



# New Marlborough 5 Village News

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## “IF YOU GIVE A CHILD A BOOK...”

by Robbi Hartt

For those who work with at-risk school-age children or have a career in education, “summer slide” — the loss of reading and math skills during the three months students are typically away from the classroom — is a disheartening ongoing reality. Under normal conditions, students regress a full month before returning to school in the fall. What happens in a year like this, when many students are only able to connect with their teachers and peers on Zoom or other remote learning tools and parents are required to supervise much of the school day? Many dire predictions were made, but according to a recent *EdSurge* article by Emily Tate, “The good news is that students learned a lot more doing remote learning than education groups projected they would. The bad news is students still learned notably less than they would have in a typical year.”



*Books awaiting distribution at the Whip Shop*

photo by Robbi Hartt

Teaching kids decoding skills, letter knowledge, and word skills is absolutely critical, because students need to be able to read to succeed in every subject; now, due to the ongoing effects of the pandemic, teaching these skills is even more challenging. A recent study using Star Assessment scores (based on short computerized tests that measure a child’s reading and math achievement) found that students in grades 1-3 are more on track than predicted

while students in grades 4-7 will need on average four to seven weeks to catch up in reading once they resume their “normal” school routines. According to Renaissance Learning’s latest ‘How Kids Are Performing’ report, the groups most negatively impacted are Black, Hispanic, and Native American populations, schools that serve high poverty populations, public schools, and rural/small town schools.”

“There is a crisis in our country of kids facing learning gaps, returning to school with social and emotional needs, and needing access to resources,” says Judy Newman, “but books,” she is quick to add, “can do a lot.” This, more than managing her recently acquired the Whip Shop building in Southfield, seems to weigh heavily on her mind, and she is taking action. Since 1993, Judy has been president of Scholastic Book Clubs, a division of Scholastic Publishing that offers pre-K through 6th grade teachers and students monthly catalogs of new and backlist books from all publishers, so she has been involved with enticing kids to read for nearly three decades. “We expect too much of kids,” she states. “It’s our responsibility to find true and creative ways to lure them in and help them choose books that match their needs and interests.” Working with 700,000 teachers across the United States — and as far north as the Arctic Circle — Judy’s goal is to help teachers get books to the students who need them. That has never been more important to her than now.

In a post on the Scholastic website last April, Judy wrote, “I always have tremen-

*continued*

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*Give a Child a Book, continued*

dous respect for the work teachers do every day, but now more than ever, I am awed and humbled by what teachers are coping with during the Covid-19 crisis — incredible challenges to help their students stay connected and continue learning in the midst of unprecedented disruption to everyone's daily lives. Our mission at Scholastic Book Clubs is to be there for teachers and students through thick and thin, providing the best books at affordable prices so that all children — of all ages and backgrounds with a wide range of interests and reading abilities — can learn to love books and see themselves as readers.”

As president, Judy receives sample Book Club shipments, on average some twenty-five boxes a month, so that she can open them and experience firsthand what the books look and feel like to the company's customers. After she has reviewed the books, it is impractical to send them back to the warehouse, so she likes to donate them to schools and kids in need. Judy hosted her first impromptu “book give-away” in the Berkshires last October when the cartons began piling up by the front door of her Montclair home due to school and community closures in New Jersey.

When Janice Stiles-Boults (caretaker of the Whip Shop) saw how excited the community was with the



*Janice Stiles Boults and Undermountain Elementary School Principal Charles Miller*



*Scholastic Book Clubs President Judy Newman*

books, she and Robert Olsen (operations manager of Volunteers in Medicine) orchestrated a holiday book distribution in December. Great Barrington Family Resource Center, one recipient of the gift books, distributed 2,000 new books to families through its Clinical & Support Options program. Now, instead of delivering the books to Newman's home in New Jersey, UPS ships them directly to her at the Whip Shop. Fortunately, Paul Borelli (New Marlborough's much appreciated UPS driver) is excited by the opportunity to help, not only welcoming the heavy monthly book supply but also offering to deliver the cartons locally, if needed.

Scholastic Book Services, which started in 1948, has a long, successful history of helping teachers get books to their students. Many 5VN readers no doubt can remember the excitement of checking the tiny boxes, folding and tearing off the form, and begging their parents for a check or cash, then waiting for the special delivery in homeroom a few weeks later. While most

routines have changed due to technology, it is heartwarming to know that Scholastic still uses that same ‘paper flyer’ marketing approach today to empower kids to play a role in building their home libraries.

Janice, who became involved in the distribution efforts in October, has been volunteering ever since by finding partner organizations to deliver the books to students and loading up cases to deliver in her car. Among the groups receiving the books are New Marlborough Central and Undermountain Elementary Schools, Volunteers in Medicine, recent immigrants, local libraries, and families identified as having school-age children. Most cartons contain single copies, but some contain twenty-five copies of the same book, allowing an entire class to read and discuss the text together. The books range in reading ability from pre-K to 6th grade, and all are beautiful, vibrant, and brand new. “This has been a fun learning experience,” says Janice, adding that it has sparked her interest in writing children's books. “It's

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heartwarming to see them going to such good use.”

Where will the great books give-away go from here? Judy and Janice have lots of ideas and are eager to engage others’ ideas as well. Both are hopeful that spring weather and Covid relief will open up more possibilities for celebrating books and reading. “I want to do more sorting and curating to make sure we match kids’ in-

terests and tastes moving forward,” says Judy. “We all need to mobilize for a big summer reading celebration to make up for this massive disruption in learning,” she adds. These book distributions are one way to help prime the pump for more reading. Those who would like to coordinate book deliveries for their organization or help in some way may email Janice at [jboults@outlook.com](mailto:jboults@outlook.com). □

## CULTURAL COUNCIL AWARDS

The New Marlborough Cultural Council is pleased to announce that we have awarded \$11,100 in grants to nineteen organizations that provide cultural and educational programs for people of all ages in New Marlborough. In keeping with our mission, grants are awarded to applicants in four general categories:

- New Marlborough residents
- organizations that provide programs that benefit residents of our town
- programs that feature the creative work of New Marlborough residents and/or
- events or creative works that occur in New Marlborough including its schools.

The New Marlborough Cultural Council is supported by an annual grant from the Massachusetts Cultural Council, funding from the Town of New Marlborough and, most importantly, by the wonderful generosity of friends and residents of New Marlborough.

Arts and culture are an essential part of the fabric of this community. The Cultural Council is actively considering ways to host gatherings again, with appropriate social distancing protocols. Look for announcements of upcoming events. If you’d like to join the Council or just volunteer to help at one of our events, drop us a line at [nmculturalcouncil@gmail.com](mailto:nmculturalcouncil@gmail.com). Thanks!

**2021 New Marlborough Cultural Council grant recipients:**

**Alliance for a Viable Future** – Observing Indigenous People’s Day with a Walk for a Viable Future

**Aston Magna Foundation** – 2021 Aston Magna Music Festival

**Berkshire Bach Society** – Bach to the Future

**Berkshire Children’s Chorus** – Take the Lead!

**Berkshire Pulse** – Moving Life Stories at CLuB

**Berkshire South Regional Community Center** – Berkshire Ukulele Band and Berkshire Sings!

**Beth Carlson** – Dewey Sessions Concerts

**Bidwell House Museum** – Raid on Township #1 Reenactment Event

**Dewey Memorial Hall** – Dewey Presents

**Great Barrington Public Theatre** – GBPT Solo Festival

**Greenagers, Inc.** – Nurturing a New Generation of Environmental Stewards

**IS 183 Art School of the Berkshires** – ARTcentric: Berkshires at Undermountain Elementary School

**Jane Burke** – The Art and Science of Clay

**Music in Common** – Berkshires Worldwide

**New Marlborough Meeting House Gallery** – Publicity in support of gallery shows

**New Marlborough Village Association** – Meeting House Programs

**Shakespeare & Co** – 2021 Fall Festival of Shakespeare

**Sparks Science and Art Education** – Young Scientists

**Tom Truss** – ReWritten, a staged work-in-progress in collaboration with Matthew Crumbie. □

*Cultural Council Chair Nancy Barbe*

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## Town Business Is Your Business

### BOARD OF SELECTMEN



**January 25:** The Board, with all three members attending by Zoom and phone, convened tonight's meeting at 6:01 p.m. The first order of business was to review a memorandum of understanding (MOU) between Great Barrington and four other area towns to operate an elderly transportation service to replace the Sheffield-based Southern Berkshire Elderly Transportation Corp. (SBETC), which ceased operations September 30, 2020.

When that happened, explained Town Administrator Mari Enoch, Great Barrington began organizing a replacement service, procuring accessible vans and training drivers, to support its seniors. **Realizing that seniors in neighboring towns were similarly affected by the shutdown, Great Barrington reached out to the other towns to see if they wanted to come on board.** In addition to New Marlborough, they included Alford, Monterey, and Stockbridge.

The idea, according to the MOU, is to operate a service that's as similar as possible to the one provided by SBETC, "the same structure, the same commitment for finances, and the same fees assessed to the riders," said Ms. Enoch. "It's meant to be a continuation of what was in operation," and after the first year the town would reassess the service and make adjustments, as necessary, she said. Great Barrington, she explained, intends to go ahead with the service whether or not the other towns join it. "It's not as though they need a certain number of towns," she said. "They extended it to the others because they felt badly everyone was left without [elderly] transportation."

Responding to a question on rider fees, Ms. Enoch said they're intended to be exactly what they were under SBETC and that Great Barrington would make the

memorandum clearer on that point. Selectman Long asked that there be an annual or semi-annual accounting of the service and that a provision be included in the memorandum that if there's an operating surplus, probably unlikely he conceded, that the surplus is carried forward at the end of the fiscal year and be applied pro rata to each town's account. Ms. Enoch said she would get clarification on Selectman Tara White's question on how assessments would be handled. According to the document, she said, the Town will be assessed \$2,917 for the January to June 2022 period.

In the end the Board decided to table the memorandum, pending clarifications from Great Barrington on the various points that were raised.

In other matters the Board voted to appoint Barbara Marchione director of emergency management. Effective immediately, the appointment will run to June 30, 2021. The position had been filled by Monica Zinke, appointed last June. She recently submitted a letter of resignation indicating she no longer resided in New Marlborough.

**Based on a written recommendation from the Conservation Commission, the Board voted to appoint Douglas Hyde of Peter Menaker Road, a retired physician, to a vacancy on the Commission.** He had been a part-time resident for thirty years and full time for the last five. His appointment is effective immediately and will run until June 30.

Under Administrative matters, the Board approved the following business license renewals: Ellen Bove Carson DBA Kettering Antiques, Norfolk Road; David M. White Antiques, Brewer Hill Road; Edward Klausmeyer for Klausmeyer Woodworking, Adsit Crosby Road; Neil W. Lidstone Electrical Contractor and Southfield Wood Products, Norkfolk Road; Casella Waste Systems Inc., Rutland, Vermont; Vern Johnson

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for Johnson Carpentry, Rhoades and Bailey Road; and James Lane for Independent Heating and Plumbing, Cross Road to Canaan Valley Road.

As there was no public comment, the Board then entered executive session to discuss strategy for the upcoming labor negotiations, advising that it would not be returning to public session.

**February 11:** In a joint session conducted via Zoom, the Board and the Finance Committee met with the chairman and vice chairman of the Regional School District Planning Board, Lucy Prashker and Peter Taylor. Theirs is the group that is evaluating the feasibility of consolidating Berkshire Hills and Southern Berkshire Regional School Districts. The purpose of the meeting was two-fold: to provide an update on the first phase of their work and two, to request funding from the Town to carry on with the next phase of the effort.

The District Planning Board was formed in March 2020, and, according to Ms. Prashker, is, as required by state law, a separate entity from the two School Committees. It's comprised of three members from each of the eight towns that make up the two districts and is divided into three subcommittees: one on educational quality, another on finance, and a third on operations.

For Phase I, the Planning Board hired an outside facilitator to provide training to its twenty-four members on how "to collaborate and engage in productive dialog." **This, said Ms. Prashker, was critical, because "when you're talking about school consolidation, you're talking about issues that elicit strong feelings from people when they're talking about their schools."**

They also engaged the services of the Massachusetts Association of Regional Schools (MARS), a group made up primarily of former school superintendents, which provided the Board with some baseline financial studies. The MARS group looked at how the two districts are

currently operating, their physical plants, collective bargaining agreements, and enrollment trends. They also calculated the increases in annual assessments to the member towns if the two districts continue operating on their own.

**Perhaps to no one's surprise the outlook wasn't good.** The MARS projections showed that the declining enrollment of the past ten years is likely to continue for the next ten, accompanied by decreases in state funding.

Factoring in rising expenses would ultimately result in assessment increases to the member towns. This, said Ms. Prashker, will put increasing pressure on the school committees, whose job it is to improve the educational offerings of their district's schools, just to maintain the status quo.

The District Planning Board, Ms. Prashker said, has elected to move on to Phase II, with a study that would dig deeper into the financial and educational feasibility of consolidation. The twelve- to eighteen-month project, she said, will require not only considerable time and effort on the part of the volunteer members of the Board, but also "significant outside expertise and resources," which is where the request for funding comes in.

Phase I, lasting about ten months, was largely paid for by a \$50,000 state grant. **The budget for the second phase is estimated to be between \$153,700 and \$182,700, with the District Planning Board asking the eight towns of the two districts to contribute \$15,000 each, for a total of \$120,000.** Those numbers are preliminary estimates and have to be firmed up, she said, adding that the Board would hear within two weeks whether a second state grant, this one for \$125,000, will be awarded. If they get it, there would be a significant reduction in what the towns will be asked to contribute.

In response to a question from Finance Committee Chair Steve Klein, Ms. Prashker said the plan is to develop a range of consolidation options, everything

***Great Barrington intends to go ahead with a bus service for seniors service whether or not any other towns join it.***

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from the sharing of programs and services to a full Pre-K-to-12 consolidation and then go out to the communities for input in the spring of 2022. The District Planning Board is aiming to have a recommendation — if there is one — ready for a town vote in the spring of 2023.

In the only other agenda item of note, the Board met with Highway Superintendent Chuck Loring to discuss roadside mowing options for the summer. He said the Worcester-area contractor the Town has been using the past three years raised his bid this year by more than sixty percent, from \$80 per hour to \$129, which works out to be a nearly \$13,500 increase over what the town paid last year. “And he was the only bidder,” Mr. Loring added. **As a consequence, he said he is preparing a proposal to replace the military surplus tractor the department acquired several years ago with a new one equipped to handle roadside mowing.** He has priced out a mower-equipped Kubota at \$75,000, which could be purchased with a five-year, no-interest loan. He estimated that taking on the mowing would require one Highway crew member three days a week for twelve weeks, an extra workload, he said, that the Department could handle because of the addition of a crew member last year. The Board and Finance Committee seemed open to the idea, but asked that the proposal be put into writing, with copies to the Capital Planning Committee, the Board, and the Finance Committee.

*Peter Schuyten*

**February 2:** With all three selectmen, Town Administrator Mari Enoch, and Administrative Secretary Sharon Fleck present via Zoom, the 4:00 p.m. meeting opened with a discussion of an adjustment in the pay of Town Clerk Kathy Chretien for the hours she had spent as acting treasurer — filling in for the ailing Bob Noonan until he is ready to resume his duties as treasurer.

The selectmen voted unanimously to pay Ms. Chretien \$23.42, retroactively, for the hours she had devoted to the acting treasurer’s job — representing an increase of \$3.62 per hour over her regular hourly rate \$19.80.

The Board heard public comment from resident Jolanta Lorenc regarding a code violation at the Hartsville apartment house, where she is a tenant. An inspection was conducted December 18, 2020, and Ms. Lorenc said she was still waiting for the Board of Health report. The selectmen advised her that the Board of Health had been contacted and that she would receive a call.

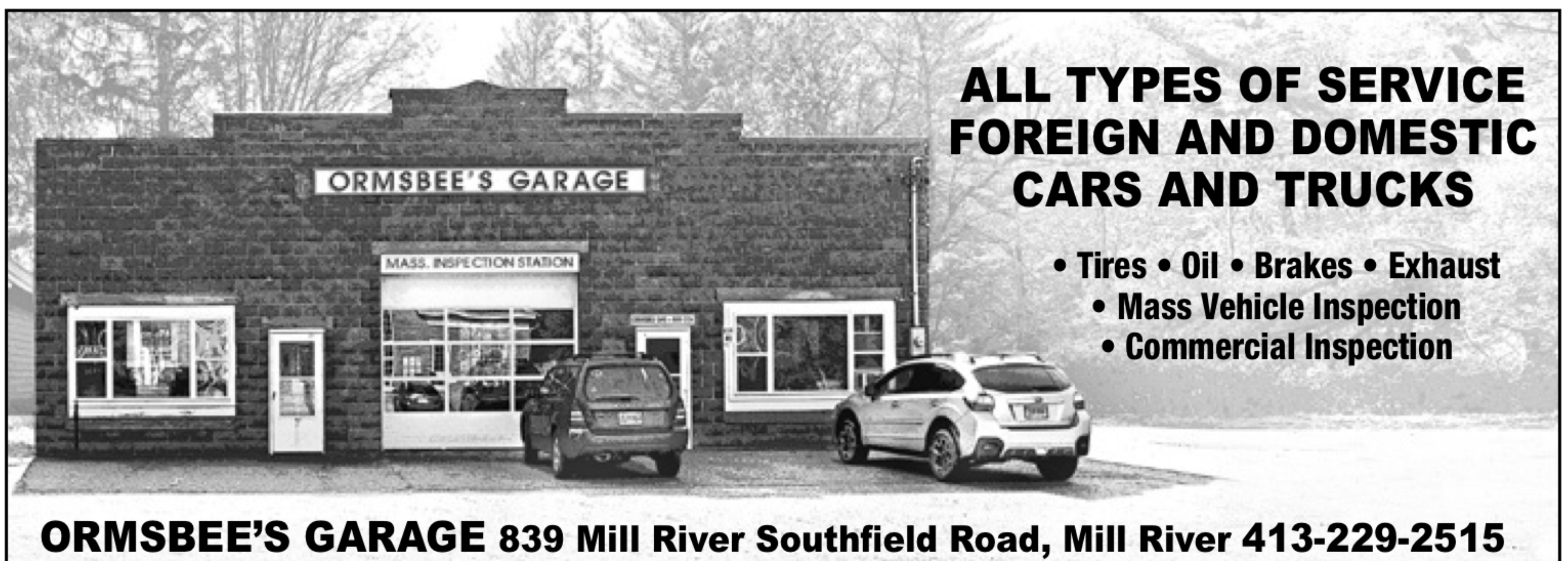
The Board then dove into a backlog of minutes dating from November 16 to January 25 — eight meetings in all and after a lengthy session of review and correction, unanimously approved them all as amended.

Moving on, Selectman Mark Carson stated that Solid Waste Coordinator Freddy Friedman planned to attend the next meeting to discuss changes to the operation of the Transfer Station to comply with new recycling requirements. The Board agreed they would add a Transfer Station discussion to the agenda of the next meeting and invite Freddy Friedman.

Under town administrator updates, Ms. Enoch noted that the contract, first signed in December 2019, with the Collins Center, a department of the University of Massachusetts that assists town governments in improving their effectiveness and accountability, would need to be extended to June 30. The Center will continue to help the Town devise a human resources plan. **Selectman Richard Long said he was working with the Center on an employee handbook and that there were several issues still needing to be addressed.** The Board unanimously approved the extension.

The Board then approved Ms. Enoch to sign the contract for a state grant of \$6,000 to the Council on Aging.

***The Regional School District Planning Board is evaluating the feasibility of consolidating Berkshire Hills and Southern Berkshire Regional School Districts.***



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Ms. Enoch said that the funds must be used by June 30, 2021 and that in the past Prue Spaulding, the director of Senior Services, has used these funds for transportation and other services of benefit to the seniors in town.

Chairman Tara White reminded Board members they needed to sign warrants. She then suggested they put off review of the remaining minutes and business licenses to the next meeting. Mr. Long added he would contact Mr. Friedman about attending the next meeting and advise him to come prepared with details of planned changes at the Transfer Station.

The meeting adjourned at 5:49 p.m..

*Sandra Fusco Walker*

**February 8:** With Solid Waste Coordinator Freddy Friedman and Tom Stalker, in his capacity as a grant writer, joining the three selectmen and Town Administrator Mari Enoch via Zoom, **the meeting opened with discussion of the thorny problems confronting the future operation of the Transfer Station.** Assisted by a detailed memo from Mr. Stalker, the selectmen reviewed a number of mandates and recommendations:

- All landfills in Massachusetts will be closed by 2023;
- An effort to reduce the total amount of trash processed at the Transfer Station will require further segregation of waste for recycling. This would include discreet containers for glass, metal, fabrics, and paper;
- Composting of organic waste should be maximized;
- A facility to incinerate remaining wastes needs to be identified.

The meeting went on to discuss how these mandates would affect Transfer Station costs: the tradeoff between capital costs and operating expenses, how much processing, for example the crushing of glass and plastic, should be done on site and how much of it handed off to a contractor. Mr. Friedman noted that while state grant money was available to cover the \$7-8,000 price of a

new compactor, the cost of preparing a pad on which to install the compactor, about \$25,000, would be borne by the Town. Another issue requiring resolution is whether the Transfer Station should be a self-sustaining operation or continue, at present, with the Town picking up the tab after income from Transfer Station stickers has been exhausted.

Before attempting to make their way through this thicket of options, **the selectmen concurred on the need for a consultant to guide them on the future design of the Transfer Station.** Mr. Friedman said that a brother of the owner of Valley Rolloff, the Lee waste management company that currently rents and services Transfer Station dumpsters, is a design consultant. "We need to bring in a consultant to work out what will be a long-term investment," said Selectman Long. Mr. Friedman concurred: "This needs to be more than a layout plan; we need a master plan."

Before moving on to other business, the selectmen agreed that a committee of residents would be useful in identifying the myriad issues facing the future of the Transfer Station and guiding the Board to an understanding of what townspeople want. Chairman Tara White saw this as an opportunity to engage younger people in matters of Town governance. She said the Transfer Station would once again be on the agenda of the next Board meeting and asked that Mr. Friedman be present.

Ms. Enoch reminded the Board that grant requests to the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission, which has received \$214,000 of state money to provide technical assistance in pursuing so-called "Best Practices," would be due by February 25. Best Practices cover a panoply of Town-sponsored activities ranging from housing development to environmental concerns to public health.

She went on to report that five New Marlborough businesses were seeking renewal of licenses: Ronald Clavette,

*In response to a price increase by a mowing contractor, Mr. Loring has priced out a mower-equipped Kubota at \$75,000.*




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DBA Pro Detailing; Schmeizl Strategic Services; Herb Eichstedt, contractor; Pamela Read Hardcastle, Garden & Floral Design; and Jackie Bergman, Farm Country Soup. All were granted.

After approving the minutes of two past meetings, Ms. White suggested that the correction process could be

made more efficient if the draft of minutes were to go first to Ms. Enoch and Mr. Long, who together account for a lion's share of the corrections. The selectmen agreed and then adjourned the meeting in just under an hour's duration. □

*Joe Poindexter*

## VIEW FROM THE BOARD

It seemed that winter was going to go by without much fanfare, but then February hit. Snow, then warming temperatures turning rain and sleet to ice, has made clearing the roadways challenging at times. Please be aware of road conditions when going out and be patient as the highway crew gets the roads cleared and sanded.

The Highway Planning Committee, charged with reviewing the roadways, has been, among other things, considering how dirt roads can be improved with either paving of some areas or working on road drainage. They are also reviewing how driveways are impacting water flow onto the town roads. When a driveway is put in and water is allowed to run directly onto a town road, it may cause wash-out or create ruts that are both dangerous and costly to repair. If you are putting in a driveway, whether it is a brand new one or a second one onto your property, you are required to get a Curb Cut Application from the Highway Superintendent. He will

review the impact of the driveway on the town road and provide guidelines for its creation. Correct placement and drainage of the driveway will save costly repairs to town roads.

In normal times, the Annual Town Meeting is in May. Last year, due to Covid-19, we needed to move the meeting to August and hold it in a tent. As of this writing, there is discussion about whether we will be able to hold the meeting in May or move it once again to a later date. Annual Town Meeting is the voter's opportunity to discuss and vote on warrant articles, by-laws, and budgeting, issues that govern the town. We want everyone to be able to participate in this process. More information will be coming on this shortly.

Stay safe, wear your mask, and enjoy the longer, sunny days. Spring is on the way. □

*Tara White, Chair, Board of Selectmen*

## PLANNING BOARD

The February 10 teleconference meeting of the Planning Board got underway promptly at 7:01 p.m. with all members present, plus Conservation Commission member Nanci Worthington. The minutes of the two January meetings were quickly dispatched, as were discussions on two Special Permit applications. The Board had no objections to the plan of Peter and Elizabeth Reynolds of 1093 Clayton Mill River Road to convert a section of their garage into an accessory dwelling. Likewise, a plan to rebuild a deck at the home of Michael Randi, 53 Lawrence Avenue, alongside Lake Buel, met with the Board's approval.

Chairman Mark Carson then welcomed Ms. Worthington to the meeting. She explained that her purpose in attending was to express the Conservation Commission's desire to work with the Planning Board on the issue of scenic view protection. She said that the Conservation Commission is "pretty far into the process" of developing a plan for the town, primarily following the stipulations of the Berkshire Scenic Mountain Protection Act (Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 131, sect. 39A). This act, which has been adopted by a small number of towns in Berkshire County, places restraints in designated ridge-line areas — new projects must not be visible above the ridge line and tree-cutting must

be limited to one-quarter of an acre and cannot cause erosion or flooding that would damage water quality.

Mark Carson said that, while the Planning Board has not been considering ridgeline protection per se, the issues it is working on now, particularly, a potential "Dark Sky" bylaw, are related to the types of protection the Scenic Mountain Act provides. Ms. Worthington suggested that the Conservation Commission would support the Planning Board if it chose to undertake a ridgeline protection bylaw. Board member Bob Hartt, in turn, encouraged the Conservation Commission to pursue its study of the issue. Nanci Worthington said that she figured, in any case, the process leading up to the presentation of a protective bylaw might take "a couple of years." Having brought the topic of ridgeline protection to the table, Ms. Worthington thanked the Planning Board members and signed off from the call.

The remainder of the meeting went quickly, with updates on the three areas of current interest — junk cars, "Dark Sky," and curb cuts. Essentially, no progress on any of these items had occurred since the last meeting. Having concluded business, Chairman Carson adjourned the meeting at 8:00 p.m. □

*Larry Burke*



## STUDENTS FOR SUSTAINABILITY

In the early 2000s, with model programs including a unique aquaculture center and a wetlands study area, Southern Berkshire Regional School District became a leader in environmental education in Berkshire County. The recent announcement of the establishment of a student-run Sustainability Coalition, which is sponsoring a series called “Our Relationship to Land and Water: Conversations with Local and National Sustainability Leaders” indicates a revitalized interest in environmental studies at Mount Everett Middle and High School.

Isabella Kemp and Cece Caldwell, both seniors from New Marlborough, founded the coalition in 2020. “There are many young individuals who want to take action against global warming, inspire change, and gain a greater understanding of sustainability,” says Isabella. “I proposed the idea for a sustainable speaker series because it is important to create a way for students and community members to explore topics that are not easily accessible.”

With guidance from faculty advisor Lindsey Berkowitz, also of New Marlborough, the two seniors submitted a successful grant application to the Berkshire Environmental Endowment to underwrite the series.

Isabella’s passion for this work grew out of a course on sustainability at Barnard in the summer of 2019. This led to her interviewing environmental experts this past summer. Since fall, she has been volunteering at the New Marlborough Land Trust and is currently interning with the Woven Roots Farm & Education Center in Tyringham, which promotes regenerative agriculture.

To be held Friday evenings from 5:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. via Zoom, the series features presentations of thirty to forty-five minutes, followed by a half hour of Q&A. The initial program, featuring Ezra Small, Campus Sustainability Manager at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, took place February 26.

The roster for future programs includes:

- Jen Salinetti, co-founder, farmer, and director of community engagement at Woven Roots Farm, “The Ecosystem of Soil in Connection to Self,” March 26;
- Holly Fowler, co-founder and managing director of Northbound Ventures, “Food Systems for Sustainable Communities,” April 30;
- Jamie Samowitz, co-founder and co-director of Roots Rising, “Youth and Their Impact on Sustainable Change,” May 28;
- Rob Koenen, chief marketing officer at Boxed Water Is Better, “Plastic Pollution and Sustainable Change,” June 4;
- Natalie Narotzky, associate program director at Urban Sustainability Directors Network, “Equitable Climate and Sustainability Solutions at the Local Level,” June 25.

The series is open to the public at no charge, but registration is required. To register, visit the events page on the Sustainability Coalition website at <https://tinyurl.com/SC-speaker-series-2021>. □

Jane Burke



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## CRAWFORD SCHOLARSHIP FUND RECIPIENTS

By Joe Krejci

The Thomas Crawford Scholarship Committee has awarded scholarships to Charlotte Smith and Katelyn Dawson. The scholarship fund, founded in September 2002 by two volunteer organizations of our town — The Volunteer First Responders and the Volunteer Fire Company — grants scholarships to students associated with the volunteer organizations. The two organizations had contemplated ways to inspire and reward the children of parents who volunteer their time to answer ambulance and fire calls. The ball started rolling on this fund when a young man, Thomas Crawford, stepped forward to donate \$68 to the Volunteer Fire Company.

Thomas Crawford was an eleven-year-old town resident who was inspired by the post 9/11 efforts. “I would see on TV that police officers, fire fighters, and EMT’s were being sent to “Ground Zero” to help look for survivors and to clean up the collapsed towers. I wanted to help in some way. I decided to make a sign asking for donations for fire fighters. I would stand at the end of my parents’ driveway holding up the sign as cars drove by. When we would go into Great Barrington, I would take every opportunity I could to hold the sign and ask for donations. I eventually saved up a little money and donated it to the volunteer firefighters in New Marlborough.”

Thomas’s generosity did not end with his contribution to New Marlborough. He served our country in the U.S. Army as a cavalry scout between 2008 and 2011, stationed in Camp Hovey, South Korea, for one year and then at Fort Knox in Kentucky, until being honorably discharged. Thomas is currently enrolled in radiology studies. We wish him the best of success.

The recipients of this year’s scholarships are children of long-standing members:

Charlotte is the daughter of Deputy Chief David Smith. She graduated from Miss Hall’s School in Pittsfield and is currently enrolled in Berkshire Community College’s Liberal Arts Program. “I plan on transferring to a four-



Charlotte Smith

*photo courtesy of David Smith*



Katelyn Dawson

*photo courtesy of Michelle Dawson*

year university next year and to major in psychology,” she says. “There are many reasons behind my interest in psychology, but it’s mainly a combination of my interest in human behavior and communication and my desire to leave a positive impact in some way or another. While I don’t know exactly what direction I want my life to take after college, and no matter where I end up, I know this scholarship will have aided me in getting there.”

Katelyn’s mother Michelle Dawson is an EMT, Her stepfather Ed Harvey is both an EMT and lieutenant in New Marlborough Fire & Rescue. Katelyn is currently studying Allied Health at Berkshire Community College. “This spring I was granted the New Marlborough Fire and Rescue scholarship, and I am very thankful for this honor,” says Katelyn. “My mother has been an EMT for quite a few years, and her husband Ed has been a firefighter for a few more. She loves this town and even more so, the people in it. She has inspired me, through her selflessness in helping others, to do the same. My intention, after my studies at BCC, is to transfer to pharmacy school, after which I intend to specialize my education by going through a residency to find solutions for pharmaceutical waste. Finding ways to limit the waste created by the pharmaceutical industry will help keep small towns, just like New Marlborough, naturally beautiful for years to come. Being awarded this scholarship has helped me to focus on this very important semester, as it may be my last before I transfer to a larger university. Pharmacy is a very competitive industry, and it is support from my community that will help me reach my goals.”

The Scholarship fund is supported by the fundraising activities of both the Volunteer First Responders and the Volunteer Fire Company. Donations to this fund may be sent either to the New Marlborough Volunteer First Responders, PO Box 283, Southfield, MA 01259, or to the New Marlborough Volunteer Fire Company, PO Box 69 Mill River, MA 01244

□



# LAND TRUST NEWS

We all have lost a dedicated member of the New Marlborough community.

On Tuesday, February 9, Don Beauchamp passed away.

For over fifteen years, Don gave hundreds of volunteer hours to the Land Trust. He loved the land and the work and quietly, although sometimes reluctantly, enjoyed the chance to be with others to love and share what he loved.

He was a singular, private man. He dedicated his time to learning about nature, observing changes in the woods, helping clear new trails, chain sawing, exploring and exhilarating quietly over what he discovered in nature. He rarely said much, but he made sure you noticed what he noticed and asked that you kneel down and look closer at what he found — the pattern of ice in the field, the moss on a rock. Any of us on the trails were made richer by his company.

On most community hikes, he assumed the role of being the “sweeper,” making sure no one got left behind while supporting any who walked more slowly than others. He was the first to gather for a hike and the last up the trail at the end. He gave his dedication, kindness, and respect to the Land Trust and to others. Without any notice, he quietly made us all better humans.

In his dying he struggled terribly to maintain his privacy, his access to nature, his pleasure for this life while the pain of cancer consumed his body and finally betrayed his earthy language. Thankfully, he now rests at peace.

It seems Don woke up daily to observe the birds, not necessarily the unusual, but instead the familiar chickadee, the bluebird, the hummer, the hawk, the nuthatch. This affinity with birds must mean that he was a bird in his life prior to this one; or that he spent this life practicing for his future in the skies.

While he is no longer on the ground, he did find his wings. He is there in the woods. Along the trail during your next walk at the New Marlboro Preserve, he is the chirp from the bird you cannot locate in the trees but who makes his presence known.

He is not missing. He has left us all simply better. We remember him with love and gratitude.

This honors the quiet and fortitude that was Don Beauchamp, 1948-2021. □

Executive Director Martha Bryan



photos by Martha Bryan

Don building the trail at the New Marlboro Preserve



Don at the summit of Dry Hill, Land Trust's Thanksgiving hike

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# THEN & NOW

**From Then and Now:** In this and future issues of the New Marlborough 5 Village News, we plan to reprint articles from a periodical created by our Historical Society called New Marlborough Then & Now, which appeared every six months from 1978 through 1997. Through most of these years, the publication was edited by Claudette Callahan and featured the writings of a number of longtime New Marlborough residents, many of whom have since passed on – John D. Sisson, Mary Wrinkle, Lee Wool, Dudley Turner, T. M. McDade, John Dow, and Louise Hart, among others. We feel it is important to keep alive

the efforts of these citizens to preserve the history of our town, and we feel as well that today's populace, both longtime residents and newcomers, will enjoy and benefit from reading these remembrances of the old days.

New Marlborough Then & Now is rich in historical nuggets, and we would like to begin this mining enterprise with one from Louise Hart. Louise was born in 1902 in Canaan, Connecticut, and settled with her husband a few miles north, in Clayton, around 1925. She died in 1989, known and loved by many as "Grandma Hart." Along with her dedication to the Historical Society, she was known for her quilting and her green thumb – in particular her propagation of many types of irises.

## WINTER DAYS BEFORE MOTOR VEHICLES

By Louise Hart

I can remember winters around 1910 and later when all motor vehicles – what few there were – were put away for the winter just as soon as freezing temperatures began. Most vehicles for travel or heavier work duties were horse-drawn. These were used until there was snow enough to make it possible to use sleighs and sleds.

People had to trudge through snow or shovel their own paths. If you lived within certain "town limits," the sidewalks were plowed out by a triangular-shaped implement made of a heavy plank with a plank bottom on which several heavy stones or other weights were placed. This was drawn by a single horse. The driver often walked behind, but could stand on the plank floor if necessary. This cleared the main sidewalks of excess snow, pushing mounds to either side for the width of about four-and-a-half feet. There were always a few inches of snow left underfoot, but it made walking a lot easier.

The roads were broken by the teams of horses pulling various kinds of sleighs. After bad storms, road men also shoveled the worst places by hand. Sometimes

the snow storms were of such a heavy nature that teams of oxen were used, drawing a triangular heavy plank plow, much like the ones used for sidewalks, only larger. There was always enough snow left behind for horse-drawn sleighs.

Covered bridges presented a different sort of problem in winter. The heavy "pungs," as the triangular plows were called, whether with wooden or metal runners, would scrape the plank flooring of the bridges. Also, any sleigh-type vehicle would have to be dragged over the bare planks of the bridges, which was a hardship for the horses or oxen. Men and grown boys were hired to cart snow in to be packed down in two wide tracks, and even doused with water to freeze the snow if it did not pack thoroughly. Heavy loads of lumber or grain or whatever would soon tear up the planking of the bridge if this was not done. This also eased the strain of the heavy-loaded sleighs on the teams of horses or oxen being used to pull them.

Clearing the roads was a slow and arduous task, which often took weeks with men and awkward equipment working from daylight to dark. □



*Southfield's unplowed main thoroughfare*



*The H. K. Bloodgood team outside the New Marlborough Meeting House*

# YE OLDE-TIME ICE HOUSE AND ICE CUTTING SEASON

By Louise Hart

The season for filling the ice house was just as important as the season for getting in the hay or for cutting and harvesting the corn or grain. This past winter (1979), from late January and most of February, was like the times when cutting ice would have been ideal – with constant zero and below temperatures, when ponds and lakes and many rivers were deeply frozen over. There were also many man-made ponds which were dug and scraped out in swampy areas to a depth of five or six feet, that would naturally fill with water. Those had to be occasionally cleaned of weeds and debris in dry seasons, so that the ice would be of clear state at freezing time.

During the coldest periods of winter, the ice was measured either by drilling holes or chopping openings. The most satisfactory depth was twelve inches or more, but in mild winters, eight to ten inches was acceptable and was cut and stored as quickly as possible. Harvesting ice gave work to many, as it required a large number of workers for the various duties required in most operations. Even some strong young boys could find a job to do. There were also many teamsters and horses needed. The older, more experienced men were the ones actually on the ponds and lakes – where the use of a horse-drawn ice plow, or “marker,” was used. On large surfaces, the ice was etched in squares with these markers, to guide the men who sawed out the square blocks with the large-tooth and bar-handled saws five or six feet in length.

There was always a choke rope around the neck of the horse that the driver was to hold at all times, in case the horse broke through the ice. It was to be pulled tight to hold air in the horse’s lungs, keeping it afloat in deep water until it could be pulled to safety. In such cases, after the horse was on shore, it was quickly and vigorously rubbed dry and covered with blankets and kept trotting or running as much as possible until it could be put under shelter, where it got special care for some time after, so as not to develop pneumonia.

Men, too, often slipped and fell into the icy water and had to be rescued and rushed to homes and cared for. It was a risky business in deep water for the animals and men working directly on the ice.

As the blocks were sawn free, the first few were hauled out with tongs and pikes to clear a way to float the rest of the blocks to loading docks on the shore. The pikes were

very long-handled, with a strong metal implement on the end with which to poke the blocks of ice along or hook them loose if they got jammed together. The blocks were kept moving toward the loading ramps at the water’s edge, where younger, inexperienced workers loaded



*Cutting ice on Lake Buel in the early 1900s*

the ice blocks onto flatbed sleighs, keeping the load in good order with tongs and pikes so it would not slide off while being hauled by teams of horses to various ice houses for storage.

During some extremely long and cold winters, a second cutting could be made, sometimes not as thick as the first. In those days, ice was a great necessity and it took a great supply to last through the warm months.

Filling and packing the ice house was also a job that required proper care and skill. Sawdust from local sawmills was always used. It was piled or stored so that it would not get wet or frozen. The ice house was a square building made of boards with no windows, but the roof had to be properly sloped and insulated with tarpaper or rosin-coated building paper under the shingled surface, so that the summer sun would not beat down hard enough to melt the ice. The only opening was the loading entrance. The floor was always dirt, with sawdust spread generously before the first layer of ice blocks was systematically laid, starting from the back of the building. All open spaces were filled with sawdust, and sawdust was also placed between the blocks so they did not freeze together. The rear and sides were piled and layered first so that the entrance could be a clear space to work from as the building was filled. Careful packing was a necessity and was usually done by an experienced workman. It was a wet and cold job.

Before electricity became common, many families were lucky enough to own a wooden zink-lined cabinet with a large compartment on top that would hold a quantity of ice, and shelves beneath to hold food and containers. There was a drain pipe to a large pan beneath the icebox for the water from melting ice, which had to be emptied often. Some people kept them on back porches or hallways, but those who put them in the kitchen often had to mop up the over-spill if the weather got very warm or they forgot to empty the container. These iceboxes had to be refilled with fresh ice, some daily, some every two or three days. Nevertheless, they were considered a luxury. □

## SURVIVAL STRATEGIES

### *The Old Inn and The Southfield Store Adapt to the Pandemic*

By Barry R. Shapiro

With Cantina 229 and Gedney Farm's restaurant closed for the winter due to the pandemic, the Old Inn on the Green and the Southfield Store are suddenly the only places in town providing dining options. The decision to remain open by chef Peter Platt and his co-owner and wife, Meredith Kennard, along with their son, Alex, who helms operations at the Southfield Store, was largely driven by an already-demonstrated fortitude: Covid-19 hadn't stopped them to this point, so why stop now?

"From the beginning of the pandemic, our attitude was to stay open and do what we could to keep the businesses viable and our people employed," Peter explains. "When the pandemic hit and all restaurants were shut for indoor dining, we pivoted right away to offer a very successful comfort food menu to go, including free delivery. We also got some Payroll Protection Program funds, and we had some continued revenue from our room guests. All of this allowed us to stay afloat and fund changes we needed to make for the spring and summer." These included the installation of a sophisticated air filtration system for the Inn and a new 30-by-40-foot tent for outdoor dining with heaters and socially distanced tables.

"The spring and summer seasons were successful," says Peter. "We simplified our menu, made fewer daily changes to it, and, with the large outdoor seating area, our capacity was only slightly down from prior years. We had terrific air flow in the tent to keep everyone healthy. We had great support from the community and some people came once or twice a week, which we re-



*Peter Platt at the Old Inn on the Green*  
photo by Barry R. Shapiro

ally appreciated. Some chose to eat indoors, and we kept everyone safe with just one table per room."

When the cold weather put an end to tent dining, Peter and crew saw little reason to shut down operations, sticking with his business model of socially-distanced tables and the same takeout menu of comfort food. "We've limited the indoor seating to just eight tables in our five dining rooms, and we are still doing an active takeout business," he says.

It comes as no surprise that, the success of the Inn's outdoor dining and takeout service notwithstanding, 2020 did not yield the financial results of prior years. "You can't compare 2020," says Peter. "We pre-

viously operated the restaurants at Jacob's Pillow and had a lot of catering work, all of which disappeared in 2020. We came out better than we thought we would, so we're super happy with that, and, of course, we're proud of our employees who were 'all hands on deck,' and all of whom, we're happy to say, stayed safe."

Meredith Kennard echoes Peter's sentiments: "Our staff has been with us for so many years, and they all showed a real willingness to collaborate. We did it together, rolling with the punches and creating a wonderful outdoor space. This was so satisfying for us, as was the great support from the local community. We appreciate that more than we can communicate."

Plans for 2021 are to continue the current business model of limited indoor dining and takeout service, and, in May, to resume outdoor dining with a larger tent, which will feature a raised platform to eliminate

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## The Transfer Station Needs You!

At its February 22 meeting the Board of Selectmen elected to create a Transfer Station Working Group to assist the Town with decisions as it prepares for a new age of waste disposal, including the state-mandated closure of all landfills by 2030, the need for greatly increased recycling, and a reduction in solid waste so as to minimize the amount going to incineration. The Board issued a call for volunteers to join the Working Group, limited to five in number, to help create a master plan for the future of the Transfer Station. If you feel you can contribute to this effort, please contact Sharon Fleck at [sfleck@newmarlboroughma.gov](mailto:sfleck@newmarlboroughma.gov) with a letter of interest.

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some drainage issues. “The tent worked really well,” adds Meredith, “but it could be stressful sometimes if there was a high wind or rain.”

Operations at the Southfield Store took a different path, where the decision was immediately made to close all indoor dining and not to resume it. “It simply isn’t safe with the number of people we have in there, all in one room, lingering around tables and other customers,” says Peter. “Once again, people really came through for us, going to the Store for takeout and eating outside even into the cold weather. We’ve added some heaters to help them stay warm. It has really become a place for people to go to take a break from hanging around the house. We’ve simplified things there, and our son, Alex, who manages the Store, has done a great job to expedite the ordering and food preparation process. Our staff has done an amazing job, and we’ve been crazy busy.”

“This was quite the learning experience,” says Alex, “and we’ve made changes to process orders more efficiently, to get our customers served faster, and to provide

them with what they need, such as retail stuff like milk, butter, and eggs from High Lawn Farm, tea, coffee, and, of course, our famous granola, for which we get orders from around the country. We’ve added more tables, including some picnic tables handcrafted by our employ-

ee, Cassius Combs, and we keep our menus published on social media like Instagram and Facebook. At times, we had some supply issues and needed to adjust to that, although we always continued our policy of buying local to the extent possible, and it all worked out. Again, we couldn’t have done it without our great staff and our fabulous customers — our regulars, lots of new homeowners, contractors, and plenty of hikers and people enjoying the outdoors.”



Alex Platt attends to business at the Southfield Store.  
photo by Barry R. Shapiro

Looking back on the 2020 rollercoaster and the stress and hard work it took to survive it (especially for Peter who had to cope with a very painful knee and, finally, a knee replacement in November), Meredith expresses what is no doubt a universal sentiment: “We sure hope that we can be back to normal after the summer, she says.” We are *really* looking forward to that! □

### Thank You to Our Contributors:

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## NEW MARLBOROUGH'S AGING PROBLEM

### *The Recently Formed Housing Committee Is Looking for a Cure*

By Joe Poindexter

If, as the adage has it, with age comes wisdom, New Marlborough is getting wiser. A study by the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission (BRPC) found that from 2010 to 2018, the median age of those living in New Marlborough increased to 56 from 48.9. What's more, over the same period the age cohort of those sixty-five and up increased 35 percent, while those nineteen and younger fell by 42 percent.

As you ponder that trade-off, consider another adage: There is strength in numbers. The BRPC study also revealed that during the same period, New Marlborough's population fell to 1,312 from 1,509, a loss of almost 9 percent. Taken together, the figures describe a town that is both shrinking and aging — not a formula for resilience as New Marlborough charts its future.

Two years ago, Selectman Richard Long determined that these trends needed to be addressed. He proposed a group that would focus on a prime dynamic affecting the town's future: the lack of housing to serve the entire economic range of New Marlborough residents. As a response, in September 2019 the Board of Selectmen created the New Marlborough Housing Committee (NMHC).

In one sense, the Board was re-inventing the wheel. In 2009, the then selectmen put their imprimatur on a fifty-three page Planning Board document titled *The Town of New Marlborough Comprehensive Plan*. Among the issues it raised: "The town has a relatively older population and homogenous (single family) housing stock. The town may wish to consider expanding building types to increase housing options and choice that will allow individuals and families to move to or remain in the town as well as downsize their living spaces."

In a sense, the Comprehensive Plan was stymied by its ambition. Tackling everything from the town's economy to its natural resources and recreational offerings to its very character, the Plan was indeed "comprehensive." Its scope may account for the fact that it has led to nothing in the way of concrete action. Enter the Housing Committee. Its narrower objective is to provide guidance on the creation of housing both in quantity and to meet the needs of a broad earnings spectrum of current and potential new residents.

In an email response to questions about NMHC, Mr. Long spelled out the issues it is facing:

- "Young people who have grown up in this town and wish to continue to live here are unable to afford or even find housing, especially rental housing.

The same is true of young families who, attracted, for example, to New Marlborough Central School, would like to live here.

- "Individuals who hold service positions in New Marlborough and nearby towns, in the restaurants, farms, and such institutions as CMC: Berkshires and now the John Dewey Academy, are likely be looking for housing options within their budgets as well.
- "Seniors who wish to downsize from their existing properties have few options, because of a general lack of housing, especially smaller homes that would be less expensive. [BRPC predicts that seniors will comprise 43 percent of New Marlborough's population. by 2030.] Many are forced reluctantly to move. A related need is for housing of caregivers."

The BRPC study, which was ordered up by the Housing Committee, makes clear where New Marlborough falls short. Of 1,033 housing units in town, 73 are rental units. But there are 101 fewer units of what is needed by middle, very low and extremely low income earners. While moderate and low income households are adequately served by available housing, 29 percent of homeowners and 38 percent of renters experience what the report calls "a housing cost burden."

The challenges have been defined, but the nascent Housing Committee has only begun to formulate a strategy to meet them. "Encouraging the development of accessory units, either in existing larger homes, or adjacent thereto, may require some sort of incentive," writes Mr. Long, and adds that significant subsidies, subject to certain requirements, are available from federal and state programs. "There will also be a need for private development funding, usually within the context of a mix of affordable and market-rate housing," he writes. One source of possible assistance: the Community Preservation Act (CPA), which allows a community to vote a small tax surcharge — of 1 to 3 percent — for community improvement projects, including tax breaks for, among other things, the creation of housing units. Residents earning less than \$30,000 a year would be exempt from any CPA surcharge. Currently 53 percent of Massachusetts municipalities participate in the CPA. Mr. Long also mentions the possible need for a revision of our zoning bylaws to permit "modestly sized and sensitively designed" cluster housing.

There could be a cost to doing nothing. Housing



Committee Chair Elizabeth Rosenberg points to a Massachusetts statute, Chapter 40B, that would permit a developer to disregard zoning in towns that do not provide at least 10 percent of their housing stock to those earning less than 80 percent of the area's median income — “a 40B hostile takeover,” as Mrs. Rosenberg calls it. The greater risk, of course, is that by failing to provide a heterogeneous supply of housing New Marlborough will continue to shrink and age.

Meeting that challenge is a tall order, but by narrowing the focus of the Comprehensive Plan to concentrate on housing, the Housing Committee might actually begin to show results. The Committee, says Mrs. Rosenberg, would welcome new members to help it toward its goals. Housing Committee information can be found on the Town website at [newmarlborough.gov](http://newmarlborough.gov). □

## BROADBAND UPDATE

### MAKING THE CONNECTION

#### *Spectrum Will Begin Taking Orders in Mid-March*

The Cable Advisory Committee (CAC) is pleased to announce that sign-up and connection to fiber-optic internet for New Marlborough residences is set to begin by mid-March. Spectrum's installation of the system infrastructure is now over 75 percent complete. For sign-up and connection purposes, Spectrum has divided the town into five zones — a map will be made available soon — each of which will be offered the service over consecutive three-week periods. All connections are expected to be completed by the end of June.

Spectrum sales representatives, masked and socially distant, will visit each residence in a zone to discuss best options. If the resident is not home when the service reps visit, they will leave a card with contact information. Once a service agreement has been established, a connection appointment will be scheduled (usually within a week or two) at which time the residence will be connected to the system and turned on.

Spectrum officials note that in two Berkshire towns (Peru and Tyringham) where they have recently provided service, the “take rate” (percent of residents signing up for service) has exceeded 80 percent.

The Cable Advisory Committee will hold its March Zoom meeting at 11:00 a.m. on Saturday, March 13. We'll have Spectrum representatives on the call to answer questions. To join the meeting, click on the following Zoom <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89505968106?pwd=T2QrdDVrdGIWYVVB4WXRYVlISWUwxdz09> or go to the March 13 agenda on CAC's page on the Town's website. We're committed to making sure that everyone is aware of the process and timing of signing up and being connected. In the interim, please direct questions to Cable Advisory Chairman Steve Klein at [sklein@firstinfra.com](mailto:sklein@firstinfra.com). □

*Cable Advisory Committee Chair Steve Klein*



### **Upcoming: THE UNDER-FORTY ARTISTS SHOW**

The New Marlborough Meeting House is excited to announce an exhibition of young artists in the Meeting House Gallery, to take place from September 17 to October 3. The juried show, entitled “Wonder in the Wander,” seeks emerging artists under forty years old, living within a fifty-mile radius of New Marlborough, to submit works that bear witness to where the artist has wandered — externally or internally — and how this has nurtured their sense of wonder.

*Anna Houston*

## NEIGHBORS



**Don Beauchamp**, who lived at the Tinker Farm (next to the Clayton Church of God) for many years, passed away on February 9 at the age of seventy-two. He moved to Clayton from Torrington, Connecticut, as a young man. He was an active member of the Land Trust and participated in all the trail-clearing work parties. He shared his love of birds through his monthly contributions to the NM5VN's Wildlife Neighbors. (See those pages in this issue.)

**Jon and Marianne Swan**, now of Yarmouth, Maine, were Don's neighbors for forty years, and remember their quiet, constant friend: "We met Donald Beauchamp in 1973, the year we moved into our house in Clayton, which was across the street from the Tinker Farm, where Don lived, alone, during the last years of his life. He was one of a small group of young men who were welcome to stay at the Farm in return for doing the chores, including milking the cows. One by one, all the other young men moved on and away – as did the cows. Don stayed, paying for his keep by painting the house and making repairs.

"Don had grown up in Torrington, gone to school there, and been reprimanded for wanting to be called by his rightful French-Canadian family name – Beauchamp, or beautiful field – with teachers insisting he use the charmless British form: Beecham.

"Don was not antisocial, but he was a loner. He was at ease during the Tinker family reunions held, at intervals, at the Farm, during which he listened more often than he spoke. He was at ease with us and our children. If people came to visit us, he would introduce himself as our caretaker, which he wasn't, but he did small jobs for us, when he felt like it.

"He loved wildlife – bird life, in particular – and kept his binoculars, bird books, and a camera at the ready by the kitchen window. He also biked around the countryside, with his camera, taking pictures of eagles, hawks, and wildfowl.

"Long after we had moved to Maine, Don kept us posted on his sightings, but said nothing about his declining health. We are deeply grateful to Martha Bryan, whom he had assisted in clearing Land Trust trails over the past years and who conscientiously checked up on him during the last months of his life."

**Sue Connell**, of The Clayton Store, shares a touching memory of Don: "Don was helping me make a stone wall and garden around my new septic system. He arrived one morning with a large cardboard box that said "EGGS." He said he found it by the side of a road, guessed it had fallen off a truck... and asked if I wanted some eggs. When I opened up the box, there were four large, perfectly identical bird nests he had found on a shelf in a shed he was cleaning out. Knowing I collected bird nests, he brought me that magical present. For over ten years, they have remained together to this day on a shelf in my store."

**Celia Hulett June** grew up on the Tinker Farm: "When Martha spoke to me about a few words recalling memories of Donald, I immediately thought of birds and growing things. Donald was one of 'the boys' at the farm, and he helped my mom and aunt. Donald was very knowledgeable about all the birds that visited. I remember most vividly the first time a black bear came to visit. I have a clear picture of Donald chasing the bear across the yard, clutching his camera. He was an ardent observer and photographer of both the flora and fauna in the Berkshires. I have memories and photos thanks to 'the Donald,' as he was known to my girls."

What's going on at the **Mill River General Store** these days? A recent conversation with owner **David Herrick** identified two major slow-moving impediments to the store's progress. The first is the continuing lack of information from the United States Postal Service (USPS) about plans to re-open the Mill River Post Office. A reporter from the NM5VN attempted to learn those plans, but came up empty-handed. Former boxholders of the Mill River Post Office have been similarly unsuccessful. Dave contacted Representative Richard Neal in an attempt to apply pressure on the USPS, but received no response. The Board of Selectmen recently sent a "strongly worded" letter to Representative Neal and Senators Elizabeth Warren and Ed Markey. So far, the only response has been a request for more information from Senator Markey; Dave will send him the packet of information detailing the interaction with the USPS.

The second slow-moving bureaucratic issue has been the approval for transfer of the liquor license for the store. The selectmen approved his application in late fall and sent it to the Alcoholic Beverage Control Commission (ABCC). The ABCC indicated that it had received the application and had all the information



*Dave Herrick at the Mill River General Store*

it needed. From there it will go to the Department of Revenue, back to the ABCC, and eventually back to the Board of Selectmen. Dave anticipates no problems, since he held the license for many years, but the slowness of the procedure is frustrating.

So Dave, accepting his own counsel of “patience, patience,” is gradually building up the number and variety of grocery and non-food items available at the store. The winter has been tough, but he knows that word is gradually spreading about the store’s increased inventory. He hopes that the advent of warmer weather, more people, and perhaps some action on the two roadblocks will help to restore the store’s customer base.



Peter Goodman...



photos courtesy of Liz Goodman

...and his Eighteenth century house

**Liz Goodman** offers this description of her father and his love for his Mill River property: “**Peter Goodman** lived to the ripe old age of ninety-five. He died in his home in Rye, New York, on January 20. He was married for sixty-three years to the painter, Barbara Goodman. He served in the Air Force from 1943 to 1945, stationed in Burma. Following his military service, he attended Oberlin College where he majored in art and met Barbara.

“Peter spent the bulk of his working years overseeing a successful family-owned women’s wear and dance wear manufacturing company. He sold the company in 1980 so he could pursue his real love, collecting American folk art and furniture; he pursued that quest throughout his life. He was a self-taught wood worker and furniture maker and enjoyed making copies of antique furniture, authentic enough to fool the average eye. He realized his dream around 1980 when he bought land in Mill River from Walter Riou, purchased an eighteenth-century house (circa 1787) known as the Ephraim Chapin House, and moved it to Clayton Mill River Road. Peter discovered the house in Chicopee, Massachusetts, in a partially disassembled state. Upon having it painstakingly dismantled, lovely original elements were revealed, such as wood paneling still holding the original paint that Peter restored himself.

“Peter absolutely loved his property here and spent as much time as possible riding his tractor or his golf cart with his clippers and his chain saw in the back, obsessing over the invasive vines or anything else encroaching on what he deemed worthy of protecting. Late in life it was not unusual for him to leave his cane somewhere on the property only to be found by my husband or me, and once by Paul Hess, who was clearing some trees. Peter insisted that my husband, Don, build him platforms so he could continue to climb up onto and

down from his tractor at age ninety, despite our continued pleas to persuade him that his tractor days were over!

“Peter will be remembered for his generous spirit, dedication to his family, and his love of all things beautiful.”

**Jared McDade**, of Sisson Hill Road, remembers many years of happy times with the Goodmans: “Peter and Barbara lived in my town, Harrison, New York, and spent weekends in Mill River, as did I. Over the years and after my parents passed, my wife, Terrill, and I would get together with Peter and Barbara for dinner in Westchester or Mill River, always having a wonderful time, sharing stories and reminiscences of people we knew, places we’d been, and events we’d attended. Barbara was one of the founding members of The Berkshire Bach Society, where my wife is a board member and musicologist, and to which Peter periodically contributed in her honor. After Barbara passed in 2015, Peter and I often visited each other and I got to know him from new angles. It turned out we had a lot in common: a love of antiques, films, books, visual humor. He especially enjoyed the cartoons from *The New Yorker* magazine, and we had some good laughs over our favorites.

“Peter was a good soul who maintained his sharp mind, loving spirit, and diverse interests to the end. He made me feel like an honorary member of his family, and no day goes by when I don’t think of him and miss our conversations.”

**Marjorie and Rene Biber** were neighbors on Clayton Mill River Road: “We have known Peter since 1980 when he and his wife, Barbara, moved and reconstructed an eighteenth-century farmhouse on their property across from us in Mill River. In all these many years we have thoroughly enjoyed his friendship. Early on we bonded through our mutual love of old houses and old furniture. Peter was an expert, especially in early American art and furnishings, and he gladly shared his knowledge with us. We dined together; his daughter Elizabeth lived in our guest house for

several summers; Peter and Barbara gave us their Tanglewood tickets when they didn't use them. Peter was a true scholar and a classic gentleman, and his charm and sense of humor added immeasurably to our neighborhood parties. We will miss him a lot."

**Billy Kennedy** is a master carpenter and builder who discovered a kindred spirit in Mill River: "I met Peter Goodman and his wife Barbara at a restaurant in Great Barrington over twenty years ago. He really was a good man. Some years later my family bought a house in the heart of Mill River, right across from the general store and next to the library. He and Barbara picked up their *New York Times* every Sunday, and I enjoyed our little chats which would brighten both our days. It became a routine.

"Later on, I was approached by Peter's daughter Liz to build a piece of furniture, a cherry dresser. During the process Liz would stop by and check on the progress, but one day she brought her dad, who had taken up craftsmanship as a hobby. I always thought he was a New York businessman, but when Peter talked about his shop and projects, it was with great certainty and determination. The next time he came by my shop, he brought some of his own projects. I remember a beautiful crafted candle stand table and wooden box, both painted in a primitive folk art manner. His technique for the paint and finish made it look like it was 200 years old. I asked him if he was working on any other projects and he paused. He told me he had hung up his apron and tucked his tools away for the time being. It seemed to bother him that he could no longer do what gave him such joy.

"At some point, I was invited to his house, which turned out to be an amazing experience. His house is tucked away in a beautiful setting in New Marlborough. It is a carpenter's dream: he had a saltbox chestnut post-and-beam framed home moved to a new location. Walking through his home was wonderful, as he talked about his paintings, furniture, and artifacts. It was like I was brought into the past. Every room in Peter's home was filled with quality folk art. It was truly a profound collection. This was a special time for me; it was amazing to hear about his love for the craft of art. I'm sorry to hear about Peter's passing. I hope he puts his apron back on once again and sharpens up his chisels." □

compiled by Barbara Lowman: [deeuell@yahoo.com](mailto:deeuell@yahoo.com)

## OUR WILDLIFE NEIGHBORS

In last month's issue, I ran a photo of a bird I had identified as a winter wren. On January 29, I received this correction from **Liz Goodman**, who lives in Clayton: "Hey Larry, I saw your photo of the 'winter wren' in the NM5VN. I believe it is a **Carolina wren**. They showed up in our area last summer. They seem to be everywhere, and stay through the winter. We have a pair around our house. They like to sleep in our garage, and lately in the Christmas wreath we still have hanging outside our front door. One of them has gotten in the house many times, but I always manage to get it out unharmed. They love the dehydrated meal worms I provide for the blue birds. They also have a very distinctive and loud song!"



photo by Liz Goodman

Carolina wrens on a wreath

Taking a closer look at my *Sibley Birds*, I see that Liz is absolutely right about the type of wren we are seeing. And, she is also right about Carolina wrens seeming to be everywhere. Two other readers, **Katherine Bouton**, over near Lake Buel, and **Toby Peltz**, close by in Southfield, have each been enjoying the sight of these perky little birds through this long winter.

Sightings of **bald eagles** in and around Lake Buel have become more and more frequent. On February 4, **Ian Devine** was entering Hartsville on Route 57 when, "three crows first caught my eye as I was driving by the cemetery. Then I saw what they were interested in..." What he and the crows saw, a little hard to make out in the accompanying photograph, was a pair of stately bald eagles perched amidst the snow-covered trees.



photo by Ian Devine

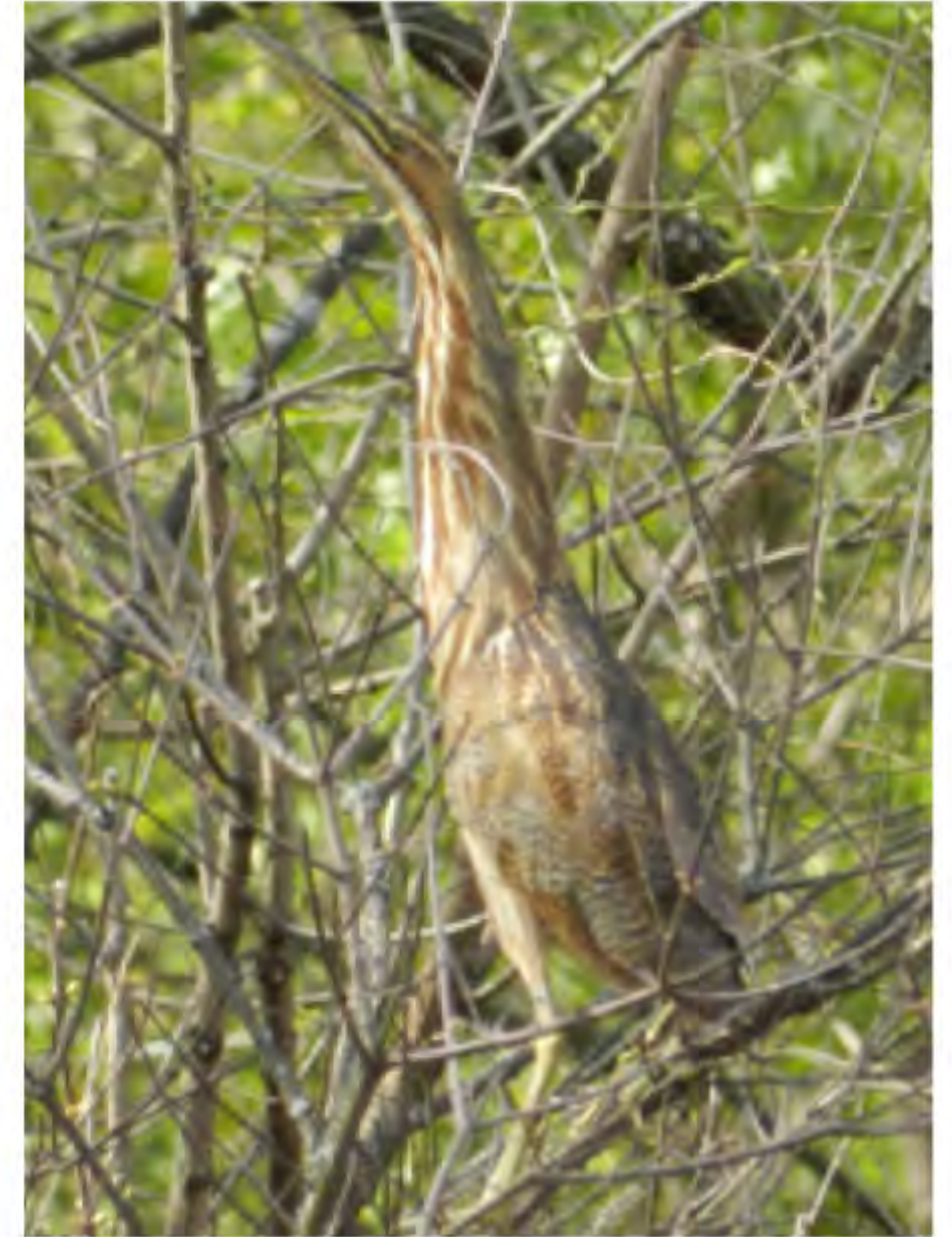
A pair of bald eagles

photo by Larry Burke



On February 13, on a snowshoe hike to a nearby beaver pond, I came upon lots of signs of **otters** – slides on the beaver dam and multiple chutes and burrows in and out of snow drifts. It was a little disappointing not to spot the otters themselves, but great to see how much fun they appeared to have had.

*Traces of otters*



Don Beauchamp's photos, clockwise from top left: electric blue dragonfly, bobcat, bittern, rose-breasted grosbeak, bluebirds, and a purple finch

**D**on Beauchamp, the most dedicated contributor to this column, has died. As has been spoken of elsewhere in this issue, Don was, to use a phrase I hope he would enjoy, "a bird of a different feather." He may not have always been at his very best with humans, but he sure loved his wildlife neighbors down along the Konkapot River, particularly his bird friends. Over the many years that this column has existed, first under the stewardship of **Jon Swan**, and then by me, Don rarely missed his monthly report.

I should add that he could get pretty cantankerous if I left out any of his photos, even the blurry ones! Every once in a while, when Our Wildlife Neighbors failed to appear, usually for reason of not having space to fit it into an issue, I would get an earful from Don. A few months ago, we had one of those occasions where wildlife news had to be bumped in favor of lengthy articles relating to town matters, and Don promptly emailed me with his disappointment. I told him the reason there had been no column — many pages concerning Town affairs, Covid-19, etc. — and he immediately wrote back, short and sweet: "Shorten Town business report! It's dated anyway!" (Point taken!)

In recent months, Don had been unable to send any new photos, most likely because of the illness he had kept so secret. In honor of his devotion to his beloved fauna, and his steadfast contributions to the *5 Village News*, I would like to include a number of his finer photographic efforts — a rose breasted grosbeak, an American bittern, an iridescent dragonfly, a bobcat, a purple finch, and, finally, Don's favorite subjects, bluebirds at his feeder. I'm sure our readers will miss Don's words and pictures, as will I. □

Compiled by Larry Burke. Send your sightings to him at [larryjburke@gmail.com](mailto:larryjburke@gmail.com)

# THE LOG

## Police Department (selected entries)

- Jan. 2 2:19 p.m. Following a stop on Hartsville New Marlborough Road, an officer calls for a tow when the driver is found to be operating with a suspended license.
- Jan. 4 4:55 p.m. A caretaker reports damage to the rear door of the Church of the Immaculate Conception in Mill River.
- Jan. 5 9:02 a.m. An officer checking on an unoccupied vehicle on New Marlborough Hill Road discovers that its driver is out for a jog.
- Jan. 10 3:06 p.m. A caller reports vandalism of a New Marlborough Land Trust sign at the head of a Land Trust trail leading to Thousand Acre Swamp.
- 4:11 p.m. Alerted to the presence of a pick-up truck parked on Arroyo Way, an officer determines that its owner is a visitor from Monterey.
- Jan. 12 11:10 a.m. An officer alerts National Grid to a large tree on wires on Canaan Southfield Road.
- Jan. 17 9:13 a.m. A call about a possibly rabid bat at a residence on Hayes Hill Road is referred to the animal control officer.
- Jan. 19 8:15 p.m. A Hartsville New Marlborough Road resident reports harassment via internet connections by a former work associate.
- Jan. 20 12:33 a.m. The Highway Department is alerted to a tree down on Clayton Mill River Road.
- Jan. 23 12:25 p.m. Smoke reported on Brewer Hill Road is determined to come from a permitted outdoor burn.
- Jan. 24 12:36 p.m. An officer assists a driver in pushing his disabled vehicle off Canaan Southfield Road.
- 5:45 p.m. Upon a report from a Brewer Hill Road resident that a burn pile at a neighbor's property has been left unattended, the neighbor is determined to have obtained a permit.
- Jan. 25 3:00 p.m. With the Brewer Hill burn still smoldering, the Fire Department orders it to be extinguished.
- Jan. 27 10:35 a.m. The animal control officer is alerted to a possibly rabid porcupine near the junction of Route 57 and South Sandisfield Road.
- 6:49 p.m. A caller requests assistance in finding a cell phone that has fallen from his truck in the area of Hartsville New Marlborough Road and Wright Lane.
- Jan. 28 11:11 a.m. An officer assists a driver whose vehicle has been damaged when it slid off a driveway on Adsit Crosby Road.
- 1:16 p.m. A caller requests augmented patrol of cornfields on Campbell Falls Road that have been damaged by joy-riders performing "donuts" in them.
- Jan. 29 10:32 a.m. An officer assists in obtaining a tow for a vehicle that has slid off South Sandisfield Road.
- Jan. 31 5:24 p.m. Driver and passenger of a vehicle left running but unoccupied at York Lake are asked to move along.

*Graham Frank, Chief of Police*



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## FIRE AND RESCUE

Jan. 6	8:31 p.m.	Cross Road to Canaan Valley Road Medical Call	Jan. 17	10:46 a.m.	Route 57 Outdoor Burn
Jan. 7	3:06 p.m.	Canaan Valley Road Medical Call	Jan. 18	4:15 p.m.	Hartsville Mill River Road Medical Call
Jan 11	6:45 p.m.	Mill River Great Barrington Road Medical Call	Jan. 20	6:28 p.m.	Cross Road to Canaan Valley Medical Call
Jan. 13	5:41 a.m.	Mill River Great Barrington Road Medical Call	Jan. 21	11:40 p.m.	East Hill Road Medical Call
Jan. 13	6:33 a.m.	Mutual Aid to Sheffield Structure Fire	Jan. 24	5:55 p.m.	Brewer Hill Road Outdoor Burn
Jan. 13	8:45 a.m.	Hartsville Mill River Road Fire Alarm	Jan. 25	11:03 a.m.	Konkapot Road CO Alarm
Jan. 13	9:50 p.m.	Deerwood Park Road CO Alarm	Jan. 28	2:50 a.m.	Clayton Mill River Road Fire Alarm
Jan. 16	3:04 a.m.	Mutual Aid to Egremont Structure Fire	Jan. 30	2:52 p.m.	Mutual Aid to Great Barrington Medical Call
Jan. 16	10:43 a.m.	Hayes Hill Road Medical Call	Jan. 31	3:12 p.m.	Alum Hill Road Medical Call

*Fire Company President David Smith*

## BURN SEASON



Burning is permitted from January 15 through May 1, and permits will be available from 8:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. daily, as conditions allow for open burning. Permits may be obtained at [www.bcburnpermits.com/](http://www.bcburnpermits.com/) or via a link on the Fire Department page of the Town website: <http://newmarlboroughma.gov/pages/index>.

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

### Reminders:

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

*Fire Company President David Smith*



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## THE SCHOOL REPORT RAISING RACIAL AWARENESS

By Jane Burke

This past summer, the national upheaval sparked by protests against police violence raised awareness of persistent societal racism. In Great Barrington, over one thousand people gathered in front of the town hall to show their support for change. Responding to a request from the Massachusetts Association of School Committees that its member districts consider issuing a racial equity statement, the Southern Berkshire Regional School (SBRSD) School Committee took up the issue at a meeting last July.

The Committee was aware of the issue. One member pointed out that graduates had reported their difficulties of socially navigating the racially diverse world they encountered at colleges campuses and in the cities where they relocated. They had had little experience with racial diversity in their home towns. According to the Department of Education, in 2019 the student population at SBRSD was 84.3 percent white, 1 percent African American, 9 percent Hispanic, and 5 percent multi-racial. The numbers for New Marlborough, according to the 2010 census, are 93 percent white, 1 percent African American, and 4 percent Hispanic.

The outcome of this meeting was that the School Committee voted unanimously to issue a statement of commitment to adopting anti-bias and anti-racism practices it would pursue: ensure a welcoming community for all students; provide ongoing professional development on diversity, equity, and inclusion to all district staff and School Committee members; commit to recruiting a diverse workforce; identify policies in which institutional and systemic racialized practices are imbedded and implement change; incorporate into the educational curriculum the history of racial oppression and include works from diverse perspectives, including women, people from

various religions, ethnic backgrounds, and sexual orientations. Finally the statement made it explicit that the Committee would not remain silent to the issues of racism and hate that continue to plague our public and private institutions.

This statement builds on work in progress in the district. SBRSD students had already begun to tackle the issue by forming groups to advocate for LGBTQ students and for changes in curriculum that include the history of racism and discrimination in the United States. In fact, the School Committee had initiated a discussion of training on implicit bias and diversity for the district through participation in the Anti-Defamation League's (ADL) "A World of Difference" program, leading to a presentation in January 2020 by Mount Everett Principal Jesse Carpenter about the school's participation in this program.

Social Studies teacher John Hammill attended a September training session which outlined the procedures for recruiting students from grades 9 through 11 to be trained as peer educators. A year ago February, these students joined with others from Lenox Memorial and Monument Mountain High Schools to gain knowledge and skills on how to facilitate discussions on discrimination and prejudice with other students. The hope was that these discussions would start in the spring for grades 6 through 12. A workshop for all staff, including bus drivers, was scheduled for March 14. On March 13, however, the effort was put on hold when in-person learning was curtailed due to Covid-19.

While most of the District's energy since then has been directed to effective teaching during the pandemic, by this January it was possible to refocus on equity and inclusion. On January 19, all staff participated in the

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postponed full day of professional development provided by the ADL. As a result of a very positive experience, the ADL trainers have been invited to return in April for a second series of workshops. The Curriculum and Professional Development Coordinator has established Professional Learning Communities where teachers can discuss creating culturally sensitive pedagogy. The Curriculum Committee is meeting monthly and is leading a teacher review of all the English Language Arts texts used by grades Kindergarten through 12th grade. The diversity inventory will track the race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, disability, and family structure of main characters and authors. A review of Social Studies materials will follow.

In January, the School Committee, with three newly elected members focused on advancing equity and inclusion, held a special workshop session to proceed with an action plan based on its goals stated last July. The new Committee members endorsed ADL diversity training for the full Committee, and, on top of that, they have volunteered to research additional trainers who can guide the work needed to ensure that what is learned is imbedded in every aspect of the District's educational experience. Pointing out that diversity training alone has little impact — and can even lead to negative results —

they are advocating for institutional changes to achieve a cultural shift in schools.

Consequently, the action plan includes regular reports from the superintendent on progress examining curricular materials. The Policy Subcommittee will review current policies with an eye to strengthening them to ensure all equity issues are fully addressed. The Community Relations and Advocacy Subcommittee will form a bridge to the five towns for community conversations about racism and bias. Two members of the Committee are investigating with the Stockbridge Munsee Tribe the creation of a land acknowledgement statement. Others are looking into how the Committee can change its decision making-practices with equity in mind.

At a February School Committee meeting, Superintendent Beth Regulbuto reported on a state-wide superintendents' meeting, in which, she said, "Everyone felt the urgency of examining their practices and making the changes these times require, but we are all slowed down by fear.... We are going into uncharted water, but it is essential that we at SBRSD work together to get it right for our students." If the productive and collaborative discussion at the February meeting of the School Committee is any indication, it appears that SBRSD is willing to do what it takes to "get it right." □

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*The Lost Boys*, Faye Kellerman  
*The Return*, by Nicholas Sparks  
*The Wife Upstairs*, by Rachel Hawkins

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## Children's Fiction

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*No Place for Monsters*, by Kory Merritt  
*Trouble*, by Katherine Battersby  
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**Board of Selectmen:** Every Monday at 6:00 p.m.

**Town Administrator:** Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, 8:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.

**Planning Board:** Second and fourth Wednesday at 7:00 p.m.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**Town Hall:** 229-8116

**Police:** Business office: 229-8161

**Library:** 229-6668

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

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Contributing writers and artists: Ann Getsinger, Fiona Kerr.

Index: Donna Weaver

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### New Marlborough 5 Village News appears monthly,

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The next issue will be dated April 2021.

All copy must be submitted no later than March 17.  
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- ♦ **Susan M. Smith:** Attorney At Law; Concentrating in the areas of Estate Planning, Estate Administration, Elder Law, Real Estate and Zoning Matters. [ssmithlaw@barringtonlawoffice.com](mailto:ssmithlaw@barringtonlawoffice.com) or (413)528-4300
- ♦ **Reiner White & Sons, Inc:** A family-run general contractor business serving the MA and CT area since 1988 - new construction, additions, remodeling, and more. Licensed and insured. Call (413) 229-8450 for free consultation.

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