I'm going to get up, pour myself a strong cup of coffee and greet the day as I do every day, with a huge smile on my face and a heart full of gratitude, because I can't imagine anything that makes me happier than farming.

If you happen to see me down at the Mill River Store, regardless of what I may be complaining about at the moment, know that I am feeling completely fulfilled, because I have successfully overcome the challenges of my morning responsibilities and gotten to my next cup of coffee. And that, my friends, on nice days or on cold days, is what accomplishment looks like to this farmer in the winter. □



A chorus line of piglets

Town Business Is Your Business SELECT BOARD



January 9: The regular meeting of the Select Board was called to order at 6:00 p.m. with all three selectmen present, along with Town Administrator Mari Enoch and Administrative Secretary Michelle Castellano.

First addressed, along with Highway Superintendent Chuck Loring, was a draft letter to the Massachusetts Department of Transportation, **requesting that continuous centerline rumble strips not be used** in future projects in New Marlborough. The letter is in response to complaints regarding the milled centerline rumble strip on the three-mile, newly-paved portion of Route 57. The strip is creating a reluctance among drivers to cross the strip to remain a safe distance from cyclists and pedestrians. Additionally, the strip holds water and becomes a continuous strip of ice during cold weather. A resident slipped and fell while crossing the road to get their mail. The Board requested that the letter note the unique, rural, residential nature of Route 57 with a maximum speed limit of 35 miles per hour, making the strips unnecessary for roads in New Marlborough. It will also be noted that the strips are problematic on inclines. Ms. Enoch noted that Sandisfield submitted a similar letter, and the response stated that no other towns have taken issue with the strips. Next year, Massachusetts will be paving another section of Route 57 in New Marlborough and the Town is going to be asking that no rumble strips be included.

Next the Board agreed to authorize Ms. Enoch to sign the contract for the Fiscal Year 2023 Community Compact IT Grant from the commonwealth. **New Marlborough is being awarded \$23,791 for innovative (not annual support and operating) software to “drive innovation, make government more efficient, save taxpayer money, and make it easier for residents to interact**

and transact with their local government.” The Town’s plans are for online purchase of transfer station permits, software upgrades for the tax collector and assessors’ offices and new software to track alarm permits and dog licenses, as well as manage people who hold office or who have been appointed to positions.

Moving on to a request from the Town Hall Planning Committee, the Board decided to allocate \$12,000 from the Town Hall Renovation Account for **obtaining estimates to convert the Trois Emme Winery property to a town hall and for renovation and maintenance of the current Town Hall building.** The request, orally conveyed by Ms. Enoch, was not for a specific amount because the Committee does not presently know how much the estimates will cost, but an early estimate was \$20,000 for the current Town Hall building. The Board balked at this amount. Ms. Enoch encouraged them to reconsider, noting that this project will require the consent of 2/3 of voters at a town meeting and it will be important for the Board to “show that [they]’ve done [their] due diligence.” The Board held firm and asked her to convey the \$12,000 allocation to the Committee. As town accountant, Ms. White reported that the town hall renovation account has a balance of approximately \$26,500.

In town administrator updates, Ms. Enoch reported that the tax rate for the Fiscal Year 2023 has been set at \$8.37. The Fiscal Year 2022 rate was \$9.30. Ms. Enoch noted that the rate decreased because assessments went up. It is unlikely that the decreased rate translates to lower tax bills. The next quarterly real estate tax payments are due February 1.

Ms. Enoch then presented a letter drafted for Dave Colucci, who recently retired from the Highway De-



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partment, offering appreciation and congratulations. The Board will sign and send. The Board voted to authorize Ms. Enoch to sign contracts related to bids put out by the Franklin Regional Council of Governments on behalf of New Marlborough. She reminded the Board that the Council provides group purchasing that saves the town significant amounts.

As of this meeting, paychecks from the payroll vendor had not been received due to FedEx delays. This is the third or fourth time it has happened in recent months.

Ryan Kresiak has accepted the part time officer position of thirty-two hours per week as an officer, and has begun working.

The Select Board members had no updates.

Because it is the beginning of the year, the Board had **many business licenses** prepared by the town clerk for their signature. Most were approved without comment. One application was received from Casella Waste Systems for residential and commercial trash removal, which operates in New Marlborough but is not located in town. **This raised a few questions:** Who needs a license? Why is the \$25 fee charged? How is that fee level determined? What do businesses get for the fee? How does the clerk determine to whom she sends a letter to remind businesses to apply for a license? Is the town obliged to determine who is located in town or is it up to the business to determine whether they need one? These questions will be posed to the town clerk and then consider refunding the fee collected from Casella. The town clerk does not issue a business license to those businesses who are granted a liquor license. This will also be questioned with the town clerk.

Minutes of past meetings were approved and payroll and vendor warrants were signed.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:07 p.m.

Michele McAuley


The Select Board considered a request to convert Cassilis Farm into eleven apartments for affordable housing.

January 10: The meeting was called to **consider a request of Construct, Inc.**, the new owner of Cassilis Farm on Hartsville New Marlborough Road, to **grant a special permit to convert the 1890s mansion** into an eleven-unit residence for affordable housing. In attendance were Construct Executive Director Jane Ralph, Housing Director June Wolfe, and Board President Elizabeth Rosenberg, who is also chair of the New Marlborough Housing Committee. Tuning

in via Zoom was John Schreiber in his dual role as, respectively, chair of the Historical Commission and co-chair of the Conservation Commission, and Town Counsel Jeremia Pollard. Also in attendance, virtually or in person, were abutters and neighbors of the Cassilis property.

Three issues were of principal concern to the Select Board: the source of water for the residence, the location of parking, and the increase of living units from a single family to eleven apartments. Architect Robert Harrison of Berkshire Design kicked off the meeting with an overall description of the conversion plan. Brent White of White Engineering explained that a spring uphill of the manor was sufficient to provide water for the property. Parking space to accommodate the eleven units was still under review. A sprinkler system would provide fire protection, obviating the need for any exterior staircases.

Dr. Schreiber said that the Conservation Commission needed assurance that **any construction for parking be kept at least 100 feet from streams and wetlands.** The **Historical Commission**, he added, **was enthusiastically in favor of the preservation of a historic residence** that was otherwise vulnerable to decay. The possible demolition of a barn on the property would be subject to a determination by the building inspector as to whether it was historically significant. A finding that it was would trigger a nine-month delay, as specified in



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the recently enacted demolition-delay bylaw.

Joyce Bernstein expressed a concern that construction to accommodate parking could redirect water flow across Hartsville New Marlborough Road from Cassilis, onto her property. Ann Getsinger, whose property abuts Cassilis, said she had issues with the planned configurations of parking and driveway. Martha Bryan, in attendance as a concerned citizen, asked whether the present driveway was not too narrow to allow vehicles to pass one another — a possible safety issue if emergency vehicles were called to the residence. Construct said it would respond to any road-width issues raised by the Police or Fire Departments.

The Board called on Town Counsel for his judgement as to whether the Town bylaws would allow for eleven units in a single dwelling. Mr. Pollard observed that, while one section of the bylaws called for no more than six living units in a dwelling, another appeared not to establish a limit. The six-unit restriction, he said, seems to apply to new construction. “Where there is ambiguity,” he added, “a ruling tends to go in the applicant’s favor.”

As discussion neared the ninety-minute mark, Selectman Tara White said that a number of Town boards still needed to weigh in on the proposed conversion. The Board voted to continue the special permitting meeting to January 24.

Joe Poindexter

January 17: The joint, hybrid (in-person and Zoom) meeting was called to order by Select Board Chair Mark Carson at 6:01 p.m. and by Finance Committee Chair Beth Reynolds at 6:02 p.m. **This meeting was the kickoff to Fiscal Year 2024 budget planning.** Town Administrator Mari Enoch led the group through the agenda and discussion.

First up were financial policies. Ms. Enoch noted they have not been updated in several years and

suggested consideration and discussion at the next meeting, particularly noting that the Capital Planning Committee is not addressed in the current version.

Next the members **agreed upon a budget calendar**, a memo to accompany budget request forms, and on who will work with department heads who have large budgets or who are historically slow to submit their requests. The significant date upon which the group agreed was February 10, the date when budget requests must be submitted to Town Administrator Mari Enoch.

Further suggestions from Ms. Enoch were that Select Board discuss, at an upcoming meeting, a cost-of-living increase for employees, as well as more joint meetings after the budget requests have been received.

Ms. Enoch reminded members that hybrid meetings are only allowed until March 31 per the commonwealth. The legislature may

take action to continue to allow them or, with no action, the pre-pandemic rules will apply.

Some issues of note for this budget plan were that costs of supplies and services continue to increase, supply chain disruptions persist, and services are difficult to secure. Some significant budget increase requests are anticipated from the transfer station, related to equipment issues and new regulations, and from the police department for required Bridge Academy training for officers.

Ms. Enoch provided the group with an update on staffing. There has been **quite a bit of staff turnover in the last year, and it has been handled successfully by the human resources manager**, who has placed two emergency medical technicians, one part-time police officer, and the administrative secretary. Yet to be hired are two more EMTs and a highway department equipment operator.

Moving on to the subject of the FY 2023 tax rate, Ms. Enoch gave an explanation of the recapitulation

The Board allocated \$12,000 from the Town Hall Renovation Account to obtain estimates for converting the winery property to a town hall and renovating the current Town Hall.

Thank You to Our Contributors:

Edith MacGuire Charitable Trust; Chris & Pam Hassett; Jill Graham & James Kelly; Alicia Brazie; Andrea Marks & David Warmflash; Susan Finkelstein; Felix Graham-Jones; Leslie Wheeler; Charlotte & Barry Kingham; Scott MacKenzie; Barbara Beckerman; Maurice & Linda Brazie; Deirdre MacGuire; Hope Schreiber; Eric Katzman & Melissa Elstein; Maybelle Jacquemin; Thomas O'Connor; Sandra Contreras & Lisi DeHaas; Nancy McWilliams; Enid Michelman; Carl & Renee Sloan; Brian Mikesell & John Weinstein; Francoise Lartigue & Matthew Meyers; Doug & Ginny Hyde; Priscilla Beers; Susan Griffin & Gary Skeggs; Carlos Ball & Richard Storrow; Graeme Whitelaw; Leonard & Hannah Golub; Didi Sinclair; Richard & Norene Tinker

(recap) sheet, used to calculate the tax rate, for the benefit of new members. The group had a brief discussion on the possibility of improving their ability to anticipate the new growth portion of the recap. All agreed that best, though not exact, is to use building permits to anticipate the new growth of the following years.

The discussion about **revenue projection and sources**

of funding, other than real estate tax, led to a spirited discussion about the benefits and drawbacks of adding a local sales tax on meals and lodging. All agreed that first step is to get an estimate of how much revenue would be generated by such a tax.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:23 p.m. □

Michele McAuley

UPDATE ON TOWN HALL PROGRESS

Since the Town Hall Planning Committee and Select Board decided to move forward exploring the winery as an alternate location for town hall, the owners of the winery, Mary Jane and Wayne Eline, have entered into negotiations with the Select Board for an option to purchase. No details are available at this time, though the agenda item for the January 23 Select Board meeting, "Sign memorandum of offer to purchase property and winery buildings from the Elines" is suggestive of the outcome.

The Select Board provided a budget of \$12,000 for the Committee to obtain cost estimates for both the work needed on the current Town Hall and the conversion work to make the winery into a town hall. Richard Long, chairman of the Committee said they will "do their best" to work with this amount. The full scope of work to be estimated for the current

Town Hall is not yet clear but will be clarified by EDM, the architects of Americans with Disabilities Act compliance portion of the project.

For Town Hall, they have not yet secured an estimator but are in discussion with one and, for the winery, they will employ an estimator through the architect Diego Gutierrez of Housatonic Architecture who is drafting the plans for the buildings. Both estimators work in the area and can therefore give local estimates, a qualification that is important to the Committee.

Mr. Long confirmed that the Committee is still working toward the goal of having a vote on one of the options at a Special Town Meeting in mid-March. Informational meetings will precede it in February. □

Michele McAuley

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THE CONSERVATION COMMISSION

January 9: All four Commission members — John Schreiber, Freddy Friedman, Doug Hyde, and Nanci Worthington — convened the month's Zoom meeting. The meeting started with a discussion of the Special Permit submitted by Construct for the development of Cassilis Farm of 602-606 Hartsville New Marlborough Road. Shannon Boomsma of White Engineering confirmed that Construct requested an extension by mail of last month's Request for Determination (RDA) public hearing. A discussion ensued of the parking scenarios proposed by Construct in the Special Permit under consideration by the New Marlborough Select Board. Community members present for the review by the Commission were David Madow, Pamela Hardcastle, and Ann Getsinger. The Commission resolved to extend the hearing until next month. The Commission then noted that a Certificate of Compliance for the pond construction at Cassilis Farm had been received.

The Commission then re-opened the hearing for an RDA for John Schreiber of 112 Hillingdon Road involving the removal of a dead ash tree. Dr. Schreiber recused himself from the discussion. It was noted that an apple tree would be planted in place of the ash. The Commission agreed that the work did not require any further permitting, and the RDA was given a negative determination.

Next Jeff Scherr, landscape architect for Granoff Architects, presented an RDA for his client Paul Cooper of 881 Stratford Road. Mr. Scherr explained the engineering for the construction of a pickle ball court. The Commission asked that the proposed court be moved ten feet west, which would move the court outside of the 100-foot buffer zone for Windemere Lake. The architect agreed and the permit was given a negative determination – meaning no further permitting is necessary.

Next Shannon Boomsma returned to present the Notice of Intent (NOI) permit for Jane Rennert, owner of the Rooney Farmhouse at 346 New Marlborough Southfield Road. Ms. Boomsma started by confirming that the debris piled on site had been cleaned up and put in a dumpster per the Commission's request. Ms. Boomsma then explained the proposed site improvements including a septic system upgrade, a new well located roughly sixty feet from the river, restoration of the back deck to the house and construction of a deck attached to the greenhouse, extension of the gravel driveway to accommodate a car, and extensive planting along the riverbank. She further described the riverfront restoration to involve new plantings of fifty shrubs and an extended area up the river including fifteen new trees. The Commission asked that a slurry pit be established during the well drilling and that additional erosion controls be added along the river bank. Tom Brazie, property owner across the road, asked the Commission to confirm that the leach fields for the septic upgrade did not interfere with the farm's well. Ms. Boomsma confirmed that the leach fields were well beyond the farm well. The Commission asked Ms. Rennert to reinforce and repair the silt fence currently on site in the coming week. Ms. Rennert agreed and promised to start the proposed site improvements as early in the coming spring as possible.

Finally, Ms. Boomsma presented for Michael Meyers and Jane Kurzman of 14 Norfolk Road.

She first explained that the certificate of compliance for a previous NOI involving cleaning up knotweed and native plantings along the river had been filed. The applicant added that that work was also ongoing. Then Ms. Boomsma described a dramatic landslide that occurred on the property at the bank of the Umpachene River. The property owner had completed

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an investigation which revealed that the water from a broken well line was adding to the destabilization of the bank, resulting in the dramatic slide. That repair had been concluded and the restoration could be considered. Ms. Boomsma explained a very complicated, sophisticated construction of a dam and a keyway, which would allow a retaining wall at the bank to be built. The Commission listened to the explanation and then approved the permit, requiring that careful monitoring of silt and erosion be a high priority during construction.

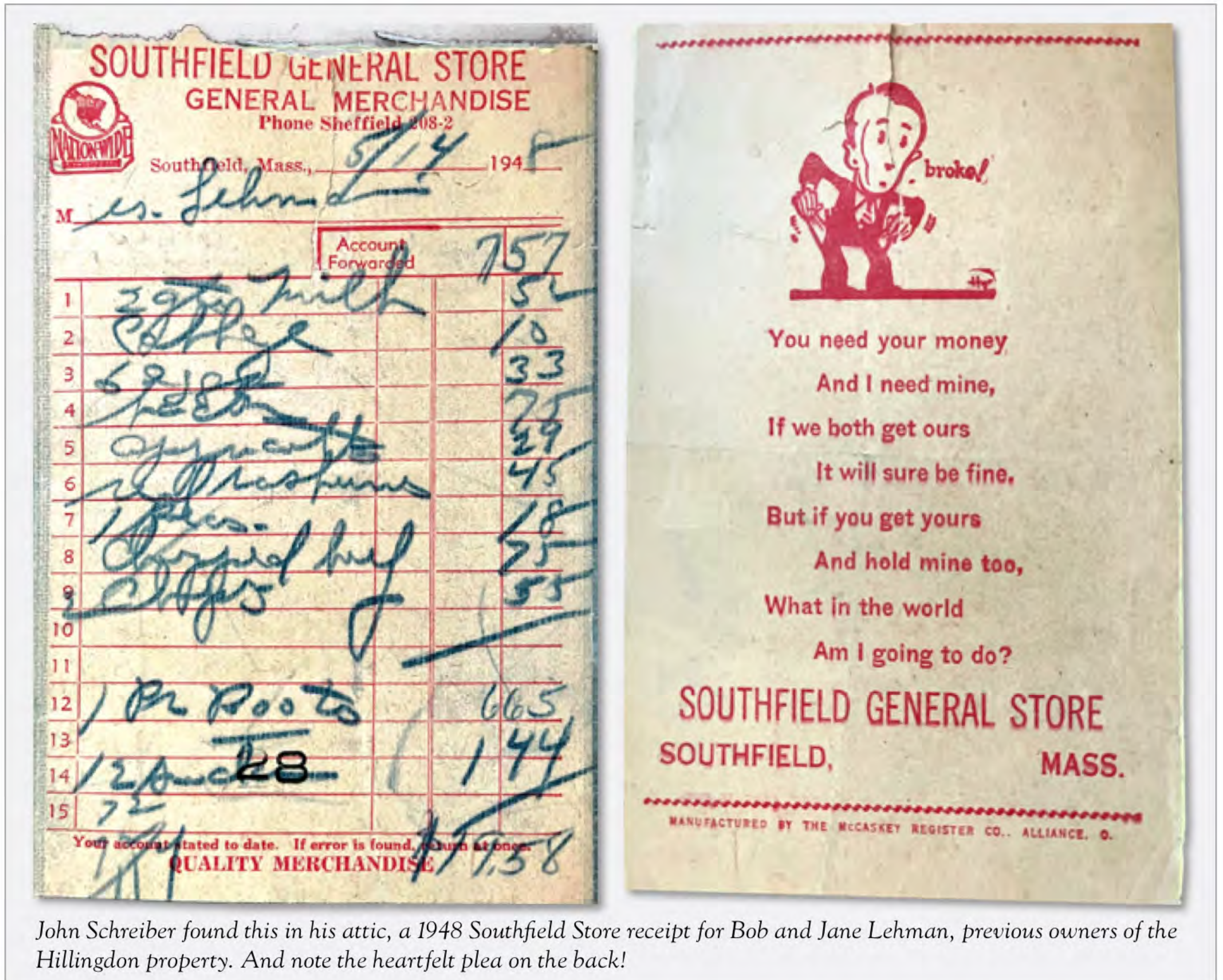
Three additional Certificates of Compliance were received for NOIs at 98 and 148 Lumbert Cross Road as well as at 510 Umpachene Falls Road.

Moving on to new business, Dr. Schreiber reported that the Commission would issue three enforcement orders at properties around Windemere Lake, requesting that the property owners come to the March meeting to recognize the stated concerns. He explained that while doing the site visit for

the NOI for Paul Cooper, he recognized that two properties across the lake had created beach areas without permitting and that Mr. Cooper's property showed evidence of removing trees at the lake bank without permitting. Dr. Schreiber consulted with the Department of Environmental Protection, who referred to aerial photos to confirm his observations. Letters would be sent to the three property owners. Ms. Worthington added that it was important to recognize that the missteps were likely unintentional. Finally, the mail was reviewed. The Commission received three Forest Cutting Plans and notice that David Ballon of 228 Deerwood Park Road had filed his permit's order of conditions. The Commission then noted that they would need to adjust the Commission's annual budget to allow for the participatory fees for the Massachusetts Association of Conservation Commissions.

The next meeting was scheduled for February 16. □

Martha Bryan



John Schreiber found this in his attic, a 1948 Southfield Store receipt for Bob and Jane Lehman, previous owners of the Hillington property. And note the heartfelt plea on the back!

THE PLANNING BOARD

The January 11 meeting of the Planning Board convened at 7:01 p.m. with all members present except Paul Marcel. Sharon Fleck was there in her capacity as secretary, and so was Becky Wilkinson of Cross Road to Canaan Valley Road, who wanted to hear what the Planning Board might be developing in terms of a short-term rental bylaw.

Board Chair Bob Hartt altered the evening's agenda a bit for the benefit of Mrs. Wilkinson, putting the short-term rental topic up first, and began by recapitulating the Board's response to Select Board member Tara White's request that a short-term rental bylaw be prepared for the 2023 Annual Town Meeting. Mr. Hartt reiterated the Board's initial, largely negative reaction to framing such a bylaw, which was followed by some acceptance of the idea that some regulation to ensure safety might be worth pursuing. Mrs. Wilkinson, who, along with her husband Keith, owns an Airbnb property in New Marlborough, said that her main concern is about the potential increases in taxes that may be imposed. Mr. Hartt said that the Board will "dig into it more" and that he will be distributing to the other members of the Board new information on the subject of short-term rental that he has obtained from the Massachusetts Planning List Serve.

Moving on to other matters, Mr. Hartt, speaking for the other members, praised some minor changes to the site plan for the Cassilis Farm affordable housing project. As for the issue of ridgeline protection, Christian Stovall said that he had met with the Conservation Commission's Nanci Worthington (who had spearheaded research on the subject before approaching the Planning Board) and had learned from her that the basic goal of scenic mountain acts is not so much to preserve the unspoiled view of ridgelines as to protect from erosion caused by

construction of houses along the edge of steep slopes. He added that Ms. Worthington sees the evolution of a ridgeline bylaw to be a long process, perhaps extending four years. Mr. Stovall agreed that he and fellow Board member Jordan Archey will continue to delve into existing language on ridgeline restrictions, as well as topographical maps that will be useful in defining specifically where the pertinent ridges in town are, as well as who owns them.

Mr. Hartt then turned the Board's attention once again to establishing priorities for 2023. After some discussion, it was agreed that confronting the short-term rental question should be at the top of the list, followed by working with the building inspector to clean up aspects of the bylaws; regulation, if needed, of "tiny houses;" ridgeline protection; review of the Open Space & Recreation Plan of 2016; obtaining cloud storage for Planning Board documents; supporting the affordable housing effort; recruiting a new member; and a "vision session" once every quarter.

The last item on the agenda was about the Planning Board's meeting times. It was agreed that future meetings would begin at 6:00 p.m., rather than 7:00 p.m., and that the Board would only meet once a month from May through August, on the second Wednesday. Between now and the end of April, however, the Board will continue to meet bi-monthly, on the second and fourth Wednesday.

As the meeting was drawing to a close, Secretary Sharon Fleck announced that, to her regret and for personal reasons, she must resign from her position with the Board. Sincere thanks were offered to her for her valued work and especially for her help in orienting the predominantly inexperienced new members of the Board to the tasks at hand. □

Larry Burke



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Town Governance

Continuing a series on the men and women who serve on our Town boards and committees, a brief profile of . . .

SELECTMAN AND CONSTABLE BILL WEST

By Joe Poindexter

For thirty years, Bill West made a living by helping drivers exceed the speed limit — all perfectly legal. A bit after graduating from high school, Bill joined Team Loon Road Racing, based in Nyack, New York, which competed against other members of the Historic Sportscar Racing Association. The work — supplying parts, fixing engines, rebuilding whole cars — took him to tracks throughout the United States, including those in Lime Rock, Connecticut, the Poconos and Watkins Glen in New York, Phoenix, Sebring, Daytona, and Indianapolis. In 2008, he was honored as the Association's Mechanic of the Year.



Bill West with Ozzie, his Australian cattle dog.

photo by Joe Poindexter

boy, he was invited to accompany his father and friends on their rabbit-hunting outings. He didn't shoot rabbits, but he did learn firearm safety, which led to a skill in gun-smithing. An impetus to offer classes in firearm safety and use arose from an ineptly taught class he took to acquire a license to carry in Connecticut. By that time, he was selling firearms and didn't want his customers to be ill-trained. He decided he needed to conduct his own instruction and gained teaching proficiency by attending a number of classes in Massachusetts.

His company, Paladin Firearms, is named for the 9th

All the more remarkable, given that Bill had no formal training in auto mechanics. "In our family, if something broke, we had to fix it ourselves," he says. Bill was born in 1954 in Newfoundland, where his father, a career Navy man, was serving at the Naval Station Argentina. When he was two, the family moved to a naval base in Norfolk, Virginia, and finally settled down in a house built by his grandfather in 1928 in Hartsville. Bill attended grades 5 and 6 at New Marlborough Central — learning penmanship from the same teacher who also taught his mother — then moved on to Mount Everett for grades 7 through 12.

Graduating in 1971 at age seventeen and too young to sign on with his grandfather's construction firm, Bill worked for a while at Berk Marchione's custom pool cue manufacturing operation. In 1979, he began building and repairing road racers. It was a sport for the wealthy, Bill explains, "that burned through bushel baskets of money." In 2009, his employer, caught up in a stock market swindle, ditched his race-car team, and he was suddenly out of work.

That led to chapter two of Bill's worklife: firearms. His familiarity with guns and rifles was, once again, something picked up early in life. As a

century warriors of the court of Charlemagne — as was the protagonist of the late-1950s TV western, "Have Gun, Will Travel." He has scaled back but still sells pistols and rifles and offers the instruction required in Massachusetts for a firearms permit. Bill is kept company by Ozzie, an Australian cattle dog, who maintains his herding skills by nipping at his owner's heels as he goes from shop to mailbox to pick up the day's delivery.

A lighter work schedule has allowed Bill time "to give something back to the town." In 2021, encouraged by Police Chief Graham Frank, he was elected constable, a position that, among other things, allows him to join patrols to guide traffic past lane closures during road repair. Last year he was elected to fill the term of selectman from which Dan Alden had resigned.

The work of a selectman doesn't have the adrenaline-inducing speed of a road race, but there is one similarity between the old job and the new one: faced by decisions on school district consolidation and where to locate an ADA-compliant town hall, the Select Board, too, could be "burning through bushel baskets of money." □

YOU AND YOUR PERSONAL PROPERTY TAX

A Primer

By Barry R. Shapiro

Some residents in New Marlborough got an unexpected jolt when they opened their mail in mid-December 2022. Inside an inconspicuous-looking envelope from the Town was an arcane form asking for a detailed list of their personal property and its value, with this form somehow related to a “personal property tax” to which the resident was subject.

“What’s this?” thought more than a few bewildered residents. “Why am I receiving this, and how on earth do I fill this out?”

The answer, as you will see below, is, for the most part, actually quite simple.

Let’s start with the basics as they relate to residents (rules for businesses are a bit different and not discussed below).

What is this personal property tax?

It’s a tax that goes back hundreds of years in the commonwealth and is assessed upon all personal property — not real estate — owned at a person’s residence, other than their primary residence. Please read that sentence again. If your primary residence is in New Marlborough, you are exempt from this tax, do not need to file any tax forms, and can stop reading here if you have better things to do. (However, if you are a primary resident in town and received this tax form from the assessor’s office, you should let them know that you received the form in error because your New Marlborough home is your primary residence.) By the way, if you are subject to this tax and it makes you feel better, remember that this tax is not unique to New Marlborough. It is assessed in every city and town in the commonwealth and is an annual tax (which you’ve likely been paying in the past).

◆ How do I determine if my home in New Marlborough is my primary residence, so I am exempt from this tax?

The primary residence or domicile of a person is the place they call home and intend to return to when away. Indicators of domicile include where the person votes, registers a car, spends most of their time, replies to the census, files tax returns from, and has ties to the community. For most people, this is not a difficult question to answer.

◆ Who assesses this personal property tax?



The assessors in each city and town assess personal property taxes on all taxable personal property situated within their communities — unless it is exempt. (If you paid attention to the first answer above, you already know about the most important exemption.)

◆ Where does the revenue from the personal property tax go?

It goes into the general coffers of the Town. The dollars are not really all that significant when compared to the tax on real estate which the Town assesses. For example, in 2021 the total personal property tax revenue collected was \$48,449 compared with real estate taxes of over \$5 million. The personal property tax revenue increased to over \$70,000 in 2022.

◆ What is considered personal property for property tax purposes?

Personal property generally includes tangible items (meaning property that physically exists) such as appliances and small electronics, tools and equipment, furniture and accessories, and personal effects which are located at the residence or in its garage with the owner’s intention that it remain with some degree of permanence, but that are not firmly attached to the land or buildings. Personal property is assessed by the city or town where the property it is situated on the assessment date (January 1).

The following tangible personal property is not included in the tax calculation: motor vehicles and trailers subject to an excise tax, boats subject to an excise tax, and non-commercial registered airplanes. Individuals are also not taxable on farm utensils (meaning hand tools and simple mechanical devices), farm animals, machinery and equipment subject to a farm animal excise tax, solar and wind powered systems, and tools of a mechanic’s trade (meaning hand tools, including hand-held electrical devices used in the vocation of the owner, but not lathes, table saws, routers and other machinery generally bolted to or resting on the floor for support). A “mechanic” means a plumber, electrician, carpenter, or auto mechanic and does not include a professional, such as an accountant, lawyer, dentist, or doctor.

◆ How is the tax calculated?

This is a bit complicated, and you may regret asking

this question.

Rather than requiring that assessors value all the furniture, appliances, and furnishings in each city and town, the Department of Revenue requires that a study be conducted on second homes by the assessing office every five years to determine the average value of the furniture, appliances, and furnishings in homes, as a percentage of the building value.

Put as simply as it can be, the assessors do this by taking everyone's report on Form 2HF (that's the form you may have received in the mail), adding up the value of all the personal property reported by everyone, comparing that to the value of all real property owned by such persons (excluding land), and then coming up with a ratio of total personal property values to total real property values. This ratio is then used to determine the imputed value of your personal property, regardless of what was on your individual form.

So, if, on a town-wide basis, the total value of personal property is calculated to be 2 percent of total building values, the personal property tax for each second homeowner would be 2 percent of the assessed value of the home itself — no matter what the second homeowner had declared to be the value of their personal property.

An example: a second homeowner has a building assessed at \$600,000. With a 2 percent ratio, they would be deemed to have \$12,000 of personal property in their home even if they reported personal property worth less than \$12,000. They would be taxed on that amount (less the \$10,000 exemption; see the next paragraph) at the applicable personal property tax rate which, in New Marlborough is 8.37 percent per thousand dollars of assessed value (it's the same rate as used for real estate). Information on the percentage of assessed valuation to be paid in taxes had not been received when this issue went to press. An informed guess puts this figure in the range of 2 percent.

Got it?

◆ **But wait! Is there some minimum value that must be met before the tax is imposed?**

Yes. By vote at the Town Meeting on May 6, 2001, only personal property valued in excess of \$10,000 is subject to the tax, so, if your property subject to the tax is valued at \$10,000 or less, you will not have any tax assessed (although you still need to file Form 2HF annually).

◆ **How do I report the personal property to the Town?**

You use the form sent to you by the Town back in December or obtain it online from the Department of Revenue. This Form of List (State Tax Form 2HF) must be filed each year by all individuals who own or hold personal property not located at their primary residence in the state on January 1. It matters not if the property was disposed of after January 1. That date is the key, and removal or disposal of property after January 1 doesn't relieve you from the duty to report it. Form 2HF must be filed by March 1 with the Board of Assessors unless an extension is granted. Request for an extension must be made in writing to the assessors.

◆ **How do I value my personal property? It seems impossible to figure out what things are worth!**

Just do the best you can, and in the words of a spokesperson for the Board of Assessors, if you need to, just "make an educated guess."

◆ **I'm concerned that information about my personal property can be publicly available. Should I be?**

No. Forms of List are confidential and are not available to the public for inspection. They are available only to the Board of Assessors and the Massachusetts Department of Revenue for the purpose of administering the tax laws.

◆ **When do I actually receive my tax bill?**

You will receive a tax bill in January of each year.

◆ **What procedures exist for contesting a valuation or tax on personal property in Massachusetts?**

If you disagree with the valuation assessed by the Board of Assessors and wish to contest it, you will need to file an abatement application on State Tax Form 128 by the due date of the first installment payment of the actual tax bill.

◆ **Can the Assessors audit my Form 2H filing?**

Yes. The assessors may conduct a personal property audit by issuing a summons to the taxpayer for production of books, papers, records and other data.

Of course, as with any tax, situations may vary from taxpayer to taxpayer and residents should feel free to reach out to the Board of Assessors at Town Hall. □

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“FRANK TWING UPS THE COUNT AT ORMSBEE’S GARAGE”

By Robbi Hartt

Ormsbee’s Garage has been in business for forty years. For a long time, their main focus was a fleet of seventeen school buses, with the garage serving as the means to inspect and repair those vehicles onsite. Steve Berkel, a devoted employee, served as mechanic for twenty-two years. When they gave up the bus company in 2017, the garage shifted its focus to the local community. Paul Marcel took over after Steve retired, doing repairs and Massachusetts inspections until November 2020, when Frank Twing was hired. Frank and John Ormsbee knew each other from their Little League days growing up.

Frank was born in Sheffield but lived in Mill River from ages fourteen to eighteen, where he attended Mount Everett High School and took an auto mechanic course that proved invaluable for his career. He graduated, wanting to “learn a lot of different things,” but after exploring carpentry, electronics, and other things for a few years, he decided to return to his true passion. He worked at Bachetti’s Auto Sales in Sheffield (where he gained most of his knowledge) for seventeen years.

When Frank became Ormsbee’s chief mechanic at the start of 2021 (when Paul officially retired), he thought he might have an easier lift than he experienced in his most recent setting in Schodack, New York, where (pre-Covid) there were forty or more cars in the lot for six mechanics on any given day. However, word of mouth being what it is, Ormsbee’s has doubled its business over the past two years, the number of parked cars facing the garage growing so much you may have wondered if the library had suddenly started a morning exercise class.

Based on the number facing away from the garage by the end of the day, Frank and his assistant Ray Hall are sometimes turning around the same number in a day with just two people. State inspections once hit twenty-eight in one day! Frank



Photos courtesy of Frank Twing

Frank (right) with one of his cars

estimates that three-quarters of Ormsbee’s auto business is from fairly new residents, a detail he surmises from the fact that few have a 413 area code when they leave their contact number.

Frank is humble when he talks about the surprising growth in business, claiming the timing was just right. A lot of people started moving here during Covid and stayed, whether part time or full time. Frank also moved from Becket to Mill River, trading a fifty-minute commute back and forth to Schodack each day for a two-minute commute that costs about 35 cents a week. Ask anyone in town, however, and they’ll tell you the real reason for the explosion in business is that he’s simply one of the best.

Teddy Gross, who recently ran into car trouble (the tire pressure warning light was frozen on the dashboard), stopped by Ormsbee’s a few weeks ago just as they were closing. “No mechanic in New York or the Berkshires could fix it,” he says. “Every time I went into a garage, the mechanic said he couldn’t help



One of Frank VI’s victories and Frank VI after a race at Lebanon Valley

me.” When he brought it to Frank, he also said he couldn’t help him, but he didn’t walk away. “Instead, he stayed with me and explained what had happened, why it was frozen, and who I needed to see to have it fixed. What’s more, after checking the tire pressure and putting in air (which no one else had offered to do), he said, ‘Oh, by the way, I noticed you had a brake light out and I replaced it.’”

One of the work hazards of being an auto mechanic is that working on cars all day takes a toll on your neck, shoulders, hands, and knees. Carpal tunnel syndrome, which affects Frank, looms large in the industry. Enter Frank’s other passion – racing cars – which he claims offers the best relief for any physical pains he’s experiencing. “I could go to a race with shoulder pain, and once I finish, due to the adrenaline rush, the pain is gone.”

“I had been around cars my whole life,” he notes, “watching my father tinker on them and going to the dirt track at Lebanon Valley with him.” An uncle raced a long time ago, and Frank helped him out for a few years before starting to race himself. It clearly sparked an interest, as he has been an avid racer for the past thirty-six years, winning thirty-four races. It’s a very expensive passion, but it helps if you can work on the car and do what is needed yourself (which, of course, he does).

Frank’s personal biggest “win” was during Super Dirt Week in Syracuse, New York in 1999, considered the northeast “Super Bowl” of racing with a prize of \$4,000. The track isn’t there anymore, but it was a huge one, so you could go a lot faster there (well over

100 miles per hour).” Driving that fast has its risks, of course. “I’ve been upside down a couple of times but never seriously injured,” he notes. After racing cars built by himself or provided by other people, he recently purchased (for the first time) a Pro Stock race car, which he plans to use this spring, his thirty-seventh year of racing.



Frank’s car in action

While he enjoys racing, he has enjoyed passing on his passion, too. His son (Frank V), whom he describes as more of a smooth, careful driver growing up, also raced, including once against his dad at Fonda Speedway in New York. During the race he spun around, but by the end, he recovered and passed most of the other drivers, although not his

dad. They finished sixth and seventh, respectively.

Frank’s face lights up like an LED pit light when he talks about his grandson, the sixth Frank Twing (also known as Jr.), who started racing go-karts when he was five. “It came naturally to him,” Frank says, citing his more aggressive stance as a driver. He raced go-karts for four years, where he won 108 races, earning a total of eighteen championships. Moving up to something a little bigger his fifth year, he earned seven wins at four different race tracks in what is called a slingshot. At age ten he started racing a sportsman modified, which is a full-size 2,400-pound car that goes well over 100 mph. During the 2022 racing season, at eleven years old, he earned a win at Lebanon Valley Speedway and Accord Speedway, both in New York, racing against adults. Frank also has a new granddaughter, Chevelle, who was born in May. It’s too soon to know whether she will follow the family passion.

“My son does the majority of the work on my grandson’s cars, along with a good amount of help from my daughter-in-law Haley,” Frank states. “I enjoy helping my grandson as a driving coach. He’s fun and very easy to work with.” While watching his son used to make him pretty nervous, the only time he gets a little nervous watching Jr. is if he thinks he might not win. “We’ll see what the future brings for my grandson,” he adds. “Maybe he’ll make a career driving a big block modified or a super late model. Whatever it is, he couldn’t make me any prouder than I already am!” □

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THEY'VE GOT US COVERED

Meet our Daytime EMTs

By Larry Burke

The thinning ranks of volunteer firefighters and EMTs is a growing problem across the country. Here in New Marlborough the shortage of responders, especially in the daylight hours when many of our volunteers are at jobs in neighboring towns, is being addressed through the creation of two paid positions to provide coverage at the fire station in Southfield. The two hires are Kevin Brown and Zach Reynolds. Kevin Brown, 29, grew up in Egremont, attended Mount Everett High School, and now resides in Lee. He is an EMT-B (B for basic), and also has Fire Fighter 1 training. Starting back in October, he has been on duty here in New Marlborough from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays. Kevin is also a member of the Egremont Fire Department and the Southern Berkshire Ambulance Squad (SBVAS).

Zach Reynolds, 23, is a native of Lee, graduate of Lee High School and UMass Amherst, and is an EMT-B with Fire Fighter 1 level certification. Zach started work here last August and is on duty Tuesdays and Thursdays from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. He is also a member of the Lee Fire Department.

When there is a 911 call in New Marlborough, the expectation is that any member of New Marlborough Fire and Rescue (NMF&R) who is within reach will respond, either to the station or to the scene. If it is a medical emergency that requires transport to the hospital, the pre-pandemic standard had been that two EMTs must be in the ambulance, and this was a difficult requirement for a squad with relatively few EMTs. As a result of manpower shortages during the pandemic, however, a "Covid clause" was put in place across the state that makes it possible for just one EMT, along with a first-responder-trained driver to run the call. As a result, and because all of New Marlborough firefighters have first-responder training, the ambulance has been able, with either Kevin or Zach as the EMT and a responding firefighter as driver, to complete all but one calls during the daylight hours since August without seeking mutual aid from SBVAS. There is now some



photo by Larry Burke

EMT Kevin Brown at the firehouse in Southfield

talk in Boston about repealing the Covid clause, which will be a major setback, especially for small towns like New Marlborough.

Asked about their experiences so far, both Kevin and Zach are pleased with the support they have received from the leadership and individual

members of NMF&R. Kevin said he is particularly happy, as the primary EMT on calls, to apply the skills he trained for. (His experience to this point with SBVAS has been as back-up to the paramedic who is normally on the calls.) Zach pointed out that, besides the roughly four calls per week that they handle, there is plenty of time in the station to do administrative work, make sure inspections and maintenance is performed on all fire and medical vehicles and equipment, and just



EMT Zach Reynolds, standing by in the firehouse radio room
Photo by Larry Burke

generally keep the firehouse looking polished and professional.

Becoming acquainted with New Marlborough's eighty-seven miles of roads, not to mention our long, strung-out road names, is an ongoing process for Zach and Kevin, but they are assisted in this by the Town's firefighters and EMTs, and also by a relatively new piece of technology called IAR, which stands for I Am Responding. With this program, the status

of each responding member can be shared in real time through pagers and personal cell phones. The system tracks all the resources involved in the call – the locations of the apparatuses and personnel that are responding – so those in command can make more informed decisions. Between IAR and GPS, the challenges of successfully navigating through an emergency call in New Marlborough are much reduced.

Another aspect of emergency response that Zach Reynolds would like to see in New Marlborough

would be a greater use of 911 signs at the head of driveways all over town, and for that, the cooperation of the individual property owners is needed. Signs may be ordered by calling 911 Coordinator David Herrick at 229-8795 or New Marlborough Fire & Rescue at 229-8100, or by visiting the Fire & Rescue page on the Town of New Marlborough website, or email nmemtfr@gmail.com. The cost is \$20, and if help is needed to install the sign, NMF&R will lend assistance. □

CANTINA 229 TO CLOSE

By Barry R. Shapiro

As this issue of the *NM5VN* was going to press, news arrived via email that Cantina 229 is going to close in February.

Owners Josh Irwin and Emily Rachel advised that, with “emotion,” but also contentment, they have chosen to close their doors after eight years of service, fun, celebration and friendships.”



Aerial view of the Cantina 229 restaurant

The email explains that, “Cantina 229 has been a sweet labor of love, a gift to our community, and to our family. With all the blood, sweat and tears and perseverance it required of us, it has also been a source of abundant growth, love, joy, laughter and fulfillment along the way. We fell in love with this magical place in New Marlborough in 2014, we created, nurtured and grew a special unique spot in the community and lived it for almost a decade. We have made the tough decision for ourselves and our

family to say goodbye. It was not an easy choice, but as we all know, so especially evident in the last few years through Covid, sometimes we have to do hard things.”

For Josh and Emily, the “next chapter awaits, a million and one possibilities.” They remain grateful to “our farmers, amazing staff, and to all

our friendships and relationships with customers and neighbors,” and “are optimistic about what the future holds and also very curious.”

Cantina remains open until an unspecified date in February. Until then, Josh and Emily invite everyone to come down, sit, eat, enjoy, and say goodbye. Information could not be obtained at this point as to future plans for the building. □



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Shawn Fields

Calling All Artists!

The Meeting House Gallery is looking forward to its 26th season this year.

If you are an artist who is not already on the Meeting House Gallery's artists list, and would like to have your work considered for the gallery shows, please send your contact information, along with a website link and/or examples of your work to: gallery@nmmeetinghouse.org.

Artists do not have to be New Marlborough residents to be considered for Meeting House Gallery shows.

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THE NIGHT SKY

Beauty in the Darkness

By Ruben Kier

In New Marlborough, we are blessed with clear dark night skies that allow us to see the Milky Way, hidden from most Americans by light pollution – a condition protected by the town’s recently-passed ordinance prohibiting nighttime light pollution. This coming year will give us some great opportunities to enjoy the sky, with the second half of the year including a solar eclipse and meteor showers.

Celestial Events for February: On February 5, the Snow Moon. The February full moon is often termed the Snow Moon, a name attributed in 1760 to the explorer and writer Captain Jonathan Carver. If the ground is snow-covered, full moonlight will be reflected off the white snow, allowing an evening stroll without flashlight, if you can weather the cold!

Planets: Beginning in mid-February, look towards the west at around 6:00 p.m., about an hour past sunset, for Venus and Jupiter, which will appear brighter than any star. Every night of the month, they will appear to close in on each other, separated by only one degree at the end of the month! Venus will be brighter and lower than Jupiter. Unlike stars, planets do not “twinkle.” Stars twinkle because they are point sources of light that appear to change slightly in position with normal atmospheric turbulence. Planets are tiny discs of light, not point sources, and thus visually do not seem to the naked eye to shift in position.

If you have 10x binoculars mounted on a tripod, or a small telescope, you can see even more! Venus will appear oval in shape, like a gibbous moon, because it is almost on the other side of the sun from us. Jupiter will show up to four moons as tiny dots in a line close to the planet.

On February 22, the thin crescent moon will appear just one degree below Jupiter and five degrees above Venus, which makes a beautiful view both to the naked eye and with binoculars. To measure one degree, hold your hand at arm’s length, with your little finger extended. The width of your little finger at arm’s length is about one degree. (The width of your middle three fingers held together at arm’s length spans about five degrees.)

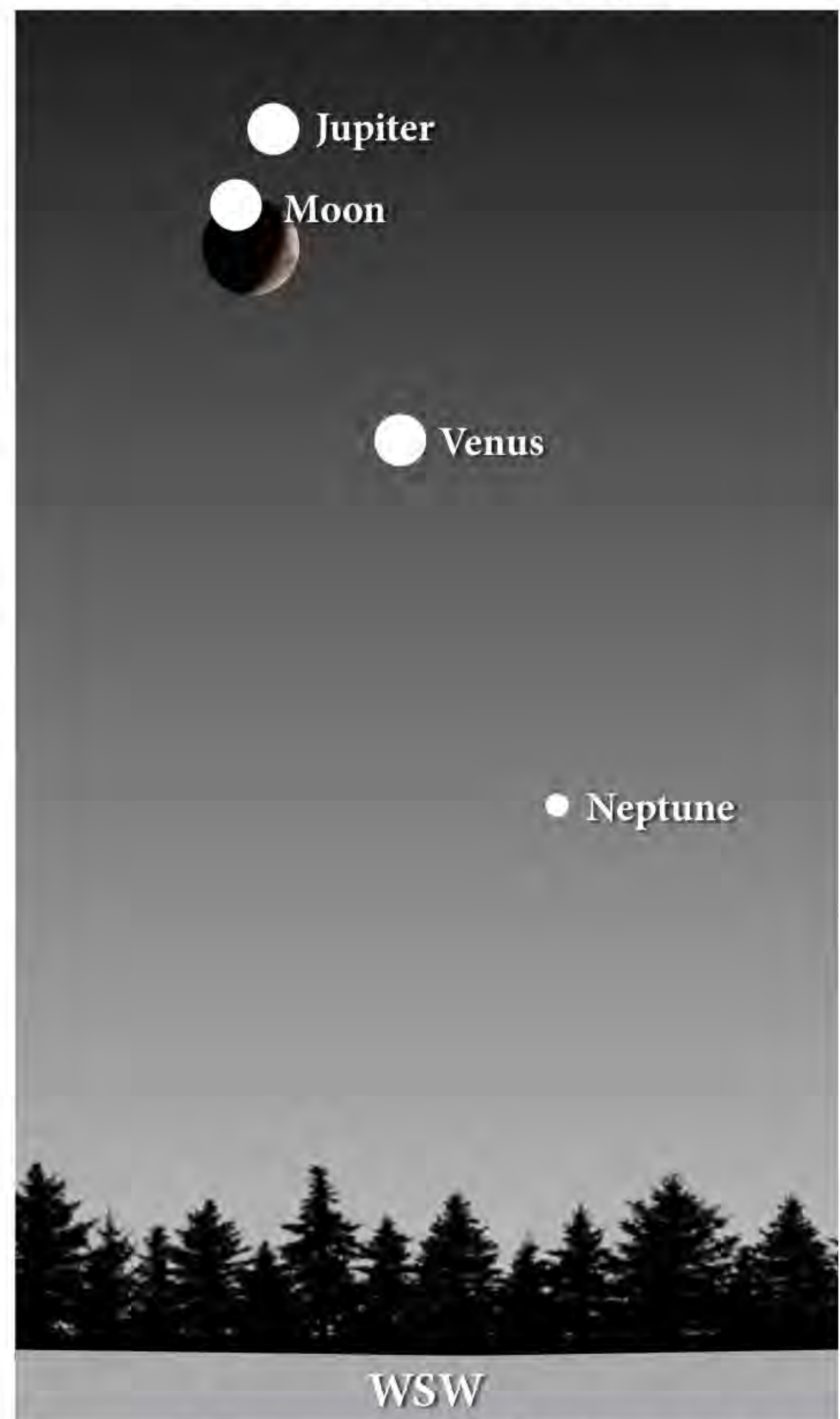
Highlights for later this year: August’s Perseid meteor shower and December’s Geminid meteor shower will put on the best displays of the decade in 2023, because the moon will be nearly absent for both. From our dark sky location in New Marlborough, we should be able to see up to sixty meteors per hour for each event.

The Big Event for 2023 will be the annular solar eclipse of October 14, which will appear as a partial eclipse from New Marlborough, with the moon covering 21 percent of the sun at 1:23 p.m. (Even more exciting will be the total solar eclipse of April 8, 2024, when New Marlborough will see the moon covering 95 percent of the sun at 3:26 p.m.)

This column will go into more detail for these and other events as they get closer. □

Ruben Kier is author of The 100 Best Astrophotography Targets, A Monthly Guide

FEBRUARY 22, 2023



View towards the west on February 22 at 6 p.m., just past sunset. Prepared with In-The-Sky, Copyright Dominic Ford.

NEIGHBORS



Ramona Veretto died peacefully at Fairview Hospital on December 29 at the age of ninety. She grew up and lived in Southfield with her sisters, **Lorraine** and **Winnie**, and their parents, whom she cared for in their later years.

Ramona was skilled at cooking, baking, and needle work, and also enjoyed taking walks and feeding the birds. She was a familiar figure walking along the southern parts of the Norfolk Road. She had a wealth of stories about growing up and living in Southfield for many decades. She moved to Stockbridge in 2007, and for the past seven years lived at Fairview Commons in Great Barrington.

Jane Burke, of New Marlborough, shared many hours with Ramona: My friendship with Ramona Veretto goes back to 1990. I always valued time spent with this pioneer woman who had a storehouse of stories about her life on the farm in New Marlborough and her school days. She lived a Spartan and isolated life with no complaints, hauling firewood into her elder years to keep warm in her cabin on Norfolk Road. We enjoyed sharing our common interests – current events in New Marlborough, cooking, hand crafts, and word puzzles. She was game to try almost anything. I remember her making dozens of potato pancakes to serve to a crowd, mastering sewing on an old machine, and doing complex cross-stitching. Some of my favorite stories about old times growing up in New Marlborough were her recollections of the elementary schools in every village, the challenging bus rides through snow in the winter, and her time taking the secretarial course at the New Marlborough Central School. It was lovely to visit her at her cozy apartment at Heaton Court in Stockbridge where she was able to live later in life. She pointed out all the amenities including the common dining hall with entertainment. Her passing has left a void but many fond memories.



Roy Wilkenson

Roy “Bud” Wilkinson passed away at his home in Southfield on December 28, at the age of eighty-six. He grew up in Southfield and graduated from New Marlborough High School in 1954. He worked for many years at Gilligan Brothers as a mason and carpenter before starting his own construction company, Wilkinson General Contracting.

Bud was an avid hunter and fisherman; a familiar sight every fall was Bud, with his group of equally dedicated hunters, seeking and finding deer in a variety of locations in town. Trading stories and reminiscing about their antics was a favorite pastime of Bud and his longtime friends.

After his retirement, he and his wife, **Carolyn**, spent time collecting and curating their antique furniture, stoves, machinery, and assorted collectibles.

Mohammed Ismail Khan, a part time resident of Cagney Hill Road in Southfield for more than forty years, passed away on October 13 at the age of ninety-one. Born in India, he moved with his family to Pakistan during the Partition; Ismail came to New York City in 1954. He pursued higher education at New York and Columbia Universities in civil engineering and urban planning. He worked as a city planner in the New York City Department of City Planning for fifty years, retiring in 2011.

He and his wife, **Fern**, married in 1969 and had three sons, **Yussuf**, **Javaid**, and **Nafees**. They purchased a brownstone in New York’s Upper West Side, and a year later purchased the property on Cagney Hill Road, affectionately known as “The Barn.” It originally was a three-sided hay barn, but Ismail saw its potential and spent the next few decades developing that vision. Fern says that despite his extensive travels, he often said that he only felt at home on the Cagney Hill property. He was happiest working on the barn and the land; he became friends with many of the local residents whose services he used, and spent hours enjoying their stories. He felt a sense of belonging on Cagney Hill as a result of those years of work, listening to and learning from those who worked with him.

Leslie Wheeler also lives on Cagney Hill: Ismail and Fern Khan have been my neighbors on Cagney Hill for more than forty years. During that time, I’ve watched them transform a somewhat ramshackle barn into a beautiful living space with a screened in porch and a gazebo, and an overgrown farm field into a wonderland of rolling green lawn, flowering plants and trees, as well as a play area for their grandchildren with a basketball hoop, swings, a slide, and a small, summertime swimming pool. Working with local carpenters and landscapers, Ismail was the driving force behind these changes. He was someone who loved projects. As a civil engineer, he was responsible for the New York City waterworks, and he used his expertise to create a drainage system for his property on Cagney Hill. He was also someone who drew people to him. Several of the local people who worked for him became lifelong friends. And he was someone who loved natural beauty, as evidenced by the

profusion of colorful flowers he had planted. He also had a deep love of his land, and enjoyed visiting it whenever he could. When he retired from his job in New York, he often came to the hill by himself during the week to oversee projects and just spend time there. When a car accident made it impossible for him to drive to the Berkshires himself, he and Fern arranged for rides with friends and family, and/or took the bus to Canaan. Still later, when he could no longer get around easily, his family purchased a small, motorized vehicle that enabled him to explore the grounds he'd worked so hard to beautify. Fern told me how thrilled he was to ride on this vehicle.

I've often thought that I couldn't have asked for better neighbors than Ismail and Fern — they were so friendly and welcoming. We shared many delightful meals at their place or mine, and during the first year of the pandemic, my partner and I often joined them for mid-morning tea and conversation on their porch—get-togethers that we always looked forward to, and that helped break the feelings of isolation so many of us felt at that time. Ismail struck me as more of a listener than a talker, but when he said something, you listened, because it was usually interesting and important, and often contained a bit of wry humor accompanied by a chuckle from him. A serious-minded scientist, he nevertheless had time for friendship and fun that included watching cartoons with his three sons when they were young. I'll miss him on the hill, as I'm sure many others will whose lives he touched.

Peter Schuyten was also a neighbor on Cagney Hill: As a neighbor living just down the road, I'd often see Ismail and Fern, his wife of fifty years, sitting on their tiny front porch enjoying the nice weather until one day, for reasons I now forget, I pulled into their driveway to introduce myself and that in turn led to a friendship.

Although he divided his time between Manhattan's Upper West Side and the Berkshires, his real love, after his family, was his home on Cagney Hill, known affectionately as "The Barn," because that's what it had been in an earlier era when it was part of the original Cagney family farm. It was a true handyman special in need of some serious attention when he bought it in 1976.

But the barn would have to wait, because by then Ismail and Fern were focused on raising and educating their three sons. It wasn't until around 2010, by which time all three sons had finished college and were out on their own, that he felt he could afford to invest in upgrading his beloved barn and the acreage surrounding it.

And for that he hired **Justin Davis**, oldest son of **Laura Davis**, who for seventeen years, as many will remember, was a fixture behind the counter at the Mill River General Store back in the days when Dave Herrick owned it. In time, Justin became like an adopted son to Ismail and his family.


Working from Ismail's designs, Justin transformed the building and surrounding grounds over the next decade and a half. Today, the barn has been insulated, the floors redone, windows replaced, and that tiny front porch was replaced by an elaborate wrap-around deck. Trees and flowering bushes are everywhere about the property, and the tangle of underbrush that once threatened to push its way through the back door now resembles nothing so much as a classic English park. There's even a large trellis for Ismail's favorite rose bushes, considered the king of flowers in his native Pakistan.

I'll miss him and his gentle, peaceful disposition and I count him among the nicest people I've known; the same goes for Fern. □

Compiled by Barbara Lowman: deeuell@yahoo.com



Mohammed Ismail Khan



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WILDLIFE NEIGHBORS

Louise Yohalem sent in a shot taken on New Year's Day, entitled "Lunchtime at Yohalem's." Looks like these four **deer** are out celebrating the end of hunting season!

On the unseasonably mild morning of January 13, **Larry Burke** stepped outside to refill the birdfeeders, only to find that a **bear** had roused itself out of bed and found a midnight snack. The empty feeders were on the ground, the stand bent at a right angle, and the suet container nowhere to be found. "I thought it was quite safe, between now and the end of February at least, to assume the bears were in their dens, but times have changed. I guess I'll be taking the feeders in at night from here on," Larry muttered to himself.

As a followup to **Diane Barth's** photos of a pair of **bobcats** last month, she writes that one of the bobcats returned on January 13. The bobcat heard Diane's dog barking at it from within the house, stopped to look up for a nice photo op, but seemed completely unbothered by the barking, and slowly wandered off.



photo by Louise Yohalem

Al fresco dining Chez Yohalem



photo by Diane Barth

A bobcat's photo op

Also on January 13, **Toby Peltz** wrote in reference to last month's Wildlife Neighbors note about the apparent absence of **nuthatches**, "Larry, just read your column in the current NM5VN. We have plenty of those little guys at our place on Cagney Hill. I am not aware of any diminution in the number of nuthatches. I am, however, aware of the decline in the number of **finches** we usually see, both gold and house."

Meanwhile, over on Woodruff Mountain, Larry sees plenty of **goldfinches**, not so many **house finches**, and, wouldn't you know it, **nuthatches**, both red-breasted and white-breasted, showed up at his feeders the day after the January issue went to print! □

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

NEW MARLBOROUGH CULTURAL COUNCIL ANNOUNCES GRANTS

The New Marlborough Cultural Council is delighted to announce that it will award \$16,000 to twenty-seven grantees this year. Among the local awardees are The New Marlborough Central School, Flying Cloud Institute, and two music series at the Southfield Church and the Meeting House. Other successful proposals will support Greenagers, Shakespeare & Company, Berkshire South Regional Community Center, and Festival Latino of the Berkshires.

Massachusetts has the largest Local Cultural Council program in the country. Each year, the Massachusetts Cultural Council (MCC) allocates funds that must be used to fund grants that support organizations and individuals who provide programs

in the arts, humanities and interpretive sciences. For the 2023 grant cycle, the MCC is providing \$5,500. The additional \$10,500 has come from generous supporters through their donations and participation in Cultural Council events.

The NMCC is a committee of the Town of New Marlborough. Agendas and Minutes are posted on the Town website. All of the activities of our LCC are done by a dedicated committee of volunteers; new members are always welcome.

A complete list of programs and projects funded for the 2023 fiscal cycle can be found on line at <https://massculturalcouncil.org/local-council/new-marlborough>. □



NEW MARLBOROUGH LAND TRUST

The New Marlborough Land Trust announced the appointment of four new members to its Board of Directors.

Our four new Board members have a diverse range of skills that will benefit the Land Trust and our community. From education and the arts to nonprofit administration and agricultural science, they represent the deep pool of talent that can be found in our town.

Paula Hatch brings broad nonprofit and educational leadership to the Land Trust. Paula is the former director of the Berkshire Bach Society and, previously, the South Berkshire Education Collaborative.

Fran Lartigue is a long-time educator who works for ParentPowered. Fran has developed science and technology curricula for the Flying Cloud Institute and served on the New Marlborough/Monterey PTA and the SBRSD School Committee.

Matt Sheffer has an extensive background in land conservation and regenerative agriculture. Matt is the managing director of Hudson Carbon, a research and policy organization focused on sustainability.

Katherine Slingsluff is a photographer, musician, and textile designer. Katherine's creative energies and love for nature were displayed when she performed at the Land Trust's GoodTimes@Goodnow event in September.

The New Marlborough Land Trust's core mission is to protect lands of conservation value for the benefit of residents and the general public. Land Trust properties consist of open fields, forests, wetlands, riparian lands along the Konkapot and Umpachene Rivers, wildlife habitat, and agricultural land. The Land Trust owns and manages approximately 900 acres of land containing miles of public hiking trails.

More information about the New Marlborough Land Trust can be found at www.nmlandtrust.org. □

Sylvia Eggenberger, Executive Director

WINTER HOUSE CONCERT SCHEDULED

The New Marlborough Meeting House announces the return of the Winter House Concerts with the Highbridge String Quartet on February 19. They will be performing quartets by Mozart and Borodin. This will be the only performance of the 2023 winter season.

The Winter House Concerts begin at 4:00 p.m. and last an hour



with wine and hors d'oeuvres served afterwards. All concerts take place in private homes. Seating is limited so please make reservations by calling 413-229-2785. Admission \$30. NMMH members \$25. □

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THE LOG

Police Department (selected entries)

- Dec. 1 1:00 p.m. The Department notifies National Grid and Spectrum of a tree down on South Sandisfield Road. charges of assault and battery following a dispute at a residence in New Marlborough village.
- Dec. 2 1:28 p.m. National Grid is notified of an electrical wire down on Foley Hill Road. Dec. 16 10:42 a.m. An officer removes a tree blocking Norfolk Road.
- 4:07 p.m. National Grid is notified of a tree on wires at the base of East Hill Road. 8:29 p.m. A Hartsville resident requests a tow for a U-Haul van stuck on her property and damaging her lawn.
- Dec. 3 1:10 p.m. The Department is informed that a credit card belonging to a Mill River resident has been turned in to the Lee Police Department. 10:14 p.m. A tow is called for a car stuck on an embankment on Hartsville New Marlborough Road.
- Dec. 4 4:50 a.m. A caller reports two goats loose on Mill River Great Barrington Road. Dec. 22 10:22 p.m. A New Marlborough resident alerts the Department to her fear of a relative violating a restraining order.
- Dec. 6 8:10 p.m. An officer requests a tow for a vehicle abandoned on Norfolk Road. Dec. 23 7:18 a.m. National Grid is notified of wires down on Canaan Valley Road.
- Dec. 8 7:19 p.m. An officer requests assistance in resolving a dispute at a parking lot off Hartsville New Marlborough Road. 7:25 a.m. National Grid is notified of tree on wires on Sisson Hill Road.
- 9:10 p.m. A Clayton resident is arrested for assault and battery. 8:12 a.m. National Grid is notified of tree on wires on Route 57 near the New Marlborough-Sandisfield town line.
- Dec. 11 10:45 a.m. A caller reports damage to the front end of his car, which slid off the road while heading to his New Marlborough village residence. 8:20 a.m. National Grid is notified of tree on wires on Old County Road.
- Dec. 12 11:38 a.m. A caller reports a vehicle colliding into a tree off South Sandisfield Road. 9:16 a.m. Eversource is notified of tree on wires on Brewer Branch Road.
- Dec. 13 12:16 p.m. A caller reports a non-commercial truck and trailer parked on Brewer Hill Road and a person nearby connecting a wire to a utility pole. 9:25 a.m. National Grid is notified of tree on wires on Clayton Mill River Road.
- 12:37 p.m. The animal control officer is called to help retrieve a terrier loose in Goodnow Preserve. 4:17 p.m. Wires down on Canaan Southfield Road.
- 6:53 p.m. A motorist reports hitting a deer on Hayes Hill Road. Dec. 24 8:30 a.m. A caller reports a damaged fence and a horse loose in front of a Rhoades and Bailey Road residence.
- 11:41 p.m. A tow is ordered for an unregistered, uninsured, uninspected motor vehicle stopped on Hartsville New Marlborough Road. Dec. 26 10:57 p.m. An officer, receiving a call from a mother worried about her missing daughter, determines that the call was intended for the Marlborough, not the New Marlborough, Police Department.
- Dec. 14 4:20 p.m. A caller reports his suspicions of a person knocking on doors in New Marlborough village, then leaving when the knock is answered. Dec. 30 7:48 p.m. A tow is ordered for a vehicle stopped for speeding on Hartsville New Marlborough Road, whose driver has a suspended license (one of the day's nineteen vehicle violation stops).
- 9:02 p.m. A Hartsville resident reports being threatened by an employee if she were to fire him or give him a negative review.
- Dec. 15 10:34 p.m. A Pittsfield resident is arrested on

Graham Frank, Chief of Police

FIRE AND RESCUE

Dec. 4 3:16 p.m.	Hayes Hill Road Fire Alarm	Dec. 24 12:40 a.m.	Mutual Aid to Great Barrington Medical Call
Dec. 4 10:22 p.m.	East Hill Road Medical Call	Dec. 24 1:41 p.m.	Stratford Road CO Alarm
Dec. 5 2:37 a.m.	East Hill Road Medical Call	Dec. 25 4:01 a.m.	Canaan Southfield Road CO Alarm
Dec. 10 3:00 p.m.	Norfolk Road Odor of Propane	Dec. 25 10:36 a.m.	Clayton Mill River Road CO Alarm
Dec. 10 7:40 p.m.	Mutual Aid to Great Barrington Medical Call	Dec. 25 12:35 p.m.	Mutual Aid to Sheffield Medical Call
Dec. 15 4:18 p.m.	Mutual Aid to Great Barrington Medical Call	Dec. 25 4:51 p.m.	Hartsville New Marlborough Road Fire Alarm
Dec. 16 3:37 p.m.	Hartsville New Marlborough Road Fire Alarm	Dec. 26 2:04 p.m.	Mutual Aid to Great Barrington Medical Call
Dec. 16 8:34 p.m.	Canaan Southfield Road Medical Call	Dec. 27 10:26 a.m.	Clark Way Medical Call
Dec. 19 12:35 p.m.	East Hill Road Medical Call	Dec. 29 1:42 a.m.	Rhoades and Bailey Road Medical Call
Dec. 19 2:20 p.m.	Church Road Chimney Fire	Dec. 29 3:23 p.m.	Mill River Great Barrington Road Medical Call
Dec. 21 2:45 p.m.	Mutual Aid to Great Barrington Medical Call	Dec. 30 6:50 p.m.	Mill River Great Barrington Road Medical Call
Dec. 21 8:13 p.m.	Hartsville New Marlborough Road Medical Call	Dec. 30 4:50 p.m.	Mutual Aid to Great Barrington Medical Call
Dec. 22 3:43 p.m.	Mutual Aid to Great Barrington Medical Call		
Dec. 23 7:15 a.m.	Canaan Valley Road Wires Down		

Fire Company President David Smith

HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT NEWS

Burning season runs from January 15 through May 1. To apply for a burn permit, which is good only on the day for which it is given, please use the online application at www.bcburnpermits.com/ or click on a link on the Fire Department page of the Town website: <http://newmarlboroughma.gov/pages/index>. You may request a burn permit from 8:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. daily, as conditions allow. Burning is allowed between 10:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. All fires must be extinguished by 4:00 p.m.

If burning is not permitted on a given day, it will be noted on the website, and permits will not be issued. You may not burn using a permit granted for a previous day.

Reminders:

- Avoid burning on days with high winds.
- Keep fires at least seventy-five feet from structures.
- Have a rake and/or shovel available, and, when possible, a garden hose or other water supply.
- Do not leave fires unattended.
- Burn the fire down to coals and drown with water to extinguish.



- Burn only brush; no leaves, grass, hay, stumps, building debris, or other material.
- Have a second person on hand to help. One person cannot contain a brush fire if it gets out of control.
- Call 911 to report any emergencies.

New Marlborough Fire and Rescue strongly recommends you complete your burning as soon as possible, as a dry April could lead to ending the burn season before May 1.

Fire Company President David Smith

HOW MAGGIE'S LIST GOT STARTED

New Marlborough's Virtual Bulletin Board

By Debra Herman

Your dog just bolted out your front door off into the woods. You need a plumber, an electrician, someone to plow your driveway, or mow your lawn. You want to let everyone know about a local happening. You have spotted tracks in the snow or captured by a wildlife camera you placed in a tree. You want to pitch a candidate for Select Board. You have bread or vegetables or excess household stuff to sell. You have just authored a cool haiku and hope to interest others in showing off their literary talents. Something interests or irks or worries you and you are seeking advice, support, or commiseration from neighbors. Where do you go with all these concerns and more?

In a town with five villages dispersed over nearly forty-eight square miles, how do you quickly and easily communicate with your neighbors? This is the problem I sought to solve when I started Maggie's List in April of 2008. Yes, there was the *5 Village News*, a vital community resource but a monthly publication. What if your message was time sensitive? What if, though important to you, your issue was hardly newsworthy? You could post a note on a bulletin board somewhere, perhaps at the Mill River General Store. But would people living in Southfield, Clayton, or Hartsville ever come across it?

In starting Maggie's List, I envisioned an email list which would tie together a small town whose residents were widely dispersed, and which lacked a universal gathering point. In naming my list, I thought of the then-popular Craig's List but chose to name the list, not for myself, but for my Icelandic sheepdog Maggie, who was known to students at New Marlborough Central School as a "reading dog."

A name chosen, I now had to sign up participants. The person with the longest-standing membership with an unchanged email address, is Peter Platt. In the weeks that followed I added anyone and everyone I knew with an email address and a willingness to take a chance on something new. By the end of the first year, the list had fewer than fifty members, and I was, by far, the most prolific poster. The first post by a list member other than myself was by Steve Cunningham, who fittingly urged members to lobby for DSL service, then the coming thing in internet access.



Maggie herself shaking hands with Debra photo by Al Lenardson

To find new members, I accosted people using the Wi-Fi outside the library in Mill River. (Those were the days when just about nobody in New Marlborough had good internet service at home.) I passed out postcard propaganda with a fetching photo of Maggie at Elihu Burritt Day and made my pitch to customers at the Mill River Store and Post Office.

The list grew, but slowly, and, in the early days, posts were sporadic. For a long time, I moderated each message, mostly to avoid spam or malicious messages creeping in should members' email be hacked.

As word of the list's usefulness spread and email became commonplace, the list grew to hundreds of members. Often, there were many messages per day, some time-sensitive, and I found it necessary to end moderation. This has led to a few intense list-based controversies and some accidental posts to the entire list that should have been directed to a single member, but, for the most part, posters have been responsible and the list a congenial place to be.

There are to date 901 Maggie's List members. Maggie's List is now the New Marlborough digital town square. Realtors commonly direct new home buyers to sign up. But there are still many in town who either do not know of the list or have not yet chosen to join. Please spread the word to your neighbors and friends. The greater the participation, the more valuable the list. And, as my dog Maggie might have thought, the more eyes on the lookout for lost pets, the more likely they are to be found and returned home.

How to Join Maggie's List

If you want to become a member of Maggie's List, the New Marlborough Google Group, send your request to Debra Herman (debra@dtrain.com). If you live in town, just name your village. If you live nearby and have a reason to join, make your case. Just be sure to clearly state your connection to the New Marlborough community.

Once you join, posting is as simple as emailing maggies-list@googlegroups.com. You will automatically get any emails others post. Further helpful instructions will be provided with your membership confirmation. □

□

RECIPE OF THE MONTH

This month's Valentine's Day recipe comes to us courtesy of the wonderful and talented Pastry Team at the Southfield Store, and I can't wait to try it! It's an easy to bake and assemble cookie that will make the holiday super special. Happy Valentine's Day and enjoy!

Marjorie Shapiro

As this issue went to press, the Southfield Store had not yet begun the heart-shaped version of these cookies.



RASPBERRY HEART LINZER COOKIES

Total time: About one hour

Ingredients

- | | |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1 cup finely ground hazelnuts | 4 egg yolks |
| 1-1/2 cups almond flour | 1/2 tsp. almond extract |
| 2 cups all-purpose flour | 1 tsp. vanilla extract |
| 1/2 tsp. salt | Seedless raspberry jam |
| 1 lb. softened unsalted butter | Confectioner's Sugar |
| 1-1/3 cup granulated sugar | |

Preparation

Preheat the oven to 325 degrees.

- In a bowl, combine ground hazelnuts, almond flour, all-purpose flour, and salt. Set aside.
- In a mixer, cream butter and sugar.
- Add egg yolks to the butter and sugar mixture until combined.
- Add extracts and the dry ingredients to the egg, butter, and sugar mixture until fully incorporated.
- Chill dough for 1 hr. or overnight.
- Roll dough out 1/4" thick on a lightly floured surface.
- Using a heart-shaped cookie cutter, cut all the rolled dough into heart shapes and place on ungreased sheet trays.
- Cut holes in the center of half the cut-out cookies. You can use a bottle cap or another round hole cutter if you need to, making sure you have enough border around the hole that it doesn't come too close to the edge of the cookie. (You can use the "hole-dough" and any other scraps to make more cookies.)
- Bake for 12-15 minutes or until browned around the edges.
- Let cool.
- Scoop 1-2 tsps. of raspberry jam onto the bottom of each whole cookie and spread to cover most of the cookie.
- Sprinkle the top (with holes) of each cookie with Confectioner's sugar.
- Place the top cookies onto the bottom cookies and press very gently.

Yield: Roughly 12-14 cookies, using a 4" cookie cutter

The School Report

EARLY COLLEGE GIVES EVIDENCE OF POSITIVE CHANGE

By Jane Burke

As a new superintendent in August 2017, Beth Regulbuto knew that the job would be wide-ranging, complex, and full of challenges, but she came in determined to do what was needed to help improve student outcomes. Early in her tenure she sat down with a third-grade girl and asked her if she was thinking about going to college. The girl said, "Oh no, we don't do college in our family." That conversation fired up her resolve to ensure that "No child at Southern Berkshire Regional School District (SBRSD) would feel they are not college material.

Not that everyone needs to go to college, but no child should be denied access."

After a years' long effort, in late March 2022 SBRSD and Bard College at Simon's Rock were awarded a four-year state grant to establish the Mount Everett Early College. This groundbreaking project would establish the first wrap-around Early College in a rural area. All students would participate. Following more hard work over the next six months, the Early College became a reality for the students in the first semester in fall 2022. Everyone knew that there were still many unknowns, but this first semester was an opportunity to learn what adjustments were needed to make it a good fit for SBRSD students.

Early College Internship Coordinator Lindy Marcel explained that when seniors returned from their summer break they were surprised by an unexpected chal-



Part of the wrap-around Early College experience includes sample college lessons for younger students. Here Sarah Porter-Liddell teaches tenth-graders about bias.
photo by Jane Burke

lenge: Everyone was going to take a college-level writing and humanities course with the option of earning college credit. Even students who had not previously enrolled in honors or advanced placement courses participated. At the start of the course, she heard from some students that they thought that a college course "was not for them." During reflective sessions at the end of the course, she asked for feedback. They said, "At first, we didn't feel prepared, but we liked the challenge. We passed and got credit, so now we know we can do college work

if we try. We would take another course of interest to us." Ms. Marcel noted the many skills they gained that will help them succeed should they go to college or not. "Meeting new teachers and navigating new expectations, while in a familiar environment with the support of trusted staff, allowed them to build confidence and persevere through any glitches." She is pleased with the number of students who participated and their successes.

Principal Jesse Carpenter said, "As we end the first semester, I am really proud of our students in the Early College classes. They worked really hard to meet the expectations of our professors and teachers. I am also proud of the success of the "Murder Most Foul," an Early College class taught by Mount Everett's Kevin Wolgemuth. He is the first Mount Everett faculty member to be granted initial Early College certification. We

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look forward to the spring semester, as we have another group of seniors taking an Early College English class, and multiple elective opportunities.”

Seniors were not the only students who were able to experience college classes. Another aspect of the wrap-around Early College model is that younger students experience a few different hour-long sample college lessons each year taught by Bard College at Simon’s Rock educators. The first class for eighth graders was taught by Provost John Weinstein, who wowed them with his knowledge of Chinese numbers. Ninth and tenth graders enjoyed exploring the concept of bias with Dean of Equity and Inclusion Sarah Porter-Liddell. Ms. Porter-Liddell commented, “Early College is an excellent opportunity for our students to engage their interests, and to explore college through a realistic, tangible, and affordable approach. Through the Early College classes, students experience a variety of teaching styles and

course materials, allowing them the flexibility to pave the way for their future, authentically and at a pace that makes sense for them.”

Dr. Regulbuto continues to explore additional ways to provide the best education possible by making fruitful connections with other rural districts. She was elected to the board of the Massachusetts Association of Regional School Districts where she is responsible for leading the professional development and is promoting the study of rural districts. Recently she joined the American Association of School Administrators and is now a member of its Rural School Coalition. She is hoping to return from its conference in San Antonio, Texas, in February, with new ideas particularly about the sustainability of small schools and the latest research about effective vocational education. □

LINDY MARCEL GOES FURTHER

By Jane and Larry Burke

Beyond her Early College assignments, Lindy Marcel has taken on a task close to her heart, procuring official state designation of the Innovation Pathway that Technology Director Chris Thompson has been developing over the years. The two began working together in the early 2000’s when she was a Mount Everett student, expert in robotics and learning coding. After graduating from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute with a degree in mechanical engineering and management she went on to found a cloud computing company. She often returned to SBRSD to mentor students and share her experience



Lindy Marcel working with Flying Cloud’s Young Women in Science program in 2016

photo by Jane Burke

in developing cutting edge software. Her personal professional experience showed her that every job in the future will require computer skills including coding. With her help, SBRSD was accepted to apply to have an Innovation Pathway that will result in students earning certifications in advanced technology and information technology. Students will have sequential course work, college courses, and 100 hours of internship in a tech company. This will make SBRSD the only district in the state to have both a wraparound early college and the vocational innovation pathway. □

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Magic Tree House: Sunlight on the Snow Leopard, by Mary Pope Osborne
The Emilie Windsnap Series, by Liz Kessler

Children's Nonfiction

Wolves, by Gail Gibbons
The Universe in You: a Microscopic Journey, by Jason Chin

DVDs

Black Adam
Lost & Found
The Menu
Operation Seawolf
Recipes for Love & Murder Season 1
She Said
Still Life: A Three Pines Mystery
Till

*Homemade
Sweets
For
Your
Sweet:*



A Chocolate Celebration

Stop in at the New Marlborough Library on February 11 from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Just in time for Valentine's Day:

- ♥ Homemade Confections
- ♥ Chocolate Fountain
- ♥ Children's Activity Table
- ♥ Free Hot Chocolate

All proceeds benefit library programs

Sponsored by the New Marlborough Friends of the Library

Debora M. O'Brien - Library Director



Library Hours
 Mon. Wed. Sat.
 10:00 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.
 Tues. / Thurs.
 1:30 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.
 Fri.
 1:30 – 7:30 p.m.
 229-6668



(413) 229-2544
 Free Estimates

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Herbert W. Eichstedt III
 Jason W. Eichstedt

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!

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Town Times

- Board of Selectmen:** Every Monday at 6:00 p.m.
- Town Administrator:** Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, 8:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.
- Planning Board:** May - August, 2nd Wednesday at 6:00 p.m.
September - April, 2nd and 4th Wednesdays
- 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:** By appointment only; call 413-229-0277
- 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
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.
- Animal Control Officer:** Graham Frank, (413) 229-8161
- 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

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 1

and can be purchased for \$185 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, Isabella Kemp, Michele McAuley, Steven Nester, Joe Poindexter, Peter Schuyten, Barry Shapiro, Marjorie Shapiro, Rachel Perera Weingeist.

NM5VN Board of Directors

Roy Blount, Jr., Larry Burke, Barbara Lowman, 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 2023.

All copy must be submitted no later than February 16. For advertising, contact Barbara Lowman, tel: 229-2369
PO Box 243, Southfield, MA 01259

5villagenews@gmail.com

New Marlborough 5 Village News
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SERVICE SECTOR 2/23

- **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
- **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@barrington-lawoffice.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