



New Marlborough 5 Village News

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Clayton • Hartsville • Mill River • New Marlborough • Southfield

WHY THE FIRE CHIEF STEPPED DOWN

by Joe Poindexter

The notices were as terse as they were abrupt. A letter received at the Town Hall on April 10 states, "Dear Board of Selectmen, I am Retiring from New Marlborough Fire & Rescue as of April 9, 2013. Peter J. Scala." An April 10 email from Barbara Marchione to the Board says: "Dear Selectboard, I just wanted to notify you that as of April 8th 2013, I have tendered my retirement intentions to Chief Scala." A day later, the Board received an email with the subject line, "Asst Chief Todd Riiska," saying, in its entirety, "Asst. Chief has Retired from New Marlborough Fire & Rescue as of April 8, 2013."

The Board of Selectmen acknowledged the retirements on April 12, and attempted to fill the office vacated by Mr. Scala. Chuck Loring, present at the meeting, said he would remain as deputy fire chief, at least temporarily, but that he needed to give "serious thought" to accepting the position of chief. On April 22, during a work session he had requested, Mr. Loring agreed to accept the position of acting fire chief until the end of the fiscal year, June 30, after which a full-fledged chief would be appointed. As of this writing, the other two positions remain unfilled.

Thus far, the Fire Department has managed to operate without a hitch. "Things are proceeding normally," says David Herrick, a captain in the department. In the week

following Mr. Scala's departure, Fire and Rescue answered two calls (both false alarms) without incident. But the question remains, what precipitated the sudden resignations of three long-time Fire and Rescue personnel?

In a word, a sense of disconnect. The former fire chief contends there had been a breakdown

in communication between him and the Board of Selectmen and that the Board had thwarted him in carrying out his duties. "I can't in good faith do a job they won't let me do," says Mr. Scala. "I feel bad leaving the townspeople in this situation," he adds, "but I just can't work for a Board that doesn't want to work with me."

According to Mr. Scala, the lack of a productive working relationship goes back for years, but it was brought to a head by two recent incidents. The first was the Board's response to a confrontation over the Police Department's aborted move to the firehouse. Mr. Scala asserts that as soon as Police Chief Scott Farrell brought before the Board what Mr. Scala characterizes as a personnel issue, the Board was obligated to halt the discussion and refer it to executive session. In a letter to the Board, dated March 31, Mr. Scala presented a starkly different version of the events described by Mr. Farrell. At the April 12 emergency meeting Selectman Nat Yohalem asserted that the altercation itself was irrelevant. The matter brought before the Board, he said, was not a personnel issue but a declaration by Mr. Farrell that he had reached an irrevocable decision not to move his department into the firehouse at the present time.

The second incident involved the issuance of liquor licenses to the four New Marlborough establishments that serve alcohol – Gedney Farm, Mepal Manor, The Old Inn on the Green, and The Southfield Store – without the required signature of the fire chief. Administrative Assistant Michael Skorput maintains that, based on assurances from Building Inspector Tom Carmody that the establishments were in compliance except for the lack of certain paper work, the Board signed off on temporary permits. A certified letter to Mr. Scala, requesting information on the status of his inspections, went unanswered. Mr. Scala, did, however, sign the permits shortly thereafter.

Repeated requests for comment on their retirements from Barbara Marchione and Todd Riiska were unavailing.

Mr. Scala's decision to retire goes beyond individual

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incidents to what he perceives as a general lack of code enforcement. "They [the selectmen] say Boston wrote the codes, and they're not for western Massachusetts," he says. "But this is a serious job." Then he adds, "Am I sad I am no longer chief? Yeah. But if my town won't

work with me to help protect the town, I hope my departure will be a wake-up call. Congratulations to the Board," he says, ruefully. "They got what they wanted. But condolences to the town." □

PETER MARKS ALSO RETIRES

After three and half years running the Highway Department, Superintendent Peter Marks has indicated he is retiring effective May 31. The letter announcing his decision, apparently unrelated to the fire department retirements, was accepted by the Board of Selectmen at its April 22 meeting. Mr. Marks, seventy, was appointed to the superintendent's position in November 2009, and since then has directed the expenditures of the Town's second largest

budget. Before that he worked for twenty years for the Great Barrington Waste Water Treatment facility before retiring from there in 2004. He came out of retirement to take the Highway Department job, where he's been responsible for the safety and maintenance of the Town's ninety miles of roads ever since. He's also a member of the Town's Conservation Commission and is an appointed – as opposed to elected – Town Constable. □

Peter Schuyten

MAILBOX

To the editor, NM5VN:

The Town of New Marlborough recently took a devastating blow to its Fire Department with the resignation of Chief Peter Scala, Assistant Chief Todd Riiska, and EMT and Fire Captain Barbara Marchione. I have served with these people for twenty years as a member of the Fire Department, and their service and dedication is irreplaceable.

I would like to communicate to the community the extent of this loss. Chief Scala dedicated hundreds of hours to the community between training, truck and facility maintenance, fundraising, and responding to almost every call we were dispatched to. In addition, he has written and secured approximately \$300,000 in grants; the most recent was \$125,000 for the new brush truck and \$100,000 for firefighter safety equipment to keep his men safe. When equipment broke, it was always repaired, even if it was late at night, and if it couldn't be repaired in-house, it was always immediately taken to the appropriate repair facility, without anyone having to worry.

Chief Scala has always dedicated himself to enforcing fire codes in the Town of New Marlborough, with his main concern always being the safety of his firefighters, because the best way to keep his men safe is fire prevention. Several years ago, New Marlborough was called to provide mutual aid to a large-scale incident involving a search in a neighboring community that lasted six days. We all dedicated one or two days that we could take off of work, but Chief Scala was present every single day until the person was recovered. That is an example of the kind of dedication that cannot be replaced.

Some people have the opinion that Chief Scala can be difficult to work with, but the same characteristics that give them that opinion are the ones that make him a great chief. He never backs down from a challenge and doesn't take no for an answer. If you or a member of your family were in crisis, this is the man you would want calling the shots.

The same can be said for Assistant Chief Todd Riiska. His experience in maintaining the equipment and all aspects of the Fire Service will also be nearly impossible to replace. Captain Marchione was also a highly valuable member of our team. She was like having your mother on an emergency scene. She was constantly checking on the safety and well-being of the firefighters and making sure that every need was met, from food and water to checking blood pressures and other vitals, and demanding that you take a break, even though you didn't want to. Her passion and commitment to the emergency service volunteers was exceptional. With the loss of these members, the New Marlborough Fire Department has a void that may never be filled.

Charles Loring
Deputy Chief



The Way We Were

by Joe Poindexter

This is the second in a series of the reminiscences of residents whose time in New Marlborough goes back a half century or more. This month:

Hal Crine

There is a lot of New Marlborough timber in Hal Crine's house. In the mid-1980s, Hal cleared a plot of land on New Marlborough Hill Road, using the surrounding pine, fir, and oak to build the home he now lives in with his wife, Jennifer, and daughter, Molly. It was a slow process. The logs were hauled up to Charlie Wyman's mill in Hartsville, then dried before being assembled. By the time he finished the house in 1993, says Hal, "there were a lot of fingerprints on that lumber." And in a manner of speaking, there are a lot New Marlborough fingerprints on Hal Crine. He was reared on a Hartsville farm that had been in the family for three generations. In Hal's day New Marlborough at mid-twentieth century was a kid's paradise.

A school bus took the Hartsville kids to New Marlborough Central. Hal has fond recollections of his teachers – and still remembers their names: "Mrs. Ford in first grade, Mrs. Carl in second, who basically was the principal, Mrs. Garrahan fourth grade, Mrs. Rooney, sixth grade." Snow days were rare. "When we had a snowstorm, the bus had chains," says Hal. "We didn't get too many days off from school."

After school, there were some thirty kids growing up in Hartsville in Hal's day, "so there was never a lack of things to do – hide and seek, fishing the Konkapot River. If you wanted to work, you'd mow lawns or you'd go to Charlie Wyman's and help pile slabs. In the winters, we'd shovel driveways. Or you could go to the farms and get work."

If the kids wanted a bite to eat, they could go over to the Hillside Restaurant, run at the time by Hal's Aunt Rose. "She would say, 'Come on kids, come on up.' She would give us cheeseburgers, French fries, ice-cream rolls."

Occasionally, Hal visited a cousin in Southfield. "We used to stop by and see Gardiner Rugg [proprietor of the Southfield Store], a real character. He'd say, 'Hey boys, you want a cigar?' We're only like eleven, twelve years old. 'Want a cigar, boys?' And he'd know we would get sicker than a dog smoking a cigar." Hal, and many of the other boys, accepted the offer, took the cigars out ice fishing, and, indeed, "got sicker than a dog."

Then there was baseball. In the afternoon, the village kids would pile out of the school bus and head for a horse



photo by Joe Poindexter

pasture next to the Hartsville cemetery. "The heck with homework, we're playin' ball" is the way Hal recalls it. "Now, you've got kids who are fourteen years old, and you've got kids who are seven and eight years old, and they're all playing. The younger you are the farther out in the field you played, because you don't want to get hurt." Were there rivalries with other villages? "Why sure. For example, the Davis boys had some people could hit the ball a mile – down there in Davisville. Open to challenge. Settle the score."

"I picked up baseball as soon as I was out of diapers," says Hal. A left-handed pitcher, he honed his skills playing stickball at Ray Whitney's blacksmith shop, where Ray had painted a batter on his garage wall to give the boys a target. By the time Hal got to Mount Everett High School, he had developed a curve, a changeup, and "a fast fastball, a farmer's fastball." His high school won-lost record was stellar; he even drew interest from the Boston Red Sox. Instead, he went to the University of Connecticut and then C. W. Post University, both on athletic scholarship. He still plays April through July in the Albany Senior Men's Baseball League.

The New Marlborough of Hal Crine's youth was farm country. "When I was a kid, there was a dairy farm everywhere," he says. They began to fail, by his analysis, because of the expense of meeting state-imposed sanitation standards, such as dug wells being required instead of ground water for watering cows.

With New Marlborough an increasingly difficult place to make a living, why not venture out to another part of the country? "You know, I gotta tell you something," says Hal, with quiet urgency. "I was born onto the land, because I was from a farming family. You were tight to what was going on in the environment, on the land, on the farm. I hadn't traveled much, but the places I traveled, there was no place like Berkshire County. It was unique. Maybe not its career offerings, but the people were kind, very helpful, very interested. You can't trade that for anything. So, you know, something drew us back. In retrospect, growing up around here was like growing up in Shangri La. Seriously, it was awesome."

You want to know where Hal Crine is from? Check him for New Marlborough fingerprints. □



photo by Edgar Davis

The southpaw at age sixteen.

Town Business Is Your Business

BOARD OF SELECTMEN



March 27: Because Passover was on Monday, this week's meeting was held on Wednesday at 5:00 p.m. The first order of business was a meeting with Police Chief Scott Farrell to discuss the possible purchase of a call-logging and information management system for the Police Department. The system, from TriTech Software of San Diego, would cost approximately \$18,000 and could also be used by the Fire and Rescue squad. It would reduce paperwork by automating the department's record-keeping, while allowing the department to share and retrieve records from other police departments where the system is in use. According to Chief Farrell, most of the police departments in the county already use it, and the base system is housed on a computer at the Berkshire County Sheriff's office in Pittsfield. The selectmen agreed to add it to the warrant for approval by the voters at the Annual Town Meeting in May.

There was also a brief discussion with Chief Farrell about the possibility of renting office and garage space at the Kolburne School. According to Chief Farrell, the rent would be around \$500 a month, or about half what the Town was planning to pay the Fire Company for similar facilities before that deal was abandoned because of a confrontation between the Fire Chief and a member of the Police Department. However, Chief Farrell was concerned that Kolburne might not be a long-term solution if the property is sold. As he noted, "If we could do something for a prolonged period of time, it would be a good spot for us. But if there's anything up in the air about it, it wouldn't make sense to move there." He was also asked about the possibility of renting space at the Buggy Whip, now called the Whip Shop, but said he didn't think there was a secure, enclosed space there for the cruiser. The Board urged him to at least talk to Whip Shop owner Ned Odegaard about it. For now, the cruiser is being garaged at the Highway Department, and the department is back in its old office at the Town Hall.

The selectmen reviewed a lease-to-purchase proposal from Kingswood Leasing for the new compactor the Town is planning to buy for the transfer station. (See Board of Selectmen report in the April NM5VN.) After some discussion, it was agreed that the interest rates being quoted — 5.49 percent for a five year deal and 6.49 percent for three years — were too high, and that it made a lot more sense to buy the compactor outright with bank financing, which Town Treasurer Pat Mielke said would be in the 2.5 to 2.8 percent range. The Board agreed to add the compactor to the warrant.

The Board received a letter from Representative William "Smitty" Pignatelli with four questions regarding the Governor's proposed changes to the state's tax structure. The four questions and the Selectmen's answers are noted below:

Question: What is your opinion of the proposal to lower the sales tax?

Answer: In isolation, if you want to lower the sales tax, we say fine.

Question: What is your opinion of the proposal to raise the income tax, both while increasing personal exemptions and not?

Answer: In general we are against it, but our answer would depend on the amount and types of personal exemptions.

Question: How do you feel about the bulk of this revenue money being spent on transportation reforms?

Answer: It's okay if our town gets a fair share.

Question: What do you consider the three biggest transportation priorities in your town?

Answer: Bridges and roads are the town's foremost priorities.

In budget discussions, the Board approved Town Counsel Jeremiah Pollard's salary of \$8,500, unchanged from last year, and level-funded the following budgets: Town officers' expenses at \$1,000; cemetery officers' salaries at \$400; library trustees' stipends at \$320, and the constable salary at \$475. The selectmen also approved the School Committee budget at \$2,404,026, an increase of \$1,981 over last year, and library expenses of \$38,713, a \$3,341 increase.

The Board discussed with Chief Farrell his proposal to increase police coverage in the town by fourteen hours per week, which would add roughly \$5,500 to the department's salaries budget. This would bring total coverage hours to eighty-two per week at a cost of \$82,376. However, as the Board noted, the salaries budget will first need Finance Committee approval before the Board can act on it. And finally, the Board voted to maintain the stabilization fund at \$50,000 next year.

There was a lengthy discussion of how much financing will be required to repair or replace the three Town bridges not covered by state funding. They are the Clayton Mill River Road bridge, the Norfolk Road bridge and the Campbell Falls bridge at a total estimated cost of \$600,000. Selectman Tara White noted there are also some major town roads badly in need of repair. These include County Road, Norfolk Road, and the Clayton

Mill River Road. The selectmen agreed that priority must be given to the bridges, even if it means road repairs have to be deferred for a year. Accordingly, the Board agreed to add an item to the warrant allowing the Town to borrow up to \$600,000 for bridge repairs.

April 1: All three selectmen were present for a 5:00 p.m. pre-meeting discussion with Steve Mack, an engineer and principal with Foresight Land Services, about the **timing of the Clayton Mill River Road bridge project**. As reported earlier, Foresight submitted a proposal to the Board back in February to do the design and engineering work on the bridge for approximately \$30,000 and estimated the total cost of the project at around \$415,000. Even if the funding is approved by the voters, the Town won't be able to draw any of the money until July 1, when the new fiscal year begins, and as Mr. Mack noted, it could then take up to six months for the state to sign off on the design of the bridge, making it unlikely that the Town would be able to break ground on the project before next spring. Highway Superintendent Peter Marks said he's afraid the existing bridge won't last that long, and that he's worried it could collapse at any time under the weight of the heavy trucks that continue to use it, despite lower posted weight limits, or even worse, a school bus. The Board then asked whether the design review process could be shortened if the project were accorded emergency status by the state. Mr. Mack said he would look into it and get back to the Board.

The Board then went into regular session for a **meeting with the New Marlborough Land Trust, which had expressed an interest in acquiring approximately 1.5 acres of an 8.1-acre parcel near Cagney Hill that recently reverted to the town because of unpaid taxes.** (See Board of Selectmen report in the April NM5VN.) The Land Trust currently owns an adjacent 12-acre parcel on which a nature trail is being created and said it wants the additional acreage to complete the trail around the pond that is there, and to locate the trailhead on it. In response to the Board's concern that the land would be taken off the tax rolls, the Land Trust tentatively agreed, subject to approval by its board, to keep the land on the tax rolls while paying the Town \$5,000, or about 20 percent of the \$25,000 in back taxes due on the 8.1 acre parcel, for it. In addition, the Land Trust agreed to pay for a survey to subdivide the two parcels, and to add back onto the tax rolls the original twelve-acre parcel it already owns.

April 8: All three members were present for another meeting with Foresight Land Services engineer Steve Mack about **the Town's bridges**. This week the discussion focused on the Clayton Mill River Road and Campbell Falls bridges. He recommended replacing the Campbell Falls bridge with a temporary structure, known as an Acrow Panel bridge, which could be borrowed from the state and installed at considerably less cost than an entirely new bridge. As for the Clayton Mill

River Road bridge, Mr. Mack said he did inquire as to whether the design review process could be accelerated if the project were to be given emergency status, but said the state doesn't seem to have that kind of procedure in place. (See Board of Selectmen report for April 1.) In the meantime, he and Highway Superintendent Marks have come up with a plan to temporarily reinforce the bridge with steel plates to keep it open to traffic until next spring when the replacement work can begin. That way the bridge would be closed for only two days while the reinforcement work is completed at a cost of less than \$10,000. The Board also voted to sign an engineering services contract with Foresight for \$30,000 for the design work on the replacement bridge.

In **budget-related actions**, the Board approved a \$1,000 increase in the emergency management director's salary, bringing it to \$4,000. It also approved rental expenses of up to \$12,000 for office and garage space for the Police Department, and added the following items to the warrant: \$25,000 from the free cash account for a new compactor for the transfer station; \$45,000 from free cash for additional Town Hall renovations; \$18,685 from free cash for call-logging and records management software for the police department, and \$3,500 for village green maintenance. The Board will also be asking for voter approval to borrow up to \$680,000 for bridge-related work. And finally, the Board withheld its approval of \$560,000 for a new fire truck.

Selectman Nat Yohalem reported on his **quarterly meeting with the Town Hall department heads** held on Wednesday, April 3. Assessor Marsha Pshenishny indicated there will be a property revaluation in the fall, while Tax Collector Caren Adams reported that the Town has not had to borrow money on a short-term basis since it started billing taxes on a quarterly basis.

April 12: The Board held an emergency session Friday morning to deal with the sudden retirement of Fire Chief Peter Scala. All three Board members were present, as were Deputy Fire Chief Chuck Loring and, in a show of support for her husband, Joyce Scala.

Chairman Larry Davis opened the meeting by asking Mr. Loring if he was willing to step up and assume the chief's position, but Mr. Loring declined, saying he's not sure what his next move will be. "I'll stay in the position I'm in temporarily, but I have to give this some really serious thought." He went on to say he feels there's "a total lack of support" on the Board's part for the fire chief, and that he would have a hard time taking the position in view of that. He also objected to the way the Board handled the recent confrontation between Chief Scala and Police Officer Graham Frank over a key to a room at the fire house that was slated to be the Police Department's new office, before the deal was cancelled in the wake of the confrontation. (See "When Policy Gets Personal" in the April issue of the NM5VN.) He

characterized the meeting where the confrontation was discussed as an "illegal meeting," and said that since the conflict involved two Town officers it should have been treated as a personnel issue by the Board and investigated in executive session. "But there never was an investigation," he said, "It was totally one-sided. It should have been handled in executive session with both parties present."

Selectman Yohalem disagreed, saying there was no illegal meeting. "Scott Farrell, the Police Chief, asked to be on the agenda of the [Selectmen's] meeting; he was, he reported on an incident at the fire house, and took the position that under no circumstances would the Police Department move to the fire house. Period. That was the extent of the investigation. There was nothing else, no other meetings about it."

Mr. Loring also brought up an issue involving liquor licenses issued to town businesses without Fire Department authorization, asserting that even though Chief Scala had not signed off on the licenses, as required by state law, the businesses got the licenses anyway. "How would anybody want to go forward as chief with these kinds of issues?" he asked.

Mr. Yohalem asked Mr. Loring to inform the Board of his decision as soon as possible, and Mr. Loring said he would and that it would probably be in the next couple of weeks.

In addition to Chief Scala, **Assistant Chief Todd Riiska retired from the department, as did Rescue Squad Captain Barbara Marchione, who said she was also going to resign as the Town's emergency management director.**

April 17: Because Monday was Patriot's Day, the Board moved its weekly meeting to Wednesday at 5:00 p.m. All three members were present for the first order of business, which was to review letters from property owners Ismail and Fern Khan of Cagney Hill Road and Sara Kiesel of Mill River Great Barrington Road, both of whom were asking the Town for **relief from erosion problems caused by excessive drainage from the public roads.** In the Khans' case, according to their letter, the water is draining onto the front of their property from three trenches dug by the Town along the side of Cagney Hill Road, causing seepage into their ground floor rooms and problems with mold and mildew. In Ms. Kiesel's case, the runoff has been eroding and washing out her driveway for some years now. It was agreed that rather than starting an exchange of letters with property owners, the Board would invite them to discuss the problem in person along with the highway superintendent.

The Board **finalized the Town's salaries budgets** for next year, and in almost all cases held the annual increase for Town employees to the 2¼ percent recommended by the Finance Committee. A major exception was the Highway Department, where the Board elected to follow

the highway superintendent's recommendation of a 2.7 percent increase, bringing the total salaries budget to \$252,393, an increase of \$6,560. Another exception, as reported above, was the Police Department, where the Board approved a 10.5 percent, or \$7,800 increase, primarily due to an increase in coverage hours for the Town. Finally, the Board voted to raise Administrative Secretary Nicole Reid's salary to \$21,000 from \$15,000, a \$6,000 increase, reflecting both her performance and an increase in her hours to twenty-four from nineteen per week.

With the salary review complete, the Board then **signed the warrant for approval** by the voters at the Annual Town Meeting on May 6.

A group of officers from the Fire Department were in the audience to answer Board questions about the proposed purchase of a new fire truck that had been put on the warrant. As Deputy Chief Loring noted, it's basically the same fire truck that was turned down by the voters last year, but, as he pointed out, it would replace a twenty-two-year-old pumper that, because of its age should no longer be used as a "front-line piece." The Board wanted to know why it was that West Stockbridge was able to purchase a new truck for \$390,000 while the New Marlborough department is asking for a \$557,000 truck, but the firemen responded that in fact West Stockbridge never did buy that truck and is now rebidding it. It was also noted by former Fire Chief Peter Scala, who was in the audience, that if "you go to any of the surrounding towns that have recently gotten a new piece of apparatus, they've all been between \$500,000 and \$600,000."

The Board approved letters accepting the resignation of Wayne Palmer from the Highway Department and the retirements of Peter Scala, Todd Riiska, and Barbara Marchione from the Fire and Rescue Squad. Mr. Yohalem also asked Mr. Loring to let the Board know by its next meeting on April 22 what his intentions are with respect to assuming the duties of fire chief, "so that we can move on and decide what we're going to do, rather than leave it hanging." □

Peter Schuyten

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CONSERVATION COMMISSION

March 30: John Weinstein and Ned Wilson convened at the scheduled meeting time and immediately went on a brief site visit to a nearby property at 15 Mill River Great Barrington Road. The first permit on the agenda was a Request for Determination (RDA) presented by Brian Jeffries on behalf of Warren Weldon. The proposed work is to replace a fourteen-by-twenty-foot pole barn with a new twelve-by-sixteen-foot barn. After the site visit, the Commissioners noted that the work would occur within sensitive areas adjacent to the Umpachene River and therefore would be considered riverfront redevelopment. It was determined that the work is subject to protection by the wetlands regulations and would require a Notice of Intent (NOI).

Next up was Robert Beusman, who addressed the Commission for advice on the permitting required for building a carport at 268 Hadsell Street. After an informal review, the Commission advised Mr. Beusman that the work would likely require an RDA. Since the work would be outside the one hundred-foot setback from the Umpachene River and would occur in a lawn area which had already been "disturbed," an RDA would probably apply.

Next, Neil Blackwell requested a Certificate of Compliance for work completed and permitted by a NOI in 2007 at 115 Clayton Mill River Road. The Commission had done a site visit to confirm that the special conditions of the permit were met and issued the certificate.

Finally, Gail Ceresia asked that the Commission close the permit for work done at 164 Peter Menaker Road by a NOI issued in 2007. The Commission confirmed that the order of conditions had been met and the work completed. The certificate was granted and the case closed.

The mail was reviewed. Several announcements for upcoming conferences and workshops were noted and receipt of the new Bio Map 2 from the Natural Heritage Endangered Species Program was noted. One special permit for an accessory dwelling at 64 Canaan Valley Road was reviewed, and determined that the work was not within the wetlands jurisdiction.

Last month's minutes were read and approved as prepared and the meeting was adjourned. □

Martha Bryan

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FINANCE COMMITTEE

February 20: With Prudence Spaulding presiding (in the absence of Committee Chairman David Herrick) and Burt Imberman, Bill Hattendorf, and Pat Mielke in attendance, the following FY14 fund requests were approved: Umpachene Falls Park: \$3,800;

Berkshire County Communications: \$9,137 (which, according to Administrative Assistant Michael Skorput, a guest at the meeting, is an assessment the Town must pay to make use of communications services of the Sheriff's Control Office);

A request from the Tax Collector for the transfer of \$1,000 from the Reserve Fund to Tax Collector Expenses to cover the fourth-quarter tax bill mailing was also approved.

March 28: With Mr. Herrick presiding and Mr. Hattendorf, Mr. Imberman, Ms. Mielke, Mrs. Spaulding, and Ira Yohalem in attendance, the Committee approved the following budget requests:

Emergency Management Expenses: \$3,275. As explained by the department's director, Barbara Marchione, this amount includes a donation of \$500 to the Local Emergency Management Association, a group whose monthly meetings at Fairview Hospital Mrs. Marchione termed "very productive," and \$1,500 for the reverse 911 program, not in use at present but available to the town once this fee is paid;

Workman's Compensation Insurance: \$16,000, an increase of \$3,500 because, according to Mr. Skorput, more Town employees are now covered;

Liability Insurance: \$64,000, a \$9,000 increase over the present year, in which the expense had been underestimated by \$5,000 – and to accommodate an anticipated increase in premiums this year;

Library Trustees: \$320;

Cemetery Officer's Salary: \$400;

Town Records Preservation: \$5,000. This amount would cover the cost of a fireproof cabinet. A fireproof vault,

at a cost of approximately \$70,000, was considered but rejected for lack of space in which to install it.

Town Hall Improvements Loan: \$14,788;

Building Inspector's Expenses: \$3,635, a \$1,159 increase over the present year to allow for the purchase of a new laptop computer;

Visiting Nurse Associations: \$2,447;

Children's Health Program: \$1,000;

SBRSD Capital: \$85,824. Mr. Herrick advised the Committee that although the new capital assessment is \$2,004 less than this year, it provides no money for repairs to the village schools, including New Marlborough Central. Selectman Nat Yohalem, a guest at the meeting, stated that the school budget has earmarked \$20,000 for emergency repairs. He also said that the SBRSD Finance Committee has requested that Egremont and Monterey assume the expense of repairing the school buildings in their towns or risk their being closed by the district;

Police Department Rental: \$12,000, a requisition, as explained by Selectman Tara White, who was in attendance, in anticipation of locating suitable space following the collapse of negotiations to move the department to the firehouse;

Constable Expenses: \$95;

Animal Control Officer Expenses: \$1,539;

Group Insurance: \$148,122, an increase of \$38,322 because of the greater number of Town employees requesting coverage;

Highway Truck Loan: \$42,907, for a vehicle purchased this year;

Highway Front End Loader: \$88,000, in anticipation of a purchase this year;

Transfer Station Repairs: \$25,000, which when combined with \$15,000 brought forward from FY13 will allow the town to purchase a new compactor.

Mr. Skorput informed the Committee that it should anticipate a request to increase the Stabilization Fund from

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\$50,000 to \$100,000 to provide financing for bridge repairs.

April 3: With Mr. Herrick presiding, and Mr. Hattendorf, Mr. Imberman, and Mrs. Spaulding in attendance, the Committee approved a transfer of \$650 from the Reserve Fund to cover Election Expenses of providing paper ballots and the cost of a device that enables those with disabilities to vote – a state requirement that, according to Mr. Herrick, has thus far never been used in New Marlborough.

The committee deferred a review of salary increases for Town employees, noting that it had previously voted to leave individual raises to the discretion of department heads as long as the departmental average did not exceed 2¼ percent. It decided it would revisit the requests of certain departments that, in fact, breached the salary limit if the total budget had to be trimmed to keep it below the 2½ percent rise in the levy limit.

The Committee then approved the following budget requests:

Constable Salary: \$475;

Town Hall Expenses: \$38,000;

Berkshire Regional Group Purchasing: \$600 (in essence, an assessment).

It then considered expenditures that will be placed on the Town Warrant to be approved outside the 2½ percent levy limit:

Veterans Benefit Trust: \$8,000 – a fund, established by state mandate after the Civil War, to meet the needs of veterans rather than have them seek help through public welfare. Expenditures are reimbursed by the state at the end of the fiscal year;

Highway Truck and Highway Loader: \$86,000 and \$78,000, respectively;

Fire Truck: \$560,000 (the same amount that was rejected by voters at the 2012 Annual Town Meeting);

Town Hall Renovations: \$45,000, to include the installation of an elevator, repair of the front stairs, and making the bathrooms handicapped accessible;

Police Software: \$18,685 (to be taken out of Free Cash).

The program, which will be used by Fire & Rescue

and Emergency Management, as well as the Police Department, will expedite reporting of actions taken in each of these departments. The request includes the cost of training those who will use the program;

Village Green Expenses: \$3,500, in response to the New Marlborough Village Association to split the cost of upkeep of the Village Green, which is owned by the Town. Until now, the Village Association had borne the total cost of upkeep.

According to Mr. Hattendorf, by the end of March, the Committee had approved total expenditures of \$4,284,854 (including a school budget assessment to New Marlborough of \$2,402,525) and transfers from the Reserve Fund of \$21,439. □

*Joe Poindexter, from minutes
prepared by Prudence Spaulding*



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Neighbors



To Anthony Carson

by Kyle Carson

There is a man of stone, lived seventy-eight years
Watching History Channel, and drinking cold beer
But one day that beer could not take away his pain
He crumbled on the inside, but strong he remained
But before this rock erodes and fades away
I want to tell him things I never got the chance to say.

I am his pebble, I came from his stone
I'm what he'll leave behind once he is gone
Since I'm his pebble, he'll never really leave
Because I'm a part of that man of stone
And he's part of me.

I wanted to thank you for who I have become
It always warmed my heart to hear you call me son
I hate to see you suffer in so many ways
I'm not ready to let you go, so with me you will stay.

I am your pebble, I came from your stone
I'm what you'll leave behind, but now I know
Since I'm your pebble, you'll never really leave
You'll always be alive inside of my heart

As one big part of me.

Kyle Carson, of Hartsville, is a junior at Mount Everett High School. He wrote this tribute to his grandfather, Anthony Carson, before Mr. Carson passed away on March 25.



It appears that the **Odegards, Robert Olsen,** and the **Lowmans,** all of Southfield, were visited by the same large **black bear.** The Lowmans were startled to find his nose nearly touching the glass of their dining room door. Robert spotted him around their house about the same time. Ned Odegard found these paw prints in his driveway the next morning. He also saw trash strewn around the dumpster of The Southfield Store. Looks like he had a busy night in Southfield. They're ba-a-a-ck!

compiled by Barbara Lowman: deeuel@yahoo.com

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OUR WILDLIFE NEIGHBORS

On March 18, **Don Beauchamp** of Clayton, writes: I saw two pairs of bluebirds yesterday up in the cornlot and a pair of **common mergansers** in the Konkapot. And today I saw the mergansers again, and a pair of **red-breasted nuthatches** on the suet cage. Also a **brown creeper**. And got this photo of a **pileated woodpecker**. Lots of hawks sitting in trees.

On March 29, **Don** writes: On Tuesday, the 26th, a dozen or more **tree sparrows** were in the hedgerow across the Konkapot, and on Wednesday a **brown creeper** and a pair of **red-breasted nuthatches** were at the suet feeder. Later, a pair of **eagles** few overhead in a mating dance, making strange noises. Then a pair of **Canada geese** flew overhead. Finally, a pair of **common mergansers** took off from the under the bridge.

On March 29, **Jake Levin**, who lives on Mill River Great Barrington Road, writes: Last week, on March 21, I saw a **barred owl** land in the tulip tree outside of my house. Then the other night, Tuesday, March 26, as I was driving back from egg-decorating with **Saskia Larraz** and her boys, I saw a **bobcat** running down Caulkins Cross Road — just a quarter of a mile away from my house. Then, yesterday evening, March 28, my mom, **Susan Engel**, who lives next door, saw a **bobcat** in her backyard. We called **Scottie Mills**, who confirmed that she and **Scott McKenzie** have spotted a **bobcat** family — two adults and two kits — and they have been eating all of Scott's chickens on Adsit Crosby Road.

On April 2, **Ed Harvey**, of Mill River, writes: Since March 18, I have seen a **porcupine**, a **big fat woodchuck**, and now a **bald eagle** attracted by a dead skunk! I just wish the eagle would come back and finish its meal.

On April 2, **John Manikowski**, of Mill River, writes: It appears a pair of **vultures** has nested in my barn.

On April 4, **Leslie Wheeler**, who lives on Cagney Hill Road, writes: On Easter Sunday, at 10 o'clock, I was enjoying brunch with weekend guests when I saw two large birds fly overhead. At first I thought they were herons, but soon identified them as **sandhill cranes** because of their dun coloring and red-topped heads. They landed on the other side of the pond, which was mostly covered with snow, walked around it, and proceeded up the slope toward the house to the edge of the patio, where we got a good close-up view of them. They continued around the side of the house, past the vegetable garden, and toward the back field, stopping once to throw back their heads and emit their distinctive call, which always sounds to me like they're gargling with rocks in their beaks. After that, they climbed onto the stone wall and surveyed the back field. Then, apparently not finding the kind of place they were looking for, they took off.

On April 8, **Charlie Parton**, of New Marlborough Village, writes: Last Sunday we saw a pair of **Barrow's goldeneyes** in the pond at the foot of the road — just a start. Then on Monday, Teena said, "Better take the feeders down today." I did, but left them outside on the deck by the sliding door. Also Monday the pond was free of ice, and Teena saw schools of our **koi goldfish** — from three quarters of an inch to five inches in length — then a **newt**, and then another, half of the size of the first.

This morning the pond is exploding with **frogs** splashing into the water, climbing out on warm rocks and swimming among the fish — and even more newts, and then suddenly a **spotted salamander** swam up to the surface!

Then last night while watching television, we heard a thump and then another. I got up to look when Teena called out "Look on the deck!" There, right next to the storm door — his fur was virtually touching the glass — was biggest and **best-looking black bear** we've seen here. And we've had them at the window and on the deck before. Teena knocked on the glass and he looked up and walked to the other end, climbed up the railing and leaned out to look in the living room window, then ambled off the deck — out to look at the pond, up onto our abandoned stone foundation wall, and then off into the woods at the back of the lot. Think what we would have missed if I had been a good husband and brought the feeders into the house!

On April 12, **Daniel Doern**, of Mill River, writes: Here is a photo of Spike, the **porcupine** who has made himself at home in our yard in Mill River. Today, he came to eat an apple out of my hand. Spike likes bananas as well as apples. He also seems to like the smell of our cooking. Sometimes he will come to the door when we are making dinner.

Spike hurt his left front paw a couple of months ago. It had a wound on it and one of his toes was (and still is) bent under. Maybe he fell out of a tree. It's now healed and he has full use of it, but for a while he was hopping along on three paws. He'll snack on an apple or banana, then go back up into the woods.

Ed Harvey, who lives next door, has become friends with Spike as well. He and I fed him together the other day. We think Spike is an old **porcupine**.

On April 13, **Ken and Linda Fass**, who live on Rhoades and Bailey Road, write: Two returning **sandhill cranes** were spotted in Southfield grabbing a morning snack of spring peepers, but they flew off before a picture could be taken.



photo by Martin T. Pelz

ELIHU? THEATER PROJECT SEEKS PARTICIPANTS

The New Marlborough Cultural Council is sponsoring a children's theatre production about Elihu Burritt, directed by Kristen Sparhawk, to be performed on Elihu Burritt Day in August. Children in grades 3-12 are invited to research, write, and perform

in a play about this historical figure. Children interested in being involved in the project are invited to come to the New Marlborough Library on Saturday, May 25 at 10:30 a.m. Questions? Contact Nan O'Shaughnessy Smith at 229-0291. □

COMING: FABULOUS FABRIC AND FIBER

by Elizabeth Lombardi

The Meeting House Gallery officially opens on June 14 from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. with the Fabulous Fabric and Fiber Show, which runs through July 7. Ten area quilters, a rug-hooking expert, and two expert basket weavers will be presenting art quilts, thread paintings, decorative work on furniture, and clothing, as well as a variety of baskets.

One of the outstanding artists in this exhibit, Jean Marklin, of Williamstown, has shown her quilts in several prestigious shows, including the Taiwan International Quilt Exhibit, Visions Art Museum, San Diego, the Arc Gallery in Chicago, and venues in South Africa, and in college museums in Williamstown and Oberlin, Ohio. Jean dyes most of her fabrics using a Japanese Shitori technique, in which fabric is wrapped around a pole and scrunched in various ways before dipping in the dye bath, to create a variety of shapes and color intensities. Through her quilts she expresses events and questions about life, as well as the color surprises of the visual world.

Another award-winning artist who dyes most of her fabric — in this case wool — is Liz Marino of North

Egremont. Her hooked rugs are as fine as petit point and open the art of intricate rug patterns to an impressionistic rendering of a bird in flight.

The artists in the show include Joanne Kelly Catos and Wendy Jensen (baskets), Teresa Bills, Maggie Brigham, Susan Delmolino Ives, Pam Johnson, Mary Kote Jordan, Elsa Karr, Jeanne Marklin, Barbara Mulholland, Valerye Zerra, and Bill Kane (quilts), and Liz Marino (hooked rugs). Because the time to create some of the pieces in the show is so great, some of the work will be available only to admire, while other pieces will be available for purchase.

Later in the season the Gallery will be presenting an invitational, multimedia show with the theme Visual Metamorphosis, which will open July 26, and run through August 25. This will be followed by the Annual New Marlborough Artists show, which opens August 30 and runs through September 29. The New Marlborough Meeting House Gallery hours are Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, from 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. □



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Thank You to Our Contributors!

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Edith W. MacGuire; Hope Crocker; Eugene & Elizabeth Rosenberg; Deborah Decotis;

Margaret Phillips; and the Rev. Joseph P. Bishop

SIGNS OF SPRING – PHOTOGRAPHS BY NEIL NOURSE

In Neil Nourse's words, "I enjoy taking duck photographs the most because I was, originally, a duck hunter. I find using the camera much more challenging than the gun! You have to be closer, in the exact position to catch the light, and have a good background. The drake wood duck was taken recently while I was in the water. I use a floating platform for the camera and chest waders that allow me to get down to the duck's level for a much more intimate composition. This technique is something I just started and I think it is going to give me many opportunities for some great shots in the future."



The Canada goose gosling that Neil found nestled in the grass is a welcome sight for those of us who have been looking for some sure signs of spring after a lingering winter. More of Neil's work can be viewed at his website, neilnoursephotography.com. □

UPCOMING: Event Calendar for May and June

May 6: Annual Town Meeting, Town Hall, 7:00 p.m.

May 11: Screwball Comedy II: Sullivan's Travel's, starring Joel McCrea, 4:00 p.m. in the Meeting House Gallery – movie, popcorn, and lemonade are all free; sponsored by the Cultural Council

May 13: Town Election for local offices, including a selectman for a three-year term, Town Hall, noon to 7:00 p.m.

May 18-19: Retrospective exhibit of forty years of John Manikowski's art work, Meeting House Gallery, 12:00 noon – 6:00 p.m.

May 19: EMS Pancake Breakfast, 8:00 – 11:00 a.m. at the Fire House; tickets \$10 adults, \$5 children under 10, available from EMS members, at the Mill River General Store, or at the door

May 23: EMS Family and Friends night, 6:00 – 8:30 p.m. at the Fire House; demonstrations of CPR and other first aid procedures by EMT's and First Responders

May 30: Senior Pot-Luck Luncheon, 12 noon at the Clayton Church Fellowship Hall, hosted by the New Marlborough Council on Aging.

June 14: Fabulous Fabric & Fiber, the Village Association's first show of the season opens 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. in the Meeting House Gallery with wine and hors d'oeuvres and remains open Fridays through Sundays, 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., until July 7

June 25: Special Senate Election, to fill the seat vacated by Secretary of State John Kerry, 7:00 a.m. to 8 p.m., Town Hall

June 27: Senior Pot-Luck Luncheon, 12 noon at the Clayton Church Fellowship Hall, hosted by the New Marlborough Council on Aging.

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EMS: ONE MISSION. ONE TEAM.

by Michelle Dawson

The New Marlborough Volunteer First Responders will be celebrating National EMS week May 19-25, 2013. This year's motto is "EMS: One Mission. One Team." The NMVFR would like to invite everyone to join them in a week-long celebration of those who serve in EMS, as well as remembering those who have served.

We will start the week off with a pancake breakfast on Sunday, May 19, from 8:00 to 11:30 a.m. at the firehouse for \$10 per person and \$5 for children under ten years of age. You may purchase your tickets in advance from any member of the First Responders, at the Mill River General Store, or at the door.

On Thursday, May 23, we will be offering a "Family and Friends" CPR (cardio-pulmonary resuscitation) night. American Heart Association instructor Ed Harvey will instruct a class on CPR and what you can do in the event that a loved one or friend needs you. There will also be First Responders and EMTs available that evening to demonstrate other first aid skills and answer questions. Please call to RSVP, 229-8293, and leave your name, number, and how many will be attending. We really look forward to seeing you there.

Also during this week, the First Responders will be making a visit to the New Marlborough Central School. They will meet with the children and give them the opportunity to explore the ambulance and to ask questions. □

Fabulous Fabric & Fiber Show
 June 14 to July 7
 Baskets, Quilts, Hooked Rugs, Thread Paintings, Wearable Art and More
 Opening on Friday, June 14
 Gallery Days are Fridays, Saturdays & Sundays 11AM to 4PM
 At the New Marlborough Meeting House Gallery, On Rt 57 New Marlborough, MA
 Presented by The New Marlborough Village Association

DRIVER'S LICENSE UPDATE

In January's *5 Village News*, we ran an article about renewing one's driver's license. In the article, we described the Department of Motor Vehicles' (DMV) "reminder" service that would notify licensees that their licenses were about to expire. We have now learned that the DMV has cancelled this service, sending license holders back to square one. Each licensee is responsible

for knowing his or her license expiration date (it's your birthday) and renewing the license before the current one expires.

To repeat, if you're under the age of seventy-five, you may renew your license online and pay the \$50 fee with a credit card. If you are seventy-five or older, you must personally appear at a DMV office. □



photo by Larry Burke

The New Marlborough Cultural Council held a very successful photography exhibit in the Southfield Church Hall on April 6-7. Fifteen New Marlborough photographers contributed sixty-six photographs illustrating the show's title, *A Day in the Life of New Marlborough*.

A community potluck supper was held on April 6 at the Church Hall, in conjunction with the photography show, attended by about sixty people. Reactions to the two events were very supportive; the most common suggestion was that this should become an annual event. Stay tuned....



Young Voices

A sampling of the views and reviews of our newest – and youngest – contributors.

LEGO by Sofia Adams, NMC Grade 3

The New Marlborough Library is a great place to be on Wednesday afternoons. At Lego Club you get to express your imagination through building. You also express your feelings with others and combine your imaginations together. It is fun to build whatever you want. A couple of weeks ago Alexis and I built a car wash with two cars in it. That was really cool! Charlotte Micklewright had this to say about the club, "I really like how you just sit around and build your imagination with friends." This is an exciting experience, and the feedback from kids ... in a word ... AWESOME! □



photo by Debbie O'Brien

4-H TRAILBLAZERS WOOD DUCKS Odie Fields, 3rd grade, NMC

This winter on the Wolfe's farm, the 4-H Trailblazers put their minds to work on building wood duck houses to set up on the beaver pond off of the Old North Road. One of the 4-H families donated the materials we needed to make the houses, and some of the parents prepared the wood so we could have fun putting the houses together with hammer and nails. The wood was wet, so we had to be careful not to split the wood with larger nails. We had to hammer gently and slowly so the wood would not split. It was not easy to identify the pieces of wood from the two sets (we were making two houses). It was like solving a mind-twisting riddle, but we did it. Wood ducks need protection from raccoons and foxes so we had to put a little overhanging board on top of the house so the raccoons wouldn't be able to fit their heads through the hole — raccoons won't go backwards or sideways so as long as their heads can't fit in the hole, the wood ducks would be safe. We joked that the overhanging board could also be a diving board for the wood ducks. So keep your eyes open for wood ducks on the Old North Road!



photo by June Wolfe

Trailblazers display their finished product: Kristen Wolfe (Sheffield), Liam and Charlotte Smith, Sofia Joffe, and Audrey Bartzsch

PLAYGROUP Honey Fields, Grade 1, New Marlborough Central – text and photo

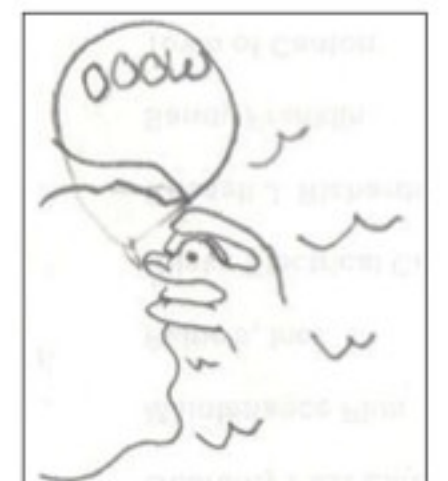
At the library the little kids, babies to three- and four-year-olds, come to make crafts, sing songs, and read a story with Sally on Wednesdays at 10:00 a.m. I went to the story time in April to take pictures and look at what the kids do so I could write about it for the paper. First Sally set out some collage materials that went along with the story and activity we did later on. Sally helped everyone with the glue and paper to make a flower. Then, the children stopped the collage and went to the carpet to sing the Hokey Pokey. Henry Brazie, who is six months old, was dancing, and it was funny. Sally read *The Tiny Seed* by Eric Carle, and then we planted nasturtium seeds. Pamela Hardcastle, my friend, donated the seeds and the soil so the kids could take them home. There were a lot of people there. Grandparents, dads, moms, babysitters, and babies were all talking and playing and having a good time.



photo by Honey Fields

DUKE By Mary Shalaby, Grade 5, Undermountain Elementary

A few weeks ago my brother and I were playing baseball outside. My dopey dog Duke went out on the ice on the pond, chasing an otter. We were trying to get him off. Before you know it Duke was in the water. I was scared. Duke was whining and flailing his arms. He could have swum back to shore but he doesn't like swimming. My mom called the fire department. They came very quickly and brought out this cool boat thing on the ice. The firemen looked like yellow marshmallows in their ice suits. They pulled Duke out of the water. Duke ran over to my family. After that I gave him a warm bath and I was glad that the fire department saved Duke.





School News

UNDER OUR FEET

by Jane Burke

New Marlborough Central School, from kindergarten through Grade 4, is participating in an all-school geology and environmental education project this spring. It will culminate with an exhibit of student work and a student-created theater performance at the New Marlborough Meeting House on May 16.

Children began to explore their local environment with environmental educator Dale Abrams on March 28. Students combined classroom work with outdoor studies on school grounds and around New Marlborough. Erna Lampman's Kindergarten studied soil and composting. Jaimi-Lyn Beaty's grade 1-2 class specialized in tree structure and life cycle. Ashely Rote's grade 2-3 class looked at soil types and their formation from weathering, while Tom Master's grade 3-4 class learned about plate tectonics, rock formation, and glaciation. On April 10 and 11 each of these two classes went on field trips to the Dry Hill Reservation where they saw evidence of these processes first-hand.

From April 2 through May 16, Kristen Sparhawk will help all of these young scientists create a theater piece,



Kathleen Dillon's Grade 3-4 class at New Marlborough Central went on a geology field trip to Dry Hill with Flying Cloud educator Dale Abrams. She contributed this drawing.



photo by Jane Burke

Under Our Feet, about what they have learned. Students will make props and scenery to bring their characterization to life.

The final show will be performed on May 16 at 1:30 and 6:00 at the New Marlborough Meetinghouse and Gallery. Admission is free. In addition to the performance, student work will be displayed in the Gallery. The New Marlborough Central School's staff and students hope that the community will come celebrate their accomplishments with them.

This project is made possible by a STARS grant to SBRSD with its cultural partner, Flying Cloud Institute, receiving support from the Massachusetts Cultural Council, a State agency. New Marlborough Cultural Council has also generously supported the performance at the Meeting House. □

photo by Larry Burke



Mount Everett High School's staging of the Stephen Sondheim musical *Sweeney Todd* in March was an ambitious and impressive undertaking, successfully realized. Terrific performances were turned in by the actors and musicians alike, and the technical crew and costume makers were outstanding. In the title role, standing on the left in the photo, is Hartsville's own Kyle Carson.

photo by Jane Burke



The girls' robotics team from Southern Berkshire Regional School District, the *Hot Tamales*, won the team spirit award at the 2013 Berkshire Robotics Challenge held at Lenox Memorial Middle and High School on March 23. Their exuberance was captured in this group photo taken before the start of the competition. They were the darlings of the day not only because they were the only all-girl team, who showed great enthusiasm, but because they were high scorers. They were one of eight teams from the field of thirty-five to make it into the final round of the competition. New Marlborough had a strong presence on the team. Eighth grader Michaela Loring, back row left, was the outstanding assistant coach who helped keep the girls on track. Team members included front row center the masked Olivia Marchione; to her right, Mary Shalaby and Charlotte Smith; and behind them, far right, second row, Sofia Giumarro. Always in the background and not pictured here is the team's adult supervisor Kristen Sparhawk. (This team has been sponsored for the last seven years by Flying Cloud Institute. Last year's coach was Samee Swartz who is now at Worcester Polytechnic Institute, an honors student majoring in robotic engineering.)

THE 2013 ANNUAL TOWN MEETING WARRANT

This year's Annual Town Meeting will be held on Monday, May 6, at 7:00 p.m. at Town Hall. It will consider thirty-four articles on the Warrant. The first nine of these articles are more or less standard, pro forma articles that are dispatched without much discussion each year. Article 10 seeks to affix salaries of elected town officers, and the only change from last year is an increase of \$8,936 to cover additional hours of the Town Clerk. However, that amount is largely offset by a decrease of \$7,659 in Clerical Salaries.

Article 14 sets forth the proposed line item figures under the heading of "General Government," and in this category there is an overall decline in spending from the previous fiscal year of \$1,551. Most remarkable is a decrease in spending on Town Records Preservation, down from \$26,122 to \$5,000. Most of that \$26,122 was spent to preserve historic Town records dating back in some cases to the founding of the Town in the 1700s, and the \$5,000 requested this year is simply to carry the work forward.

Article 16 deals with salaries and expenses relating the Highway Department and cemetery worker salaries. In this category there is a requested increase of \$22,308, which includes an additional \$10,000 for snow removal, \$2,000 for increases in the cost of diesel fuel, and \$6,560 for Highway Department raises.

Article 15 presents the school budget, and this year the total increase is a rather modest \$1,981.

Article 18 is all about police, fire, and medical salaries and expenses, as well as those of the building inspector and tree warden. Overall there is an increase of \$8,880 in this category, with a mix of level-funded line items, increases, and decreases. The largest single increase is \$12,000 for Police Department Rental, to provide office and garage space for the Department after the Town's deal with the Fire Company fell apart.

Under Article 21, group insurance is slated to increase by \$39,322. All told, this category, termed Unclassified Expense, will rise by \$51,203, and most of it involves spending on mandatory state and federal benefits over which the Town has little control.

Article 23, which is linked to Question 3 (to be voted upon at the annual Town Elections on May 13, requiring a two-thirds approval to set the expense outside the limitations of Proposition Two and a Half), seeks approval for borrowing of roughly \$85,000 for the purchase of a new plow/sander truck for the Highway Department.

Article 24 (and Question 2 on the May 13 ballot) proposes the borrowing of \$560,000 for the purchase of a new fire truck.

Article 25 requests Town voters to approve a transfer of \$45,000 from Free Cash for the purpose of continued renovations to the Town Hall. This includes upgrading the bathrooms to ADA-compliant standards, and providing an elevator that the disabled can use to reach the main floor of the building.

Article 26 (and Question 4 on the May 13 ballot) requests the purchase, by borrowing \$88,000, of a new front end loader for the Highway Department.

Article 27 seeks a transfer of \$50,000 from Free Cash to the Stabilization account for the purpose of funding future capital expenses.

Article 28 requests a vote to transfer \$25,000 from Free Cash to the Transfer Station Renovations Account to fund the transition into single-stream recycling, which will ultimately save the Town \$10,000 a year in hauling fees to the recycling center in Springfield.

Article 29 requests that \$10,000 be transferred from Free Cash to correct drainage problems on County Road. (Note that Article 32 requests the same thing, and this was a mistake that slipped past the Selectmen's review. It will be tabled on the floor at Town Meeting.)

Article 30 seeks the amount of \$3,500 to cover costs of maintaining the village green on Route 57.

Article 31 concerns the purchase of call-logging and records management software for the Police Department, at a cost of \$18,685.

Article 33 (and Question 1 on the May 13 ballot) is a request that the Town vote to borrow the sum of \$680,000 for the planning, design, repair, and/or replacement of the Clayton Mill River Road, Campbell Falls, and Norfolk Road bridges.

Every article in the Warrant that concerns the expenditure of tax dollars or the raising of funds via borrowing is recommended for approval by the Finance Committee.

reported by Larry Burke

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A LOOK AT THE FY 14 SBRSD BUDGET

by Jane Burke with Kristen Sparhawk, New Marlborough School Committee representative and SBRSD Finance Sub-Committee member.

The capsule summary of this year's school budget is that the operating budget has gone up about 3 percent, mostly driven by transportation and salary costs, while the capital budget remains level-funded. New Marlborough's contribution has gone up .08 percent from last year's assessment, or about \$2000. The 3 percent appears as only 1.32 percent because of an accounting peculiarity having to do with a capital project replacing the lighting at the main campus, which was 50 percent grant-funded. Overall, the FY 14 budget, though an increase over FY 12 and FY13, is actually less than the budgets of FY09-FY11.

The level funding of the capital budget is possible because very little money is being earmarked for the outlying community schools. The Buildings and Grounds sub-committee (B&G) is actively pursuing solutions to the problem of maintaining the community school buildings. They have helped make submissions on behalf of all the

schools to the state's School Building Authority which helps fund capital projects. B&G also intends to begin talks with each community about how to go forward to preserve and maintain the buildings. New Marlborough's school committee representative Kenzie Fields is now chair of this subcommittee.

Operating costs have increased slightly due to contracted salary increases. There will be few, if any, retirements expected in FY14. No programs have been eliminated, but there may be loss of a support position in the high school. Additional cut-backs may happen by not filling certain open or needed positions in the office and custodial staffs. A little money was added to the budget to help the district try to expand its afterschool and summer programming.

Transportation costs are continuing to increase. The school committee has just formed a sub-committee to look at the issues of accessibility and efficiency in its transportation system. □

Abridged Budget #'s for FY14

From Draft presented at budget hearing February 28, 2013

	FY13	FY14	
Operating	\$12,729,599	\$13,085,397	+ 2.8%
Transportation	\$1,044,581	\$1,130,610	+8.24%
Capital	\$419,800	\$418,800	-0.24%
(lighting project)*	\$250,000*	0	-100%
Total not including lighting project	\$14,193,979*	\$14,634,807	+3.1%
Total with lighting project	\$14,443,979	\$14,634,807	+1.32%

* lighting project was funded mostly by a grant through the utility, but the contractor asked to be paid by only one party. Therefore the district paid the contractor and is being reimbursed for \$250,000 from the utility.

Assessments	FY13	FY 14	
Alford	488,631	395,353	-19.09%
Egremont	1,328,470	1,383,733	+4.16%
Monterey	1,144,080	1,277,291	+11.64%
New Marlborough	2,400,544	2,402,525	+.08%
Sheffield	6,112,359	6,264,810	+2.49%

Contribution to total assessment portion of budget – determined by state

Alford	3.37%
Egremont	11.80%
Monterey	10.89%
New Marlborough	20.49%
Sheffield	53.44%

CANDIDATES FOR MAY 13 TOWN ELECTION

The Town Caucus, held on March 29, set the ballot for the town elections on May 13. Below are the candidates for election, along with the statements provided by them. Polls will be open at Town Hall from noon until 7:00 p.m.

Moderator, one year: Scott Farrell

Board of Selectmen, three years: Lawrence Davis III

My name is Lawrence H. Davis III. I wish to offer my background and thoughts with respect to my candidacy for a third term on the Board of Selectmen of the Town of New Marlborough.

1) I am thirty-seven years of age and have been a resident of New Marlborough my entire life,

2) I own and operate West Farm Equipment in Sheffield,

3) I have served as New Marlborough Tree Warden for the past eleven years,

4) I have served as a member of the Board of Health of New Marlborough for the past fourteen years and am presently the Chairman of the Board of Health,

5) I have served leadership positions in church, civic, and fraternal organizations in Berkshire County.

There are several principles which will govern me if re-elected as a selectman, as stated when I ran for my first and second terms:

First, I will not make promises that I cannot keep,

Second, each selectman is one of three members of the Board of Selectmen, who must work together to best serve the interests of the community,

Third, I will keep an open mind with respect to all issues which may come before the Board of Selectmen and I will welcome the ideas and suggestions of the other members of the Board and all members of the community.

I will follow these principles if re-elected to the Board of Selectmen.

Thanks for the opportunity to have served two terms. I am seeking your support for a third. Come out and vote!!

Board of Selectmen, three years: Michele Shalaby

It is an honor to be on the ballot for the Board of Selectmen. I hope to have your vote and the opportunity to serve all citizens of New Marlborough.

Selectman is a position that I'm very prepared to fill. During the past thirteen years, my husband and I managed our own sixty-person management consulting firm. Through this experience and education, I've gained skills that will easily translate: finance, personnel management, technology and strategy. On a local level, I've learned a great deal about our community through my service on the Elementary School Task Force, the Elementary School Council and the New Marlborough Cultural Council.

What I've heard and observed is that our most pressing issues in New Marlborough are related to the anticipation, prioritization and management of capital expenses. Bridges need replacement or repair, the New Marlborough Central School is overdue for repairs and ADA upgrades, and there are on-going equipment needs of the highway, fire, police and ambulance departments. We'll have to

prioritize creatively, diligently and strategically. Most importantly, we must be mindful of how our decisions might impact each person in our town. It is important for New Marlborough to be a place that strikes the balance between services and affordability, where young families can afford to settle and our retirees can remain through their elderly years.

If you have any further questions for me, I'm very happy to hear from you! Please contact me at 229-9050, micheleshalaby@gmail.com, or find me on Facebook.

Assessor, three years: Marsha Pshenishny

Board of Health, three years: John Bellinger

Cemetery Commission, three years: Tammi Palmer

Tree Warden, three years: Lawrence Davis III

Tree Warden, three years: Peter Marks

Voters of New Marlborough: My name is Peter Marks. I am running for Tree Warden and ask for your vote on May 13th at the annual election. Thank you.

Finance Committee, three years: David Herrick

Finance Committee, three years: Prudence Spaulding

I have been privileged to be a part of this committee since 1983, serving as the secretary since January 2008.

The Finance Committee is required under the Massachusetts General Laws to prepare the town budget yearly, and to approve the transfer of funds from the Reserve Account when departments have exceeded their allotted funds. During the past thirty years I have seen the town grow and the services offered by town employees (and volunteers) increase. This year the Finance Committee reviewed over one hundred budgets as well as twelve items that will be offered to the voters for their approval outside Proposition 2½. Special capital expenses (such as trucks, graders, and this year, bridges!) are permitted to be placed outside the 2½ rule, though the funds for their payment must still be "raised and appropriated" by the town.

This past year the *Five Village News* has reported the activities of the Finance Committee. Thus I am sure that readers will be well prepared and knowledgeable when the budget is presented at town meeting.

The Finance Committee is made of members who are serious about the responsibility they embrace when preparing the yearly budget. They spend many hours for only the satisfaction of preparing the best budget possible and guarding the tax payers' funds with the utmost care. Thus I would appreciate the voters continued support allowing me to continue to serve for the next three years.

Planning Board, two years: Judith Hattendorf

What attracted me to New Marlborough was the natural beauty of its landscape and the historic quality of its typical

New England villages. As time passed in the eleven years we have owned the "Red Fox Barn/Music Camp", I felt compelled as a good citizen to become more involved in a meaningful way to help maintain and protect the true nature of village life as perceived by the residents of the community as well as myself. In my opinion, one of the best ways to accomplish this was to become active on the Town's Planning Board, felt more acutely, after attending a Town Meeting during which the Planning Board presented its proposed Protective Bylaws. In my forty-year career in healthcare management, strategic planning was critical not only to envision a desired future but to protect what we have. What I've learned about the history of New Marlborough is that changes to the landscape have occurred; how subtle over the years they were; and that it is better to have a collective hand in controlling the design or patterns of our cherished landscape than to be surprised by a "dollar store" proposal. I am deeply committed to contributing to an already dedicated and diligent planning team.

Planning Board, one year: Charles Parton

I've lived in New Marlborough for eleven years and after eight-plus years covering the selectmen's meetings for the NM5VN, I resigned that post and was appointed to fill a vacant position on the Planning Board, to which I am now running for election.

I have served as the first appointed Conservation

Commission chair in the State of Connecticut and wrote the first Town Plan at that time; I was on the Wetlands Commission, and co-chair of the Historic District Committee in West Tisbury on Martha's Vineyard. My background in planning came from the masters degree program in the Yale School of Public Health. But mostly I have been honored to work with the current, exceptional members of the existing Planning Board, and I want to continue.

The Board is unanimously in favor of protecting the life styles characteristic of New Marlborough, decreasing, where possible, the permitting processes, and allowing greater freedom for usage of the residents' properties.

Library Trustee, three years: Brian Mikesell

The library is not a thing of the past, being overtaken by the internet revolution. It is the heart of the community — everyone brings something special to it and can take something inspiring away.

I have worked in libraries my entire adult life. I love libraries and what they stand for: access to information for all, whether for recreation, learning, or work; a place where the community comes together as in no other location; and a building block for democracy so that an informed populace can participate in their own governance. I want to do what I can to support the New Marlborough Library, advocate for it, and encourage everyone in town to make good use of it. □

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You Never Heard of Willie Mayes?! by Jonah Winter
Frog Song, by Brenda Z. Guiberson

Library Events and Workshops

► Book Discussion Group

Join us for coffee, bagels and a lively discussion of the book,
The Elegance of the Hedgehog, by Muriel Barbery May 18, 10:00
 a.m. at the New Marlborough Library

► New Marlborough Friends of the Library

The New Marlborough Friends of the Library will hold their
 annual Memorial Weekend Bake Sale, May 25, 10:00 a.m. at
 the New Marlborough Library.

► IKEBANA, the art of Japanese flower arranging

Join us for a series of hands-on workshops led by Brian Mikesell
 on May 25 from 10:00 a.m. – noon. Workshop is limited to 10
 participants and the cost is \$25.00. For more info contact Brian
 at mikeselb@gmail.com





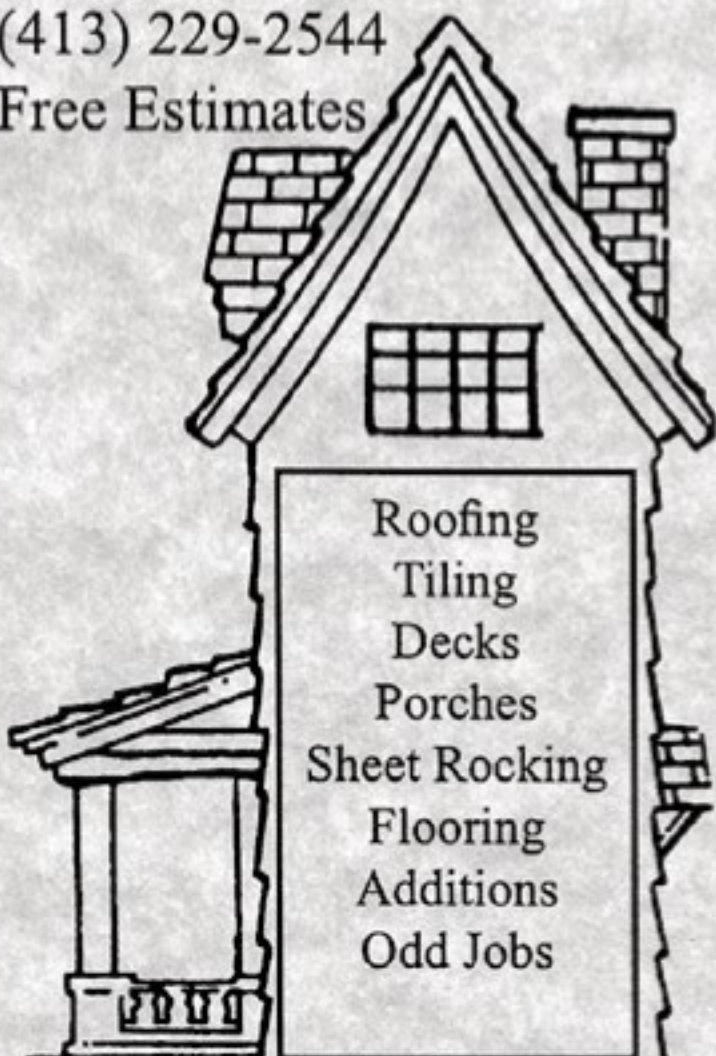
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Town Times

- * **Board of Selectmen:** Every Monday at 6:30 p.m.
- * **Planning Board:** First and third Wednesday at 7 p.m.
- * **Board of Health:** First Tuesday of the month at 7 p.m.
- * **Conservation Commission:** Last Saturday of the month at 10 a.m.
- * **Board of Assessors:** Monday through Thursday 9 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.
- * **Fire Department training:** Every Tuesday at 7 p.m. at the fire station
- * **Building Inspector:** Monday 5 - 7 p.m. Wednesday 8 - 10 a.m.
- * **First Responders:** meeting/training: First and third Wednesday at 7 p.m. at the fire station
- * **Cultural Council:** Second Thursday at 4:15 p.m. at the library
- * **Town Treasurer:** Wednesday 3:30 p.m. - 6 p.m. and Saturday 8 a.m. - 10 a.m.
- * **Tax Collector:** Monday - Thursday 8:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.
- * **Selectmen's Administrative Secretary:** Monday - Friday 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.
- * **Dog and Animal Control Officer:** John Springstube 413-232-7038
- * **Town Clerk:** 229-8278; 8 a.m. - 4 p.m. weekdays; Saturday by appointment
- * **Town Hall:** 229-8116
- * **Police:** Business office: 229-8161

Emergency calls: Police, Fire, and Medical: 911

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Martha Bryan, Jon Swan, Peter Schuyten,
Larry Burke, Marianne Swan, Debra Herman
Contributing writers: Janice Boults, Laura Endacott,
Ann Getsinger, Mary Richie Smith, and Tara White

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For advertising, contact Barbara Lowman, tel: 229-2369

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