



# New Marlborough 5 Village News

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Clayton • Hartsville • Mill River • New Marlborough • Southfield

## A TALE OF TWO MEETINGS

By Joe Poindexter



photos by Joe Poindexter (left) and Larry Barke (right)

Above, Planning Board member Mark Carson and Chairman Peter Tiso attempt to fashion an amended motion to the marijuana moratorium as member James Mullen looks on at the April 11 hearing; two days later, as yellow voter cards shot skyward in the Great Room of Town Hall, the moratorium was resoundingly approved.

It was the slowest of times. It was the swiftest of times. On April 11, a Planning Board meeting that contained an excruciatingly long five seconds of silence ended, seemingly eons after it had begun, right back where it started. Two days later, a Special Town Meeting, with all the potential for plodding on into the night, sped by like a freight train on the express track.

Taken together, however, the two meetings were a classic expression of New England town democracy. The earlier forum was called by the Planning Board to hear what townspeople had to say about a possible moratorium on permit applications for the commercial production of marijuana. Well into the second hour Chairman Peter Tiso asked for a second on his motion that the Planning Board go on record as supporting a moratorium. This, he said, would give the Board time to craft a zoning bylaw that responds to the complex issues raised by the prospect of commercial marijuana production in New Marlborough. He turned to look at fellow Board members, Mark Carson on his right and James Mullen on his left. Both stared straight ahead and remained mute. “The motion fails for lack of a second,” said Mr. Tiso, quietly.

Mr. Mullen then offered an alternative motion, declaring that the Board did not endorse a moratorium. It carried, two in favor, one opposed. At Mr. Tiso’s urging, the motion was amended to state that the Board “supports the merits of writing a bylaw to address commercial marijuana” and that it would “entertain the creation of an ad hoc committee to assist it.”

It was a maddening conclusion to a long night for the Concerned Citizens of New Marlborough, a group formed by Deanna Mummert, Rebecca Schreiber, and Julia Trumbull, which had gathered 254 signatures from voters, and more than 160

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*Two Meetings, continued*

from non-voting second-home owners, requesting a town meeting vote on a moratorium. With most of those in attendance endorsing the need for a moratorium, they were sorely disappointed that they had failed to change the minds of two of the three Planning Board members present.

Then came the Special Town Meeting on April 13. Moderator Barry Shapiro opened the assembly by informing those present that, in a time-honored New England tradition, they had, by entering the Great Room of the Town Hall, become not just citizens but legislators. With equal measures of authority and good humor, he then laid out the rules of the road, moved on a vote in favor of waiving the reading of the article, and opened the meeting to discussion.

Mark Carson briefly stated the Planning Board's non-endorsement. Rebecca Schreiber explained the need for time in addressing the complex issue of commercial marijuana — she cited 202 pages of guidance in the writing of a bylaw from the state Cannabis Control

Commission — and ended by asking that the article be amended to extend the time of the moratorium by six months to June 30, 2019. The goal, she said, would be to have a bylaw ready for a vote at the Annual Town Meeting in May 2019.

After the amendment passed, handily, Mr. Shapiro opened the floor for discussion. When no one came forward, he called for a vote, but not before the voters quickly dispatched a request by Mark Carson that it be conducted by secret ballot. Then came the vote on the article itself, which for passage needed the approval of at least two-thirds of voters present. It wasn't close. The sea of yellow cards raised in favor of the moratorium swamped the scattering of cards opposed — and was exceeded only by the unanimous assent to a motion to dissolve the meeting. With almost shocking swiftness, New Marlborough had voted itself a year-plus of breathing room.

Now comes the hard part: researching and writing a well-crafted commercial marijuana bylaw. □

## VIEW FROM THE BOARD

This spring has been incredibly busy in Town Hall, and there have been many citizens engaged in our government process. We're very grateful for your attention to the current issues and hope your interest continues. Amid the excitement of broadband developments, special permit applications, and a moratorium, we're formulating the budget for the next fiscal year and updating the capital plan. The coming fiscal year is a particularly important year because of a unique opportunity in our circumstances. We want to be sure we use it to the best advantage of the Town.

As we've built the budgets over the last few years, we've faced significant increases in our share of the school budget and in the medical insurance premiums of our employees. This has pushed our finances right up to the limits of Proposition 2½, necessitating some difficult decisions and even a few risks. This coming year is unique in that our share of the school budget is being reduced and our medical insurance premiums are the same as the current year. Additionally, our debt service has begun to decline as we have completed payments on a few financed projects.

Recognizing these facts as opportunity, the Board of Selectmen, along with the Finance Committee, agreed to work toward a common goal of building excess tax levy capacity. Our strategy has been to restrict the growth of the town operating budget. Increased costs and new services have been restricted to half of the increase in this year's tax levy capacity and half of new

growth. The other halves of the levy capacity and new growth, as well as the money saved by the reduction in school assessment, will be left unspent and/or reserved for one-time expenses so, in the coming year, we might absorb typical increases without going beyond the limits of Proposition 2½ or risking Town services.

Does this sound complicated? It is a bit, but can be better explained with some graphical depictions. Please join the Board and Finance Committee for the full explanation of the budget and capital proposal on the evening of Tuesday, May 1 at 6:00 p.m. in Town Hall. We'll present what's in the budget proposal, describe our management strategy, hear questions, and listen to your input. See you there! □

*Michele Shalaby*

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## THE 2018 ANNUAL TOWN MEETING WARRANT: A SUMMARY

The warrant for the May 7, 2018 Annual Town Meeting begins with an exhortation to voters to come to the polls of Monday, May 14, to cast ballots in the annual election of Town Officers, and also to help decide the outcome of Ballot Question 1, which would authorize the Board of Selectmen to go outside the bounds of Proposition 2½, in order to commit to a bond that would allow for the purchase of a new grader for the Town Highway Department.

The following pages of the warrant lay out thirty-eight articles, the first nine of which deal with standard authorizations that commonly are adopted quickly and unanimously. Articles 10 and 11 deal with salaries and expenses in the operation of our Town government, and the proposed increases represent less than 3 percent of the previous year's budget in this sector.

As for highway and public works funding, Article 13 asks for the sum of \$8,000 to secure rights-of-way in connection with the replacement of the bridge over the Konkapot River above Umpachene Falls, and the operating budget for the highway department (Article 14) requests \$2,948 less than FY18.

Perennially the largest single budget item for the Town, this year's school budget (Article 16), is \$2,841,455, and that is \$168,065 less than the previous year, due to changes in assessment based on the number of New Marlborough children in the school system.

Under the general heading of "Protection of Persons and Property," Articles 19 through 22, the biggest single increase sought over FY18 is for Police Department salaries – a bump of \$28,609. Other requests are \$4,000 toward New Marlborough Fire & Rescue's proposed purchase of a washing machine capable of cleansing turnout gear of contaminants. Articles 20 and 21 propose a transfer of a total of \$46,350 from the Comstar Reserve Account to fund operation and staffing of the Town's ambulance. (The Comstar Account is funded by insurance payments incurred by patients requiring transportation to area hospitals.)

Article 24 reveals that the Town is, as of this moment, in a position of declining payments on bank loans: \$58,134 less than last year.

Article 25 asks for permission "to raise and appropriate the sum of \$150,000" to the Stabilization Fund.

Article 28 requests the borrowing of the sum of \$325,000 for the purchase of a new grader for the Town Highway Department. This article requires a two-thirds vote to pass, and will also be subject to passage of Question 1 on the May 14 ballot.

Another large expenditure is involved in Article 29 — \$260,000 for repair to a section of the Norfolk Road; this would be accomplished by a transfer of that sum

from Free Cash to the Roads Project Account. Similarly, Article 30 asks for a transfer of \$75,000 from Free Cash for the purpose of paving the driveway and parking areas at the Town Highway Garage.

Article 35, interestingly, given the very large turnouts of citizens at recent meetings at Town Hall, would allow the Board of Selectmen to hold Town Meetings in an adjacent town, such as at Mount Everett Regional High School, just as the town of Egremont has done for many years.

Article 36, on an agreement between the Town and solar photovoltaic facilities is, according to Town Administrator Mari Enoch, a way for the Board of Selectmen "to enter into an agreement of longer than three years with a commercial solar facility to receive Payments In Lieu Of Taxes (PILOT). The reason a PILOT is sought is because the Commonwealth has not agreed upon the method of assessing personal property taxes on commercial solar facilities. The Town can negotiate a yearly payment for up to twenty years in lieu of that tax. The article is asking voters to authorize the Selectmen to negotiate agreements for any commercial projects because, at the time of the printing of the warrant, we have two special permit applications for such facilities pending, so we couldn't be more specific about which project(s) we need agreements for."

The establishment of a permanent commission on disabilities is the aim of Article 37, and specifies its purposes and the composition of its membership.

Finally, Article 38 seeks adoption by the Town of the proposed protective bylaw amendments on solar installations. These amendments, which had been the subject of a well-received public hearing by the Planning Board in February, are subject to a two-thirds favorable vote for passage. □

Larry Burke

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## ANNUAL TOWN ELECTIONS: STATEMENTS BY OUR CANDIDATES

**N**inety-eight voters turned out for the annual town caucus on March 27, which established the ballot for the Town election on May 14. All candidates were invited to submit statements for publication. The statements of those who responded appear below. The polls will be open at Town Hall in Mill River from noon to 7:00 p.m. on Monday, May 14.

### MODERATOR, ONE YEAR:

#### ► BARRY SHAPIRO

For the past three years, I have stood at the podium at annual and special town meetings marveling at the huge crowds of citizen legislators who take time from their busy schedules to address this great town's needs. I have also watched with pride as my friends and neighbors stand and actively participate in the oldest democratic institution in the United States, the New England town meeting. I take my responsibilities as elected town moderator very seriously and I am keenly aware of how important it is to set a tone of respect and collegiality for our meetings where passions can sometimes run high but where we all have more in common than we may think. I have worked hard to hone my skills as moderator, constantly consulting with my fellow moderators statewide on "best practices" to make sure that all of our fellow citizens feel that they can make their views not only heard but also listened to at town meetings. Nothing is more important than keeping the dialogue open, respectful, and flowing so that everyone feels that their voice has been heard. It has been an honor to serve as moderator since 2015, and I respectfully ask for your vote in 2018. I would be happy to discuss any aspect of my service with you. Just call me at 229-3993. Thank you very much.

### BOARD OF SELECTMEN, THREE YEARS:

#### ► TARA B. WHITE

New Marlborough has been my home for my entire life. During this time, changes have happened: new homes have been built, new businesses have opened, and there have been changes in how town land is used. Not all of these changes were embraced at the time they were presented, but over time, they were accepted and our community became stronger in many ways.

During my years as a selectman, I have attended Town and school finance committee meetings, worked in conjunction with our highway department for grants to repair town roads and bridges, been involved with the state's Community Compact agreement, participated in shared services with other towns, have applied, with the town of Cheshire, for a Community Development Block Grant to help with housing rehabilitation, and have worked with our staff to form a cohesive, productive group of individuals across all departments.

I believe my experience will be useful as we move ahead with challenging issues: bridges that are failing, roadways that are in desperate need of repairs, broadband and cell service that are needed to move the town forward, declining enrollment in our schools, and looking for ways to decrease our dependency on real estate taxes as our sole revenue for the town.

As a selectman, it is my responsibility to look at and understand all aspects of our town and to work with the town boards to find the right solutions that benefit everyone.

New Marlborough may be five villages, but we are all one town. How we approach these challenges in our town is for everyone to decide.

I would appreciate your support and vote on May 14 for the position of selectman. If you would like to discuss any issue, please give me a call at 229-7754 or email me at: tarabw@verizon.net

### BOARD OF SELECTMEN, THREE YEARS:

#### ► DANIEL DOERN

Together, we face new challenges and those challenges require new capabilities and leadership. I can offer those.

For twenty years I managed real estate development projects for private developers, public agencies, and my own company. These complex ventures involved many different, diverse groups and required steady, diplomatic leadership. As a business owner, I led teams towards shared goals and learned first-hand how to obtain good results with limited budgets. I obtained an MBA and understand complicated business matters and approach things in a thorough, unbiased, and practical way. Currently, I am treasurer of the New Marlborough Emergency Services Fund and hope you will allow me to share my experiences and qualities as your new selectman. If you elect me to serve you, I'll focus on:

**Accountable Leadership.** My strong, qualified voice on the Board of Selectmen will make sure that the townspeople's best interests are the priority. I will help improve our budgeting for better fiscal performance. I will work to support our schools and services, coordinating with regional efforts if it's beneficial. I will insist on professionalism and transparency.

**Responsible Conservation.** We must make sure that our beautiful small town is protected and preserved. Our villages, landscapes, and other natural features help make this town a unique, special place.

**Cautious Change.** As a town, we are considering new uses not foreseen in our bylaws. These could bring benefits or they could cause lasting damage. We must control this process with rigorous review and oversight so we know exactly what we are getting into and its consequences.

*continued*



We were welcomed here a decade ago and I love it more each year. If elected, I will work hard to fulfill my obligation to represent all the townspeople and do my best to make sure our town thrives.

I'm at 229-2440 and ddoern@mac.com

#### FINANCE COMMITTEE, THREE YEARS:

##### ► SANDRA FUSCO-WALKER

After twenty years as a patient advocate, I retired in 2013 and took some time to regroup before I found myself attending weekly meetings of our Board of Selectmen and Finance Committee.

Impressed by the people who give so much of their time volunteering to manage town affairs, I ran for a one-year seat on the Finance Committee last year to see if I was up to the commitment.

After much thought, I've decided to run for a three-year seat on the Finance Committee. I believe a town runs well when its citizens are active in its management and that the burden of a volunteer government is lighter when shared by many.

I learned a lot over the past year about finance and town management, and I would like to contribute to the continuing development of fiscally-responsible budgets based on best practices and what's best for New Marlborough.

My experience as a patient advocate taught me you don't need a degree to participate in a democracy; you need to be willing to learn, listen, and do the work. I appreciate hearing your concerns and suggestions and am happy to answer any questions. Please give me a call at 644-0088 or email sfwalker1@verizon.net.

#### FINANCE COMMITTEE, ONE YEAR:

##### ► JOHN PSHENISHNY

My name is John Pshenishny. I have been a member of the finance committee for four years. I have learned

a lot about municipal finance. My main goal is to help keep the spending down and help the taxpayers afford to live here.

I am retired after thirty years at Sheffield Plastics and have the time to give to the town. I am still an active member of the fire department after forty-four years. I am a dispatcher in the radio room.

Your vote would be greatly appreciated on election day.

#### ASSESSOR, THREE YEARS:

##### ► WENDY MILLER

My name is Wendy Miller. I have lived in New Marlborough with my husband John at Brookmede Farm since 2001 and have served on the Board of Assessors for over ten years. I was a career banker for more than thirty years and retired in 2015. Not ready for an "unstructured" lifestyle, I am currently employed by a law firm that relocated last year from New York City to Lakeville, Connecticut.

Thank you for the opportunity to continue to serve the Town of New Marlborough and its property owners. I am committed to serve in a fiduciary and responsible capacity to accurately and fairly value real and personal property within the Town of New Marlborough and provide timely and courteous service to all citizens of New Marlborough in conjunction with my fellow assessors.

#### LIBRARY TRUSTEE, THREE YEARS:

##### ► CLAUDETTE CALLAHAN

I am honored to serve as a library trustee for our very special New Marlborough Town Library. I hope the library will continue its excellent programming to better serve our community.

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## Town Business Is Your Business

### BOARD OF SELECTMEN



**March 26:** After approving the minutes from the March 19 meeting, the Board, with all three members present, met with Alison Dixon of the Housatonic Valley Association (HVA), who was there to inform the Board that **the HVA is planning to do an assessment of the Konkapot River.** What that entails, she explained, is having volunteers walk the banks of the river and conduct “a visual survey of how the river is being used, what’s going on around it, what the land use is, and whether there are any pipes coming into it.” They’ll also be looking for invasive plant species, she said.

Funded by government grants and support from its partners, HVA’s mission, according to Ms. Dixon, is to keep watch over the entire Housatonic watershed, stretching from just north of Pittsfield all the way south to Long Island Sound. That’s a distance of nearly 150 miles and encompasses some eighty-three towns, eight major tributaries and twenty-four sub-watersheds.

HVA has already done an assessment of the Housatonic, “and now we’re getting to know our tributaries,” she said. Last year, we did the Green River and the southwest branch of the Housatonic.”

**The goal, as she explained it, is to produce a report on the health of the Konkapot, listing any concerns and making recommendations for action. She stressed that the intent is not to come in and take over management of the river, but instead to simply provide actionable information to the communities surrounding it.”**

She said HVA is meeting with the Boards of each of the towns through which the Konkapot passes – Monterey, Sheffield, and North Canaan, Connecticut, as well New Marlborough – and briefing them on the effort.

In addition, she said, “since we’re aware that when we do this, we’ll be working in people’s backyards, we have a

letter we’d like to send out to the property owners along the river, and we’d like someone from the Town, a selectman or someone who’s recognized in the community, to co-sign it.” The Board’s view, however, was that this is something more appropriate for the Conservation Commission to handle, and directed that the letter be forwarded to the Commission for a decision on who should sign it.

In other matters, the Board approved payment of \$1,000 to WiredWest to cover the Town’s dues for the current fiscal year. However, since this is the first year since FY15 that WiredWest has invoiced the Town for dues, there’s no money in the budget for it. So the money, the selectmen agreed, will have to come out of the Reserve Fund, requiring Finance Committee approval.

**The Board authorized Chairman Tara White to sign the solar net metering credit purchase plan contract with Seaboard Solar Holdings LLC.** Since the signed agreement, according to state law, must be placed on file with three separate state agencies, the Board, to be on the safe side, made the contract’s approval subject to the Town receiving no objections from any of the three agencies. **As previously reported, the town will be purchasing discounted solar net metering credits from Seaboard Solar that it can then use to pay National Grid for its electricity usage, resulting in an annual savings of about \$5,000, or \$100,000 over the life of the twenty-year deal.**

The Board also voted to retain KP Law’s Rick Holland as its broadband legal counsel at a fee not to exceed \$250 an hour. Attorney Holland acted as the Town’s counsel when New Marlborough was part of the three-town broadband consortium that also included Sandisfield and Tolland. Now that the Town has withdrawn from

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the consortium and is going it alone, it wants to retain him on its own. As Town Administrator Mari Enoch noted, "He knows our situation; he's worked with us."

**April 2:** After approving (with minor changes) the minutes of four prior meetings, the Board temporarily switched hats and convened a meeting of the Town's Municipal Lighting Plant (MLP, an entity originally created to provide town-owned electric power to town's unserved by private utilities but recently resurrected to enable a town to build and own an internet-service provider). Mr. Yohalem disclosed that he and Broadband Committee Chairman Richard Long had been approached by a representative of Westfield Gas & Electric (WG&E), asking New Marlborough to participate with a group of other MLPs in a WG&E bid for federal funds to install broadband infrastructure. Both men, said Mr. Yohalem, concurred that the agreement was too vague and seemed to bind the town to WG&E as an internet operator no matter who eventually built the system. On behalf of the Town MLP, they declined the offer.

Returning to their roles as selectmen, Chairman White opened discussion on the Town's signage policy. The Board accepted the most recent revision (July 2017), which says, in essence, that any sign erected by a private individual or organization on Town property (e.g. roadsides, traffic circles) needs prior approval by the Board. There are two exceptions: tag-sale signs can be put up a week before the event and must be removed not more than two days after; electioneering signs can be placed two weeks before the election and must be removed within the following five days.

Mr. Yohalem made note, with a bit of pique, of the signs posted (à la the old Burma Shave highway signs) along the Mill River Southfield Road urging motorists to attend the New Marlborough Land Trust's mid-April Red-Hot Blues Bash. "They are too close to the road,"

he said, adding that they could interfere with Highway Department machinery. The other selectmen concurred with his suggestion that the Board write a letter requesting that the Land Trust seek Board approval for any future sign postings. (The Town policy statement on signage appears on page 26.)

Following a brief discussion of the price of the contract, the Board signed a "pavement management agreement" with the Beta Group, a New England engineering firm with an office in Chicopee, Massachusetts. At a cost of \$19,850, Beta will examine eighty-three miles of Town road to determine condition and such safety issues as the possible need for guard rails. The contract stipulates that any additional mileage will be charged on a pro-rata basis. Payment for work will come from the Town's insurance policy and Chapter 90 funds. The town's private roads are not included in the survey.

The meeting then moved on to a review of the warrant articles that are to come up at the May 7 Annual Town Meeting. Putting aside those she referred to as "housekeeping articles," Town Administrator Mari Enoch identified the following articles:

- Permission "at the selectmen's" discretion, to hold a town meeting, whether annual or special, outside of Town Hall — providing for this eventuality was deemed wise, given the possibility that weather, overflow crowds, lack of heat, or other factors could make use of Town Hall impractical or illegal.
- The establishment of an Americans with Disabilities Act commission, whose purpose will be to direct disabled residents in town to resources that will help them maintain their independence
- In preparation for the replacement of the bridge on Umpachene Falls Road, the acquisition of the necessary right-of-ways on

*The big ticket item on Highway's list this year is a \$325,000 road grader to replace a twenty-six-year-old discontinued Dresser International model with over 12,500 hours on it....*

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approaches to the bridge

- The establishment of a Payment in Lieu of Taxes agreement for commercial solar installations
- A new bylaw placing restrictions on large-scale solar-panel installations.

Discussion then moved on to the FY19 budget, in preparation for which Ms. Enoch distributed a six-page spread sheet of expense items, starting with the moderator's salary (\$145) and ending with the amount budgeted for the Stabilization Fund (\$50,000). **Of the 150 separate items in between, a few caught the selectmen's collective eye: a \$5,700 voting machine, approved by the Board but not the Finance Committee; a rise in Police Department salaries to increase hours of coverage, still under discussion; and an increase of \$5,000 in Transfer Station salaries to pay for Saturday help that in the past have been provided by volunteers — "Volunteers are not meant to replace salaried personnel," said Ms. Enoch. In answer to a question from Prue Spaulding, who was in attendance, Ms. White assured those present that the FY19 budget would not exceed the 2½ percent levy limit.**

In town administrator updates, Ms. Enoch announced that Oasis, LLC lawyer Peter Puciloski had, at the Board's request, waived the time limit for a response to the Oasis permit application. She also reported that the selectmen had been invited to a recreational marijuana workshop (not otherwise open to the public) to be held the evening of April 24 in the Lenox Town Hall, at which the legality of host community agreements would be discussed.

Mr. Yohalem pointed to a conflict: A meeting he wished to attend on the future of public education in South County, focusing on the question of school district consolidation, was scheduled for the same day and

time at the Mahaiwe Theater in Great Barrington. When Michele Shalaby also expressed an interest in this meeting, Ms. White agreed to represent the Board at the Lenox workshop. And as if the day was not already full enough, **Ms. Enoch read an email she had just received confirming that Lieutenant Governor Karyn Polito would be arriving in New Marlborough at 2:15 on April 24 for a roundtable discussion with the Board "to discuss issues facing the town."** Blessedly perhaps, this meeting is scheduled to last only forty-five minutes.

**April 5:** With budget season in full swing, the Board, with all three members present, held a joint working session with the Finance Committee. The two-hour-plus discussion focused initially on capital spending requests, of which

there are four, all coming from the Highway Department.

**The big ticket item on Highway's list this year is a \$325,000 road grader to replace a twenty-six-year-old discontinued Dresser International model with over 12,500 hours on it, and it's clearly a high priority for Highway Superintendent Loring.**

In response to a question from Finance Committee member Marilyn Fracasso as to whether the Town "really needs a new grader just to maintain the roads," Superintendent Loring pointed out that New Marlborough has forty-five miles of dirt roads, probably as many or more than any other town in the county. "If anybody needs a grader, it's the Town of New Marlborough," he said.

Addressing the sizeable price tag, Selectman Nat Yohalem said, "I think if we do approve this, [the money] should be borrowed; we should not use Free Cash or Stabilization to pay for it."

Also on the list is a \$115,000 midsize truck to replace a seven-year-old Ford F550; a \$75,000 project to pave the

**At a cost of \$19,850, Beta will examine eighty-three miles of Town road to determine condition and such safety issues as the possible need for guard rails.**

**First Fridays** *New Marlborough Meeting House Gallery  
Route 57 on the Village Green  
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**June 1:**

*Discovering New England's  
Stone Walls*

**July 6:**

*The First Industrial Revolution  
in Berkshire County*

**August 3:**

*Hartsville, the New Marlborough  
village in its heyday*

**September 7:**

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highway department garage area, and an amount yet to be finalized for road projects. **One possibility, in Mr. Loring's view, is a reclamation project for a 5,700-foot stretch of Norfolk Road from just beyond the entrance to Berkshire Mountain Spring Water, going southerly towards the Connecticut state line.** The estimated cost, according to Mr. Loring, would be around \$260,000. Also discussed were topcoats for the recently paved New Marlborough South Sandisfield Road and for sections of Mill River Great Barrington Road. However, for those, Mr. Loring indicated, he would more likely use the approximately \$340,000 in Chapter 90 money the Town is slated to receive from the state this year.

Next up was Police Chief Graham Frank to answer questions about his request to upgrade a part-time officer position to full-time and to add four eight-hour shifts, all at a cost of about \$38,000 a year. If granted, it would enable Chief Frank to realize a long-sought goal of providing the Town with seven-day-a-week police coverage from 8:00 a.m. until midnight.

With his current resources, he's only able to provide coverage from 8:00 a.m. to midnight Thursday through Saturday, while for the rest of the week the coverage ends at 4:00 p.m. It became evident from discussion later in the meeting – after Chief Frank had departed – that the Board is leaning towards phasing in the increased coverage over a two-year period, adding two of the eight-hour shifts plus the full-time position this year and the other two shifts as part of the FY20 budget.

Other budget requests under consideration for FY19 year include a \$4,000 washer to remove carcinogens from the Fire Department's turnout gear, a \$5,800 electronic door opener for the library to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act, and a \$5,700

voting machine proposed by Town Clerk Kathy Chretien to tally Town election results. However, speaking for the Finance Committee, Secretary Prue Spaulding indicated there's not a lot of enthusiasm on the Committee for the voting machine, first because it's not being mandated by the state, and second because it includes an estimated \$5,000 in annual recurring costs to program the machine and print ballots every time there's an election in Town.

The combined group also discussed budgeting \$20,000 for legal fees to negotiate a contract with a broadband provider and \$8,000 for right-of-way costs associated with the replacement by the state of the Umpachene Falls Road bridge. As explained by Town Administrator Enoch, although the state will be footing the bill for the construction of

the bridge, which is scheduled for 2020, the Town is responsible for acquiring right-of-way easements and any land that goes with it. By way of example, she noted that the Hadsell Street bridge right-of-way costs amounted to around \$4,500, and that's without any land acquisitions.

Before adjourning, the group set a date of Tuesday, May 1, at 6:00 p.m. for a public presentation and Q&A session on the budget.

**April 9:** After approving the minutes from the March 5 and March 26 meetings, the Board's first order of business was to put together a list of topics for the **roundtable discussion with Lieutenant Governor Karyn Polito scheduled for April 24.** According to Town Administrator Enoch, the Lieutenant Governor will be at Town Hall, starting at 2:15 p.m., for no more than forty-five minutes, so the Board limited its list to just four topics.

The chosen topics are: 1) the deteriorating condition of Route 57 and the possibility of a state takeover of the road's repair and maintenance; 2) revising the

*Discussion then moved on to the FY19 budget, in preparation for which Ms. Enoch distributed a six-page spread sheet of expense items, starting with the moderator's salary (\$145) and ending with the amount budgeted for the Stabilization Fund (\$50,000).*



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school district assessment formula to smooth out the financial peaks and valleys it imposes on the district towns; 3) increasing the amount of Chapter 90 road repair money the Town receives from the state; and 4) MBI and the restrictions on its broadband grants.

According to Town Administrator Enoch, there will probably not be time for public comment, but the public is welcome to attend. In addition to the three selectmen, the Board will be inviting Highway Superintendent Chuck Loring, Broadband Committee Chairman Richard Long, and the Town's two Southern Berkshire Regional School Committee members, Fran Lartigue and David Travis, to join them for the discussion.

Selectman Yohalem reported on last week's joint meeting of the Board and the Broadband Committee with Charter Communications, with Massachusetts Broadband Institute (MBI) Chairman Peter Larkin also in attendance. Describing it as "an interesting, very unusual, meeting," Mr. Yohalem said Charter is proposing to wire the Town with a fiber-to-the-home broadband system for \$3.14 million, to include the \$1.7 million grant from MBI plus another \$1.4 million from some combination of the state and the Town.

According to Charter's Director of Government Affairs Anna Lucey, the service would include a standard speed of 100 Mbps download and 10 Mbps upload at a first-year introductory rate of \$44.99 per month and \$64.99 a month thereafter, and that Charter would also provide line drops up to 250 feet to subscribers' homes. The network would be completed a year after the make-ready work on the poles is done, and for its \$3.14 million Charter would wire 96 percent of the Town.

A second meeting is being planned that would include both MBI and officials from the state's Department of Local Services – but not Charter – to discuss where that

additional \$1.4 million would be coming from. That meeting was subsequently scheduled for Friday, April 13, at 11:30 a.m. (For more on Charter-related developments, see the Broadband Update on page 14.)

In a related matter, Mr. Yohalem said the Broadband Committee has submitted its revised Request for Proposals (RFP) to broadband counsel Rick Holland for his review, and is hoping to get comments back this week and then have the RFP ready to go out next week.

"So basically," Mr. Yohalem said, "we're going down two streams here, the RFP route and the possibility of a Charter-MBI deal."

The Board held a vote to reappoint the members of the Zoning Board of Appeals, designating Dan Litchfield, Courtney Turner, and Sharon Fleck as members of the ZBA and Jack Bellinger and Helen Liveten as alternates. As previously reported, the Board had originally designated Mr. Bellinger as the member and Mr. Litchfield as the alternate. But then, after the ZBA reorganized and Mr. Litchfield was named a member and Mr. Bellinger an alternate, the Board had to revote the appointments. The ZBA also elected Mr. Turner as chairman. The appointments will run through June 30 of this year.

In budget developments, the Board is still up in the air about whether to fund all or part of the additional shifts requested by Police Chief Frank in his FY '19 budget request, and also about the Town Clerk's request for a voting machine.

At this point in the budget-building process, the year-over-year spending increase for recurring items, including a 2 percent cost of living adjustment (COLA) for the Town's employees, is projected to come in at around \$92,000. But the Board is looking for ways to cut that back by about \$10,000, to keep the increase at or even below \$83,000, which is half the Town's \$166,000

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“excess capacity” – the amount by which the Town can increase the budget before bumping up against the 2 ½ percent levy limit. So, Town Administrator Enoch went over several scenarios for lowering the recurring expenditures, all of which involved to one degree or another the additional police coverage and the voting machine. No decision was reached.

The other \$83,000 of excess capacity is being earmarked for one-time budget items, such as the library’s electronic door opener, broadband legal fees, the washing machine for Fire Department’s turnout gear, and the right-of-way acquisition costs for the Umpachene Falls Road bridge, plus \$50,000 for the stabilization fund.

In a related matter, the Board is considering borrowing the money for the Highway Department’s capital request for a \$325,000 road grader, and voted to approve language for a ballot question exempting the borrowing from the provisions of Proposition 2 ½.

Under Town Administrator updates, Ms. Enoch said there’s been a Reserve Fund request from the Highway Department for money to pay a \$608 propane bill. As she explained, there’s been a 30-cents-a-gallon increase

in the price of propane, plus an increase in the number of heating degree-days, even as the Highway Department’s propane budget was cut this year. So, there’s no money left in the budget, she said, to pay the remaining propane bills before the end of the fiscal year, adding that there will likely be two more after this one. The Board voted to recommend to the Finance Committee that the money be taken out of the Reserve Fund.

In other matters, Ms. Enoch said the Town received an email from Berkshire Regional Planning Commission asking the Town for a letter in support of BRPC’s application for Economic Development District status for the County with the federal Economic Development Agency in Washington. As the email states, this would benefit the region as a whole, “as it will open the door to potential funding through U.S. Department of Commerce grants.” However, Ms. Enoch said she’s not asking for a decision on it tonight, but will put the issue on the agenda for next week’s meeting.

Finally, Ms. Enoch reported that the Town has received an application for a special permit for another solar field, this one from CVE North America Inc. of New York City. The 5-megawatt facility would be located on sixteen acres in the northwest portion of a one-hundred-and-forty-acre parcel of land owned by John C. Palfini of Great Barrington. Access to the site, which is located at 1248 Mill River Great Barrington Road, would be via Knight Road. The Board set a hearing date for the permit of Monday, May 21, at 6:00 p.m.

**April 17:** After approving the minutes from the April 2 and April 5 meetings, the Board voted to approve the Town’s participation in this year’s Household Hazardous Waste Collection program, which permits town residents to dispose of hazardous wastes such as oil-based paints and motor oil at designated collection sites. The fee this year is \$1,399, an increase of \$200 over last, and is based on the town’s population and the number of residents who took advantage of the program the previous year.

In other actions, the Board authorized Chairman White to sign a municipal net metering application, required by the state Department of Public Utilities in connection with the Town’s agreement with Seaboard Solar Holdings LLC to purchase discounted solar net metering credits for use in paying its electric bills with National Grid.

The Board also authorized Ms. White to sign a letter in support of the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission’s application to the Economic Development

*Mr. Larkin [indicated] that not only is the state willing to pick up half that amount, or \$720,000, but is also willing to lend the Town the other \$720,000, payable over a twenty-year period at a nominal interest rate.*



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Agency in Washington to designate Berkshire County as an Economic Development District (EDD). As previously reported, EDD status confers upon the county the right to apply for U.S. Department of Commerce grants.

Selectman Yohalem reported on last week's meeting with MBI Chairman Peter Larkin and officials from the state Department of Local Services, who participated via phone, to discuss Charter Communications' proposal to build and operate a broadband system for the Town for \$3.1 million. **The focus of the discussion, he said, was the funding of the Town's \$1.44 million share of that cost, with Mr. Larkin indicating that not only is the state willing to pick up half that amount, or \$722,000, but is also willing to lend the Town the other \$722,000, payable over a twenty-year period at a nominal interest rate.** As Mr. Yohalem noted, that works out to \$36,000 a year, plus whatever the interest is.

When asked why the state is pressing so hard on behalf of a Charter deal, Mr. Larkin, according to Mr. Yohalem, replied that it's because of Charter's financial viability. "They have vetted it, they have checked out Charter's financials and they are satisfied it is able to do the work and will be here for the long run," Mr. Yohalem said, "so that's where we stand."

In a related development, Broadband Committee Chairman Richard Long indicated via email that he's received comments back from broadband counsel Rick Holland on the revised RFP that will be going out to other potential broadband providers. A joint meeting of the Board and the Broadband Committee has been scheduled for Friday morning to go over the changes and at that point the RFP will be ready to go out. As Mr. Yohalem stated at last week's meeting, the Town is following a two-pronged broadband strategy of going the RFP route on the one hand and also pursuing the idea of a Charter-MBI deal.

In the latest budget developments, the Board finally made some decisions on what's in and what's out of the FY '19 budget, with the selectmen agreeing not to go forward with the voting machine, and to phase in the additional police coverage over a two-year period, as discussed last week. They are also not going to add a line item to the budget for \$1,000 for WiredWest dues in FY'19, which means in all probability the Town will be withdrawing from the WiredWest consortium next year. Just last month the Board approved paying the Town's WiredWest dues for FY '18.

On the "what's in" side of the ledger, the selectmen gave a collective nod of approval to the Fire Department's washing machine to remove carcinogens

from its turnout gear, the Library's automatic door opener, the \$20,000 for broadband legal fees and the \$8,000 for right of way costs for the Umpachene Falls replacement bridge. They also agreed to raise and appropriate \$150,000 for the Stabilization Fund.

As for capital spending, the Board approved the allocation of \$260,000 for Norfolk Road reclamation work, \$75,000 for paving the Highway Department garage area, \$10,000 for tree work, and \$325,000 for the road grader, the money for which will be borrowed, while the other capital expenditures will be paid out of the Free Cash account. The one capital request turned down by the Board was the \$115,000 midsized truck for the Highway Department, but that was after Highway Superintendent Loring indicated he could get by without it for another year.

The Board is scheduled to sit down three days hence with the Finance Committee to review the spending items on the warrant,

and hopefully iron out any budget differences that arise between the two groups. And then all of this, of course, is subject to approval by the voters at the Annual Town Meeting starting at 7:00 p.m. on May 7.

Town Administrator Enoch said the Town's general insurance costs will be reduced by \$10,000 in FY '19 largely due to an 8.7 percent drop in the rate being charged by Massachusetts Interlocal Insurance Association, or MIIA, as it is known. Under Town Administrator updates, Ms. Enoch said the Town has received a request from Southern Berkshire Regional School District for a special permit in connection with the replacement of the oversized sign out in front of New Marlborough Central School, for which the Board then set a hearing date of May 21 at 5:30 p.m. □

*Peter Schuyten*

*April 2 report by Joe Poindexter*

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## CONSERVATION COMMISSION

**March 17:** Commission members Freddy Friedman, John Schreiber, Rona Easton, Dave Herrick, and David Hosford were present to address the month's agenda.

First up, the Commission approved last month's minutes with two minor edits.

Next the Commission discussed the email received from Craig Okerstrom-Lang regarding the Notice of Intent (NOI) filed in January to permit a new pool for Molly and Richard Gilmore of 110 Foley Hill Road. Mr. Okerstrom-Lang wrote that he would not be able to attend the meeting, but that his clients had considered relocating the pool outside the jurisdictional area per the advice of the Commission. Mark Stinson of the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) further advised the Commission that an existing culvert associated with the pool project was sub-standard and would need to be addressed. The Commission resolved

to notify Mr. Lang via email that the original NOI could be withdrawn without prejudice. The Commission determined to await further notice from the applicant.

The Commission then reviewed the mail. A Certificate of Compliance for the Shalaby dredging project at 1093 Clayton Mill River Road was received.

Afterwards the Commission adjourned temporarily. Emily Stockman of Stockman Associates arranged to spend thirty minutes advising and teaching the Commission on the details of the wetlands regulations.

The meeting then re-convened to address the Oasis special permit notice. Freddy Friedman recused himself from the discussion. The Commission resolved to draft a letter to the Board of Selectmen clarifying the role of the Conservation Commission in reviewing special permits. □

Martha Bryan



**Pot Luck Buffet:** Nearly eighty people gathered at the New Marlborough Meeting House Gallery on April 7 for the annual potluck supper sponsored by the New Marlborough Cultural Council. As always, the food contributions were plentiful, excellent, and elegant, giving rise to the suggestion of a New Marlborough Cooks pamphlet in the future. Spirited conversations continued throughout the evening. In addition, musical entertainment was provided by singer-songwriter Christa Joy, accompanied by Michael Stephens on dobro.



photos by Larry Burke

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## BROADBAND UPDATE

# CHARTER ENTERS THE FRAY AND MBI SWEETENS THE POT

by Barry R. Shapiro

Just when it seemed that the Town's most likely sources of broadband had come down to two relatively small and untested providers – Matrix Communications and Fiber Connect – Charter Communications, a multi-billion-dollar operation, has poked its rather large head under the tent and indicated that it wants to wire the Town. The Massachusetts Broadband Institute (MBI), the state agency which is dispensing money for this purpose, is enamored with the concept. So enamored, in fact, that they have increased the amount of funds they will make available to the Town, assuming it selects Charter, by \$720,000, raising their contribution from \$1.71 million to \$2.43 million.

This surprising development (Charter had not previously indicated an interest in the Town) came to light at two joint meetings of the Board of Selectmen and the Broadband Committee held just eight days apart in April.

Here's how it all unfolded.

At the April 5 meeting, Anna Lucey, Director of government affairs for Charter, made an impassioned sales pitch for Charter.

"Until 2016, Charter was a cable company in Massachusetts, Vermont, and Connecticut," she said. "Then, it merged with Time Warner Cable and is now in forty-one states with over 260,000 customers in Massachusetts, where it has 1,052 employees. We now are in sixty-eight communities in Massachusetts and, with MBI's support, will soon be in seventy-three. We provide internet, television, and voice packages with a new standard speed of 100 Mbps download and 10 Mbps upload. Our pricing and speeds are the same nationally and we're expecting more speed lifts in the future. We will not have any minimum amount of sign-ups required for New Marlborough and we will undertake to wire at least 96 percent of the Town."

The system Charter is proposing for New Marlborough would be fiber-to-the-home and likely operate off a fiber "backbone." Monthly pricing would be discounted for new subscribers. For television, internet, and phone (the much touted "triple play"), the cost would be \$89.97 in year one, \$109.97 in year two and \$138.97 in year three. For internet only, the cost would be \$44.99 in year one and \$64.99 in year two. Other packages are also available. These charges do not include taxes, governmental fees or a rental charge of \$6.99 for a video receiver. There are no data caps, no modem fees, and no contracts, meaning that customers can terminate service without any fees. Installation fees would be negotiated with the Town. Charter operates its network

under the tradename "Spectrum."

Ms. Lucey seemed to startle the Town representatives when she stated that the cost of building the network would be funded by the Town's grant from MBI (\$1.7 million) with Charter paying two-thirds of the total cost. Selectman Nat Yohalem immediately seized on this.

"If the cost of construction is \$5.1 million, as we've been told, MBI funds \$1.7 million and you pay two thirds, then the Town would not have to pay anything," said Mr. Yohalem, leading Ms. Lucey to backpedal and state that, "we need to study the numbers. We know that the Town has limited resources."

Mr. Yohalem and Richard Long, chairman of the Broadband Committee, then referred to a recently received letter from Charter in which it indicated that it expected the Town to come up with \$1.3 million. Mr. Long then asked how the Town could reconcile that demand with Ms. Lucey's assertion that Charter would pay two-thirds of the cost. Ms. Lucey seemed somewhat surprised by this and repeated that she would "have to study the numbers."

At this point, Peter Larkin, Chairman of MBI, who had been sitting in the audience observing the interaction between Ms. Lucey and the Board, stood up and, with Mr. Yohalem's consent, sat down at the table with the Town's representatives and Ms. Lucey.

Mr. Larkin didn't hide his enthusiasm for Charter. "Charter is a major company with a good price point," Mr. Larkin said. "Charter has a track record, financials, and is operationally sustainable. With the other providers the Town is discussing, the Town will have lots of risk. It is one thing to build a network. It is another to sustain it. With those other providers, MBI won't pay anything toward construction until after you've shown it will work. Charter would be paid upfront."

Larkin then stressed that he was "there to help," and strongly suggested that the Town and MBI sit down and try to find a creative way for the Town to come up with the approximately \$1.3 million which he asserted it would take to get the project done.

"The Town may not need to borrow or raise taxes to fund this," said Larkin. "The state may be able to front this money and have it paid back by the Town, over time, without interest, out of free cash, stabilization funds, or otherwise. The state may also be able to add some additional money to the current MBI grant. We want to avoid a town vote to raise taxes. We are open to having that conversation. We believe in the capabilities of Charter as a cable operator."



Hearing that the State may come up with more money and is willing to negotiate "favorable terms" with the Town to fund the Town's share of the construction cost did not elude Selectman Yohalem, who pressed Mr. Larkin to get the right people in the room to "sit down and negotiate." Larkin agreed, stressing, however, that there "is no free broadband solution." When the suggestion was made that perhaps Charter could come up with additional funds to lessen the burden on the Town, Larkin strongly objected. "Let's not ask Charter to cut their number down. They made an offer. We need to respond. They have done enough."

The meeting ended with the attendees agreeing to meet again quickly, which, in fact, they did. That meeting on April 13 produced a remarkable bit of news: MBI was now willing to add \$720,000 to its grant, which would mean that the Town's cost to bring broadband to its residents through Charter would now be reduced from \$1.44 million (the figure of \$1.3 million previously mentioned was apparently an error) to approximately \$720,000. Sean Cronin, a representative of the Department of Local Services, was on the phone and discussed with the Board creative ways in which the Town could pay this amount without borrowing or burdening its taxpayers. While nothing definitive was agreed upon, the possibility of the State paying the Town's \$720,000 share and the Town repaying it to the State in up to twenty years with

nominal interest was reviewed. The source of funds to be used by the Town for such repayment was also discussed but nothing definitive was agreed to at the meeting.

One thing which was made clear at the meeting is that MBI's additional grant of \$720,000 is only available if the Town decides to go with Charter and would not be available for any other provider.

While the economic playing field now seems to favor a transaction with Charter, much work remains to be done before the Town can make a final decision. 1) The long-delayed RFP needs to be issued. The Broadband Committee had originally planned to issue it by March 7, but some technical complexities requiring the input of counsel slowed things up. Mr. Yohalem has indicated that he hopes that it will be issued by the end of April. 2) Responses to the RFP need to be reviewed and vetted (hopefully within two or three weeks after the RFP response date). 3) Charter needs to clarify questions about its terms of service. Charter is not required to respond to the RFP, since cable companies are exempt from such process, but Mr. Yohalem and Mr. Long both noted that they expect that Charter would answer many of the questions in the RFP even if it did not formally respond to it. 4) The Broadband Committee needs to compare the available options. 5) An informational meeting for the Town's residents needs to be held at which the options are presented and questions answered. 6) The Broadband Committee needs to make a recommendation to the Board of Selectmen. 7) The Board of Selectmen needs to act on the recommendation. And 8), A Town meeting to approve the selection needs to be held, if required.

Mr. Long remains anxious to move this entire process forward and, along with the rest of the Broadband Committee, has pledged to continue their hard work on behalf of the Town. He does not, however, believe that the necessary steps are likely to be completed before mid-summer. "That's the most likely scenario," he said.

Stay tuned. □

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## The Way We Were

### MARILYN DEMPSEY CAMERON

By Joe Poindexter

“When we came out here, I thought we were going to the end of the world. I had nightmares about bears and Indians coming over the wall.”

For Marilyn Dempsey Cameron, the move to Hartsville — all the way from the bustling metropolis of Great Barrington — was traumatic. In 1955, just shy of Marilyn’s eighth birthday, the Dempsey family pulled up stakes and settled into a house they had bought from Hartsville’s Charlie Wyman. The move was precipitated by the chagrin of Marilyn’s father, Matthew Dempsey, over Great Barrington’s failure to join the then-nascent Southern Berkshire School District.

For Marilyn, however, the relocation was a challenge: not only because of the bad dreams — triggered, perhaps, by the bear rug that was left behind in the new house — but also for the loss of her friends in the Hollenbeck Avenue neighborhood of her former home. Then, too, there was the slightly spooky aura of the cemetery just across Hartsville Mill River Road from their new home. As if to confirm that the family had moved to some untamed corner of the planet, they were greeted by the flood of ’55, in which hurricane-driven rains breached a dam on the Konkapot River, upstream of Hartsville. (Though the Dempseys’ new home, built three feet above grade, was spared, most houses in the village were flooded.)

But these ominous signs were swept away by two of Hartsville’s assets: large families and plenty of open space. The former provided a whole new set of companions for the six Dempsey kids, the latter, a chance to translate a childhood fascination into a reality. As youngsters, Marilyn and her siblings liked to make believe they were on horseback. “We were galloping around everywhere, pretending we were riding horses,” she says. As it happened, their new home came with the real thing, a palomino, named Blaze. Marilyn rode Blaze everywhere, including to New Marlborough Central on the occasional half-day of school.

Blaze was a favorite of the neighborhood — “He was everybody’s horse,” says Marilyn — but he could also get “barn sour,” a resistance, she explains, to leaving the barn after he had spent too much time there. “Sometimes he would puff up his girth to keep me from



The Dempsey family: back row, from left: brother David, father Matthew, and brother Tom; middle: sister Debbie, mother Myra, and sister Carolyn; front: sister Evelyn, and Marilyn

cinching up the saddle,” which once resulted in Marilyn falling off when a loose saddle slipped sideways. Blaze was smart in other ways. He once, with his nose, pushed back the bar that secured the barn door, walked under the Konkapot River bridge, and helped himself to the vegetables in Harold Crine’s garden.

Riding horses was just one aspect of a newfound independence. “We had the freedom to go anywhere, walk, ride bikes, ride horses. We would walk to the package store [an establishment just north of the village that became a small general store before closing altogether], which sold candy bars,” says Marilyn. She recalls casting votes for “Miss Rheingold,” in the beer ad campaign, even though they



Marilyn at age 10



Blaze, the neighborhood horse



were nowhere near old enough to purchase the beer itself. Then, too, the Dempsey children learned driving skills long before they were eligible for a license, by steering the car while sitting in their Dad's lap.

Marilyn went to Mount Everett High School, where she was a cheerleader for the football and basketball teams. She got to wear a Balenciaga gown as Lydia in a high-school production of *Pride and Prejudice*. During summers, she ushered at Tanglewood (in an evening gown) and baby-sat for the summer people. ("Those New York kids showed us dance steps we'd never seen before," she says.) All pretty much typical teen behavior, but she also excelled as an artist and was one of two students chosen to take Saturday classes at the Boston Museum of Fine Arts. After graduating, she went to study art at Boston University but stayed just a year — "It was a huge party school" — and returned to take jobs in and around New Marlborough.

Not for long, however. At age 21 Marilyn was off on a career that would take her to New York, Paris, Los Angeles, and dozens of places in between. First, though, she had to endure a literally crushing setback. She was on her way to a rehearsal of a new playwright's work, when, at the side of her car to fix a flat tire, she was sideswiped by a passing motorist. She suffered a broken back, hip, pelvis, tibia, fibula, and both knees. Six months after the surgery (it occurred on Saint Patrick's Day, and the anesthesiologist said he would help her celebrate by putting a little alcohol in her IV), she was back on her feet. "I wouldn't have wished it on anyone, but an experience like this gives you a lot of strength," she says.

Shortly thereafter, Marilyn met Wilhelmina Cooper, who invited her to join Wilhelmina Models, a New York



Marilyn Dempsey Cameron, in a quiet moment in her Hartsville home

photo by Joe Poindexter

City agency with an international clientele. "Modeling opened up the world," she says, but once again, she engaged it on her own terms. She found the dress code of Manhattan's Eastside, where she shared an apartment with two flight attendants a bit rigid — "You had to put on lipstick just to go down to the laundry," so she moved to a place of her own on the Westside. In 1970, Wilhelmina sent Marilyn to Paris for a three-week gig that she parlayed into a stay of fifteen months, including a week in Germany. "The French fashion houses liked American models," she says. "They showed up on time and took the job seriously. French girls didn't consider modeling a reputable career."

Marilyn remained in New York City for eight years: "I liked modeling, but I didn't need it." At the urging of Elinor Kilgalen (sister of game-show panelist Dorothy Kilgalen), she went to Los Angeles to look into working at Universal Studios. That didn't pan out, but she did meet future husband, movie maker William Cameron, with whom she had a son, Scott. (They have since divorced.)

In 1987, Marilyn returned to Hartsville and now resides just a stone's throw from the old family home. She has reignited her artistic talent and, after working for four years for Lenox architect David Rothstein, established her own practice, concentrating on residential design. And she has revisited her past in one more way: Eighteen years ago, she reconnected with fellow Mount Everett High Schooler William Wilcox, who lives in Alford. "I had a crush on him," she says. They have been together ever since. □

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## NEIGHBORS



We learned of the death of **Reverend Joseph Bishop** on March 12, too late to do a proper tribute for the April issue. Several of his friends share their remembrances below.

**Robert Olsen** met Joe Bishop in 2009, first at the Southfield Store, and later at the Christmas Eve service in Southfield, which Joe conducted. Their friendship grew: "I had not been aware that Joe liked to spend a week or so every summer visiting with his old friends in New Marlborough. Each summer thereafter, Joe and I would spend time together getting to know each other. He was more interested in learning about me than in letting me

learn about him. Nevertheless, I managed to learn that here was an old man of the clergy who never stopped learning, learning about people, life, love, and God. He read *The New York Times* every day and mourned, fretted, and prayed over all that was happening in the world. His Bible and Book of Common Prayer were always open and by his side. I learned that his idea of God was not in a box but was forever expanding, just like the universe. His theology knocked down the walls of mine, which were aching to be brought down, but needed permission from some higher authority."

**Silvia Eggenberger** and **Paul Hess** fondly remember Joe as a neighbor: "Joe, like so many others, was introduced to this area and to my parents, Martha and Henry Eggenberger, through his connection with Charles and Margrit Suter of Hayes Hill. We shared an appreciation for wine, walking, and laughter. Paul (whom Joe fondly referred to as Paulus) also met Joe when he was working on the Suter property. They quickly became friends, and soon Paul started clearing the land on which Joe would build his home.

"Joe would offer you the shirt off his back or the Pathfinder in his garage (literally). Paul and I were setting out for our very first vacation together nearly seventeen years ago when car problems threatened to ruin our plans. Joe would not hear of it and said we should take his wife's car and have a wonderful time. And we did."

**Jeanine and Herb Coyne:** The Coynes had known Jane and Joe Bishop for some fifteen years when the Bishops lived on Hayes Hill Road. They would frequently get together for dinners. "He enjoyed my cooking," says Jeanine. "He loved good food and good wine."

"We discussed religion and ethics; he was not particularly orthodox," says Herb, who once invited Joe to meet the faculty of the Harvard Divinity School, where Herb had spent a year as a graduate student. In recent years they visited Joe in Westerly, Rhode Island, where he had gone to live with a son, and in return lent him an apartment in their Southfield village house when Joe spent summer weeks in New Marlborough. "He was a lovely, lovely person," says Jeanine.

**Pam and Dick Stebbins**, of New Marlborough, reflect on Joe's relationship with their family, and with many other families as well: "We always thought Joe Bishop was our personal family pastor until we went to his Memorial Service at the Southfield Church on April 7. Everyone there thought he was their personal family pastor! He married our daughter, baptized our three grandchildren, and took a lifelong interest in our family. His way of focusing on whomever he was talking to made that person feel very special. He was full of love for others and was loved in return by the many people whose lives he touched. Although a serious person, Joe had a wonderful sense of humor and was fun to be with. We celebrated Kentucky Derby Day with him one year, and I still remember his spirited support of one of the contenders who, unfortunately, lost.

Joe Bishop was a very special person and our family will miss him greatly.

**Minkie and Bruno Quinson**, former long-time Southfield residents, offer this tribute: "Joe Bishop came into our lives when he served in the Episcopal Church in Rye, New York, in the 1970s. He was well-known in town because of his ecumenical stance. He was doing a lot with local youth, and our older sons have happy memories of working on projects with him. One of these was a production of *Noah's Flood*, and Joe was suitably cast as God. On a sadder note, he officiated at the funeral of Bruno's son Marc, who died of a brain tumor when he was just thirteen. Our connection with Joe continued when he married us in New York City in 1980. We were surprised and delighted when we bought our home in Southfield to discover that once again our lives would connect with Joe Bishop. Our friendship continued over the years in New Marlborough and we will be buried adjacent to him in the cemetery on Branch Road. Life without Joe will not be the same."



*Joseph Bishop*



**Christopher Marc Boults**, of Southfield, passed away on April 5 while out hiking in the village. He was fifty-seven years old, and had lived in New Marlborough for almost twenty-five years with his wife and son. Chris and his wife, **Janice Stiles Boults**, would have celebrated their twenty-ninth wedding anniversary next October. His thirty-one-year old son, **Marc Boults**, is now living in Tampa, Florida.

Janice wrote movingly about her husband: "Chris was proud of his position as an EMT and serving his community. He was a member of the New Marlborough Fire & Rescue, as well as having worked several years for the Southern Berkshire Volunteer Ambulance Squad in Great Barrington. When he had to leave this position due to illness, he was so saddened, because he wanted so much to help.

"Chris lived life large, rarely backing down; he loved and embraced life, accepting every challenge that came his way. A strong, and at times a stubborn personality, Chris would 'tell it like it is,' never mincing words. He loved people...and always had a kind word for everyone he encountered.

"Chris was a hero who courageously battled two cancers and a heart attack in the last three years, never giving up hope. Walking and hiking became his passion, and on April 5 he went for his final hike. He was happy, visiting friends along the way and taking pictures. Chris's heart gave out while he was doing what he loved, and he quickly passed away with his wife at his side."

**Cassie Keeley**, of Foley Hill Road, offers a story that illustrates Chris's concern for the safety and well-being of others: "Chris Boults was our neighbor. He and his wife, Janice, are kind, quiet, helpful people who live at the end of our street. But it wasn't until Chris became ill a few years ago that I began to realize exactly who Chris Boults was. If I only had one word to use to describe this man, I would tell you he was a protector.

"Through his illness, he was around more, and my family got to know him better. He was even more able to demonstrate what I think was his life's purpose: to protect his family, friends, neighbors, and strangers.

"Chris knew every car that drove down our road, who was driving, and what time it was. One day, I took my donkey, Bluebell, down to the end of the road to meet the school bus and Delanie, my daughter. Chris came out to say "Hi" to Bluebell and me. He kept insisting I bring Blue into his driveway. I was confused and amused. "Chris, it's okay. No cars will come. If they do, Bluebell and I will move." (There are three houses on our mile-long dirt road.) He strongly insisted. When I inquired about his persistence, he explained that a certain delivery truck would be coming, and the driver drove too fast. So I gave in, thinking to myself that I get my daughter almost every school day, and I had not once seen this truck speeding through. Not two minutes had passed when said truck flew up Canaan Valley Road, and without applying brakes, yanked the wheel to the left, fishtailing onto Foley Hill Road. The driver of the truck then stomped on the gas, passing right over the spot Blue and I had previously been occupying. My donkey is an emotionally-scarred rescue donkey, who certainly would have fled at best, or worse, been run over, had we still been in the road.

"Foley Hill will never be the same without him."

**Bobby Litchfield**, of Southfield remembers his friend: "Chris Boults was a dear friend of mine who was always ready to lend a cheerful hand. Whatever challenges Chris faced, he did so with dignity and grace, and never complained. I am so lucky to have called him my friend, and my life was enriched by his presence. He will be missed until next we meet."

**Ed Harvey**, of Mill River, was even more succinct: "I am not really sure what to write at the moment. He was a dear friend and a damn good EMT. □

*compiled by Barbara Lowman: deeuell@yahoo.com*



*Chris Boults*

## Thank You to Our Contributors

Maurice & Linda Brazie; Abbe & Peter Steinglass; Anita E. Matthews;  
Alexander & Julia Ginzburg; and Ramona Veretto



## OUR WILDLIFE NEIGHBORS



Photos by Larry Barke



As winter grudgingly gives way to spring, four photographs taken during the past several months capture the ephemeral passage of a few of our wildlife neighbors. Clockwise, from top left: In late January, a male red fox left these tracks as he marked out his territory for the approaching mating season. In March, as snow persisted, eight-foot-long swoosh marks in the snow reveal the joyful signature of an otter. In early April, the newly-thawed surface of a farm pond erupts, just a split-second after three hooded mergansers took flight. And then in late April, the tiny tracks of a junco intertwine with the formidable footprints of a bear that crossed a driveway to sample the contents of a birdfeeder.



## Upcoming: Events Calendar for May and June

**May 7: Annual Town Meeting**, Town Hall, 7:00 p.m. This is the way democracy works in small New England towns; let your voice be heard

**May 11: Council on Aging Spring Luncheon**, Southfield Church Hall, begins at noon, with a special presentation on student robotics

**May 12: White Elephant Collection** for Burritt Day, at the Rooney House (opposite The Farm New Marlborough) on New Marlborough Southfield Rd., 10:00 a.m. to noon

**May 14: Annual Town Election**, noon to 7:00 p.m., downstairs in the Town Hall

**May 27: Through Her Lens: A Retrospective of Photographs by Virginia Joffe**, 2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. at the New Marlborough Meeting House Gallery. Join her family in celebrating the life of Virginia "Dinny" Joffe, a longtime resident of Mill River, at this retrospective exhibit of her photographs. Refreshments served. Select photos available for purchase. Proceeds will benefit the New Marlborough Land Trust.

**May 28: The Memorial Day Parade**, Main Street, Mill River, 9:00 a.m.

**June 1: New England's Stone Walls**, how and why our meadows came to be laced with perimeters of stone, a First Friday program presented by master wall builder Kevin Gardner and sponsored by the New Marlborough Historical Society; 7:30 p.m. at the New Marlborough Meeting House Gallery, free and open to the public, wine and cheese to follow the program

**June 9: White Elephant Collection** for Burritt Day, at the Rooney House (opposite The Farm New Marlborough) on New Marlborough Southfield Rd., 10:00 a.m. to noon

**June 22: Small Works**, the season's opening exhibit at the Meeting House Gallery, a juried art show of paintings of limited size; opening 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. with wine and hor d'oeuvres, on view 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays until July 22

## FIRST FRIDAYS

A new summer is on its way (we think), and so, too, is a new season of New Marlborough Historical Society First Friday programs, each occurring on the first Fridays of June, July, August, and September. The programs, held in the Meeting House Gallery, located in the center of New Marlborough village on Route 57, begin at 7:30 p.m., with wine and cheese and an opportunity to ask follow-up questions of the speaker following the program. All programs are free and open to the public.

**June 1: Discovering New England Stone Walls**, a talk by master wall builder Kevin Gardner.

**July 6: Industry in Berkshire County**, author and historian John S. Dickson, tells us how we harnessed water power and human ingenuity to put Berkshire County to work.

**August 3: Hartsville**, New Marlborough's quiet village wasn't always so quiet, a talk by Hartsville historians Claudette Callahan and Hal Crine.

**September 7: Colonial Epidemics and How the Medics Responded**, a talk by pediatrician and hospital administrator Dr. John Schreiber.

And mark your calendars for the Historical Society's cemetery restoration days: August 11 and September 15, 10:00 a.m. to noon at the historic New Marlborough Village Cemetery, with a light picnic to follow. □

*Joe Poindexter*



## YOUR TURN

NM5VN has established a place for our readers' stories. We encourage you to share your experiences, incidents, or thoughts through this space. Reviewing the rules:

*Up to 1,000 words, but short and succinct is best; no politics; points of view are welcome but civility is mandatory; editors reserve the right to accept, reject, and edit.*

*Send your story to Joe Poindexter at [joepoindexter@earthlink.net](mailto:joepoindexter@earthlink.net)*

# A Personal Journey

By Barry R. Shapiro

I took a very long trip recently. It covered parts of three continents and I think you should consider doing the same thing. I should warn you, however, that my trip spanned over 150 years. Yours may be longer.

Some background.

My dad passed away in 2014 at age 96, my mom in 2016 at age 97, the last of her generation to depart. With both of my parents gone, it was quite obvious that unless I wrote down their story, and the story of their parents and grandparents, the essence of their lives was going to disappear and they would at best exist to future generations only as "names." There is an undeniable geometrical regression in the amount of information that each generation has about those that preceded it; my children know less about their ancestors than I do; my grandchildren know even less.

I was determined not to let the memory of our ancestors disappear. But, like so many other things, I kept putting the project off (inertia and procrastination are pretty powerful). I knew it was going to be a long journey.

Finally, I forced myself to sit down at the computer and start typing. The simple introduction, "Hello, my dear descendants," was enough to break the logjam and off I went to write what turned out to be a 150-page letter to my descendants.

I started to gather information by talking with my brother, some of my cousins and collecting as much information about my father's line as possible (I made the conscious decision to focus there, leaving my mother's line for a future project). Internet-based resources, such as Ancestry.com, were helpful and the remarkable number of documents that can be found (such as my grandfather's World War I registration card and citizenship application) is startling.

One thing led to another. A home address found in a census form led to information about the family's then-neighborhood. Information on a marriage license indicated where my grandfather worked. Photographs were found in basement boxes, on the internet, or even from the New York City Department of Finance, which took photographs of every house in New York in 1940 and now has them available to order. (That's how I found a picture of my grandmother's house in Brownsville, Brooklyn, with the family-owned luncheonette in front and, incredibly, my grandmother standing in the store window.)

Family stories of daily life in Poland emerged in discussions with relatives. One question begat another. Who emigrated to the United States and when did they do so? How did a



branch of the family wind up in Mexico? Aunt Rivke was apparently not allowed into the States (something about her political views and perhaps something about gun-running; she was quite a colorful character and became friends with Diego Rivera, Frida Kahlo and Trotsky). Who stayed behind and perished in the Holocaust? Who escaped to fight the Nazis, survived and then moved to Israel or the United States? Who spent time in a gulag in Siberia or a jail in Poland? When did my father go overseas in the Second World War and where was he stationed?

Many of these stories required detective work, piecing together what happened to my ancestors and where the extended family may be today. Some stories ended happily. Some, sadly, did not.

Months of effort went into the project, writing, editing, finding photographs (my father's father was one of nine children; I managed to find photographs of seven of the nine), writing and editing a family tree, and reading over my father's letters written during the Second World War, including a fascinating letter he wrote in newly liberated Paris on January 1, 1945, a stunning evocation of a day in the life of a GI. Remarkable discoveries were made, including a photograph of the 19th century family home in Poland that still, incredibly, stands.

And then, at last, the journey was over. It was an exhausting and highly emotional voyage during which I got to know my ancestors far better than I had ever done before. I don't think it overstates it to say that what I had done was to resurrect my forbears and preserve their names, faces, and memories and then add my own story (far less dramatic than most of my ancestors') to the family narrative.

Every journey has a final step, of course, and mine was to publish the book so that a hard copy could be given to each child, grandchild, sibling, and cousin who would like to know their "roots." To get this done professionally and to give it the care it needed was beyond my skill set.

Happily however, Diane Barth, a gifted graphic designer who also does a fantastic job of laying out the NM5VN each month, agreed to work with me to design the book, assisting in the most professional and thorough manner with everything from font selection, layout, insertion of photographs, cover design, and the like. I could not have done this without her help and unflagging good spirits.

So, consider taking the first step on your own version of the journey I just finished. It may be a long trip and parts may well be quite emotional. In the end, however, you will be giving an invaluable gift to your descendants, most of whom you will never meet, but all of whom will be indebted to you for introducing them to their ancestors.

Get started.





# THE LOG

## Police Department (selected entries)

- Mar. 1 12:46 p.m. A Rhoades and Bailey Road resident reports a web-based scam.
- Mar. 2 2:46 p.m. A Hayes Hill Road resident provides the phone number from which she received an IRS scam.
- 4:58 p.m. National Grid notified of loss of power in the entire village of Southfield.
- Mar. 3 12:41 p.m. Alerted to possible violence at a Mill River residence, officer finds that one of the parties to the dispute has vacated the premises by the time of his arrival.
- 9:24 p.m. A Canaan Valley Road resident reports two people arguing loudly in front of their residence.
- 9:42 p.m. A Southfield resident requests assistance with a juvenile's behavior, which is causing safety issues.
- Mar. 7 1:33 a.m. Massachusetts State Police called to assist Clayton resident concerned about her teenage daughter, who has not returned home since leaving at 9:45 p.m. the previous evening.
- 6:41 p.m. Officer assists a motorist in changing a flat tire on Route 57
- Mar. 8 1:23 a.m. Mini van driver, stuck on the as-yet unplowed Route 57 at its junction with Route 183, told to contact a tow-truck operator to remove a potential traffic hazard.
- 1:43 p.m. A Canaan resident, who has driven off Norfolk Road, is arrested for operating under the influence, after a passing motorist calls in the incident.
- 8:59 p.m. A driver, uncooperative after he is stopped on Route 57, is arrested for operating under the influence.
- Mar. 9 1:33 p.m. An environmental protection officer is notified after a caller alerts the Department to a number of deer carcasses dumped into a swamp off Cross Road to Canaan Valley Road.
- Mar. 10 12:56 p.m. Tree down on Brewer Hill Road.
- 2:24 p.m. New Marlborough village resident reports a suspicious pick-up truck parked at the foot of his driveway.
- Mar. 13 8:16 a.m. A caller reports a fight taking place in his Clayton residence.
- Mar. 14 7:19 a.m. Driver stuck in a snow bank off New Marlborough Southfield Road calls for assistance.
- 8:20 a.m. Driver collides with a utility pole on County Road at its intersection with Corser Hill Road.
- Mar. 15 9:29 a.m. Car stuck in the snow on Mill River Southfield Road.
- Mar. 16 3:00 p.m. Caller reports discovering dead deer dumped off Cross Road to Canaan Valley Road.
- 7:41 p.m. An officer detains a trespasser who has assaulted a Southfield village resident.
- Mar. 17 10:00 a.m. A caller reports that eggs were thrown at his Clayton residence and vehicles parked there.
- Mar. 21 9:47 a.m. A caller reports that his daughter struck a deer in an auto accident near their Norfolk Road residence.
- 4:27 p.m. An officer, investigating a report of a "pile of intestines" dumped near Hartsville New Marlborough Road, determines they are those of a goat.
- Mar. 23 4:40 a.m. A disabled vehicle is towed from County Road.
- Mar. 28 7:59 p.m. Investigating a report of an unrecognized van parked on Arroyo Way, a private road, an officer determines it belongs to a Great Barrington electrician.
- Mar. 29 1:34 a.m. State police are called in when a Hartsville resident reports a family member having a mental-health emergency.
- Mar. 30 8:36 p.m. A patrol car reverses direction and chases a vehicle doing 54 mph in a 35 mph zone northbound along the mile-long cornfield on Clayton Mill River Road and then loses contact as the driver sped out of sight on Brewer Hill Road.

During the first quarter of 2018, the Department issued ninety-four vehicular citations and warnings and handled eight open investigations and twelve arrests/criminal complaints.

*Graham Frank, Chief of Police*



## Fire and Rescue

Mar. 6	2:15 p.m.	Hartsville New Marlborough Road Medical Call	Mar. 18	2:09 p.m.	Leffingwell Road CO Alarm
Mar. 7	9:32 a.m.	Mutual Aid to Great Barrington Medical Call	Mar. 22	11:51 p.m.	Mill River Great Barrington Road Medical Call
Mar. 9	1:00 p.m.	Juniper Hill Road CO Alarm	Mar. 23	4:17 p.m.	Hartsville New Marlborough Road Medical Call
Mar. 9	3:49 p.m.	Rhodes and Bailey Road Medical Call	Mar. 26	10:29 a.m.	Mill River Great Barrington Road Medical Call
Mar. 15	7:56 p.m.	Stratford Road Fire Alarm			
Mar. 15	6:00 p.m.	Hartsville New Marlborough Road Medical Call			

*Fire Company President David Smith*



## LAND TRUST NEWS

The New Marlborough Land Trust's Red Hot Blues Bash on April 14 at Gedney Farm was a welcome extravaganza for the New Marlborough community. Guests were treated to live music by the Colby Band and Bev Rohlehr, Chef Rob's preparation of Tom Brazie's pasture-raised chicken and Jan Johnson's exquisite greens, and the Land Trust's unique silent auction.

Three unsung town heroes – Pam Gillette, Debra Herman, and Alvin Stalker – each got a standing ovation for their contribution to what makes New Marlborough an exceptional place to live.

The silent auctions were buzzing with “only in New Marlborough” experiences donated by community members sharing what they love to do with a lucky winner. Jan Johnson's and Megan Moore's donation of an elegant farm-to-table dinner party of one's design claimed the highest bid among the sixteen adventure auction packages.

Nine local businesses generously supported the event – Gedney Farm as presenting sponsor, John Field Tree Service, Berkshire Property Agents, and The Center for Motivation & Change: Berkshires, each as grand sponsors, and Berkshire Mountain Spring Water, Mike White Contractors, Reiner White and Sons, David Cicchetti Creative Design and Direction, and Pamela Hardcastle Design as business sponsors.

The celebration was welcome fresh air, a time to dance with neighbors, chat with other neighbors, and chase away the weight of winter, as 260 guests rocked Gedney Farm. It was a memorable Saturday night in our town. □

*Martha Bryan*

*Bev Rohlehr and the Colby Band rocked the house with a combination of hard-driving blues and upbeat jazz standards. One of the honorees of the evening was Maggie's List founder Debra Herman, who received a huge round of applause as she stood to receive her award. Emcee of the evening, New Marlborough Land Trust President Ian Devine teamed up with Executive Director Martha Bryan (both standing back to camera) to welcome the many guests at this year's highly successful Red Hot Blues Bash.*



*photos by Larry Burke*



## WANTED: WHITE ELEPHANTS

Once again the New Marlborough Cultural Council is collecting items for the annual white elephant sale on Elihu Burritt Day, August 18. It's time to gather strength to plumb the depths of your cellar, attic, garage, or scary closet in search of treasures – things that you no longer need or want, but might be just perfect for someone else. Please, no clothing, obsolete electronics, skis, or large pieces of furniture! Also, we are no longer accepting dinner sets of china, curtains or rods, old stuffed animals, or broken toys. All items must be clean and in good working order. Please note that the Council members at the collection site have the discretion to refuse a contribution if these conditions aren't met.

Again this year, thanks to the New Marlborough Land Trust, items will be collected at Rooney House, across from The Farm New Marlborough (the campus of the former Kolburne School), located on the east side

of the New Marlborough Southfield Road. The collection will begin on Saturday, May 12, from 10:00 a.m. until noon. Subsequent collection dates will be June 9, July 14, August 4, and August 11. It is imperative that the collection times be respected; otherwise, your contributions will be open to the weather. If these dates or times are inconvenient, Council members will be happy to pick up donations. Please call Barbara Lowman at 229-2369 or Nancy Barbe at 229-2526.

In addition, the Council will conduct a silent auction at Burritt Day. If you have an item that is unique or of greater value than usual for a white elephant sale, please consider donating it to the silent auction. This is a good way to ensure that the item draws the greatest value. All proceeds from the white elephant sale and silent auction go to support grants for programs in the arts and sciences for New Marlborough children and adults. □

Barbara Lowman

## SIGNAGE ON TOWN PROPERTY (as revised July 17, 2017)

The purpose of this policy is to set forth the conditions upon which signs can be erected on Town property:

1. Tag/estate signs, primarily for weekends, will be permitted. These signs can be put up a week prior to the sale but must be removed within 48 hours of the sale.
2. Other signs would require the consent of the Board of Selectmen.
3. Town Elections — Signs may be erected two weeks prior to the election and must be removed five days after the election.
4. Any other signs erected without the permission of the Board will be removed by the Police Department. If possible, those organizations/people will be advised their signs have been removed and can be picked up at Town Hall. □

# Barnbrook

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photo by Ed Harvey

**Stopping in Town:** Monday, April 16 - Patriots' Day - found New Marlborough's emergency personnel, along with multiple crews from NationalGrid and Verizon, hard at work in daunting conditions from dawn to dusk all over town. High winds and heavy sleet and rain brought down trees, and numerous roads were closed for hours, including Route 57 and the Norfolk Road in Southfield (seen in this photograph, just above the bridge at the northern end of the road). Power was out to large sections of New Marlborough and neighboring towns. Electricity was not fully restored in the Lake Buel area until the following day.



## THE SCHOOL REPORT

### Budget Details, and a Clarification

The proposed Southern Berkshire Regional School District's overall FY19 budget, including operating and capital, is increasing by \$323,298, or 1.98 percent, from FY18. The operating budget is seeing a 3.29 percent increase, while the capital budget is decreasing by 23 percent. According to Business Manager Christine Regan, the increase in the operating budget is due mainly to a decrease from FY18 in available funds from school choice and other sources that have been used annually. The increase of 15.9 percent for teachers' salaries mentioned in the April issue of the NM5VN is not actually an increase to their salaries – they are staying essentially the same – but is an appropriation needed to offset the loss of funding to that budget line through those decreases in funds that were formally available.

The share that New Marlborough pays, per the five-town regional agreement, is based on the minimum required contribution that is established by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Four main factors that impact this figure are: 1) the number of students residing in New Marlborough who are being educated in public schools; 2) New Marlborough's property wealth (based on the town's equalized valuation of its properties); 3) New Marlborough's income wealth (based on the total personal income reported to the Department of Revenue by New Marlborough residents); and 4) how far or close the calculated preliminary minimum required contribution is to the state's "target" contribution for New Marlborough. New Marlborough's assessment share had been increasing in recent years, from 20.5 percent in FY14 to 22.8 percent in FY18. But for the coming FY19 school year, that share has decreased to just under 21 percent. Based on the state's minimum required contribution formula, New Marlborough's share of the school's proposed budget for FY19 is a decrease of 5.54 percent. A committee is being established for town officials from the five member towns to examine the

regional agreement in an effort to create an assessment method that will have fewer peaks and valleys from year to year.

### Sixth Grade Not Moving Up to Middle School...Yet

In December, Superintendent Beth Regulbuto and Curriculum Director Kerry Burke met with the Curriculum Committee, a sub-committee of the school committee, to raise the question of whether the sixth grade should in future be part of the middle school instead of the elementary school. The idea was of interest to the committee, and a Middle School Task Force (MSTF) consisting of teachers, administrators, and community members was formed as a way to explore such a change. To keep the process transparent and open to the public, meetings of the task force and meeting minutes are posted on the district website.

The first meeting on February 13 laid out the educational, social, and emotional needs of today's eleven- and twelve-year-olds. At the March 1 meeting, attendees worked in small groups to identify the challenges of making the move. There were a lot of questions about the timing, curriculum changes, staffing needs, and communication with the parents.

At the April 11 meeting, in light of the evidence collected since the March meeting, Superintendent Regulbuto decided to postpone the move of the sixth grade until the start of the 2019-20 school year. The next steps for the MSTF is to work collaboratively with district administrators to ensure time for developing thoughtful, comprehensive, and well-articulated programming for students, with related supports for faculty and staff at the middle level. Those interested in being part of the conversation are encouraged to attend the next meeting on May 2 at 3:15 p.m. in the Mount Everett Library, or leave a comment on the Middle School Task Force web page on the District website, sbrsd.org. □

Jane Burke

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## THE MOUNT EVERETT HIGH SCHOOL MUSICAL WOWS AUDIENCES

The musical *Godspell* was performed at Mount Everett High School on March 22, 23, and 25. The ensemble of fifteen wonderful performers included six outstanding New Marlborough talents: Olivia Marchione, Mickey Masters, Cece Caldwell, Autumn Snyder, Caitlyn Snyder, and Mary Shalaby. Odie Fields was on the tech crew, and five of our adult residents added their considerable creativity – Tom Masters as choreographer, Megan Marchione in charge of sound, Michelle Shalaby and Kenzie Fields making outstanding costumes, and Rob Sanzone anchoring the pit band.

The show received rave reviews. The audiences were thrilled. After one of the performances, Maddie Maggio, a graduate of Mount Everett and now an actor with Shakespeare and Company, was moved to tears by the excellence of the performers. She knew many of them from their younger days, and had directed some of them in the Fall Festival of Shakespeare.

One New Marlborough resident, attending a Mount Everett show for the first time, was astounded by the high level of the show. She wondered how such a tiny school could possibly have such talented and accomplished students. The answer lies in the dedication of a few teachers and community members who were passionate about creating an excellent district wide theater program where children can start acting in third grade.

Choral teacher Nancy Loder began presenting the high school musicals in the 1990's, and Bob Law, who, sadly, passed away last month, worked tirelessly in the early 2000's to add elementary and middle school productions. In 2005, he started Encore, a six-week summer program held at the school. Children ages eight through fourteen were able to mount a production while learning more about dance, voice, improvisation, and technical theater.

A series of inspired and sensitive music and theater professionals, including Ralph Petillo, Courtney English, Travis Daly, Kristen Sparhawk, and Chris Clark, have continued to bring out the best in these young performers. Older kids have encouraged the younger students and helped backstage. Many of the performers in *Godspell* have loved being on stage since they were eight years old. Senior Olivia Marchione, for example, made her first appearance as a puppy in *101 Dalmations* in 2010, then Kaa the Snake in *Jungle Book*, and Jasmine in *Aladdin*. By middle school she was in *Music Man* and *Grease*, and then in high school, *Footloose* and *Into the Woods*. Now, in her final performance as a Mount Everett senior, she feels that her *Godspell* role is her favorite of all. She loved the ensemble nature of the show and the challenges of the music and lyrics. Her solo, which was practically a show-stopper, provided a wonderful capstone to her great list of performances on the Thomas A. Consolati stage. Olivia and her classmates now move on to yet a larger stage in their lives, with experiences and coaching that will serve them well. And, the remarkable talent that was on display by the younger Mount Everett students will continue to bring pleasure and pride in our District and its mentors in the coming years. □

Jane Burke

The musical *Godspell* staged in late March featured an excellent pit orchestra and exuberant performances by the cast of fifteen, with featured solos by Mickey Masters (far left), Olivia Marchione, seen here in a song-and-dance number with Nolan Dupont (left), and Mary Shalaby (below)





## EAGLE FUND NEWS

The Eagle Fund, created in 1998 to make possible exceptional and innovative educational opportunities for Southern Berkshire Regional School District students beyond the District's core curriculum, has awarded \$51,688.12 in grants to the SBRSD community, in partnership with our sister endowment, Janet's Fund, both under the aegis of Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation.

The fund received more than twenty applications and awarded grants to students, teachers and community members in support of new and on-going projects, which will engage students in educational experiences about climate change, solar energy, ecology, fine arts, health, multiculturalism, and robotics. The projects will

enrich and complement the SBRSD curriculum and are exceptional for such a small school district.

The Eagle Fund is an endowment that is funded in part through an annual student-led phonathon each November. The 2017 phoneathon raised more than \$6,500. Supporters include residents and businesses in the five towns that make up the Southern Berkshire Regional School District – Alford, Egremont, Monterey, New Marlborough and Sheffield – as well as from nearby towns that also, send students to the district. Please visit [berkshiretaconic.org](http://berkshiretaconic.org) (search using the keyword 'Eagle') for more information and how to contribute to the Fund. You can also contact Melissa Zdziarski, Eagle Fund Board Chairman, at [mzdzarski@gmail.com](mailto:mzdzarski@gmail.com). □

## MAILBOX



Greetings,

In favoring a moratorium on marijuana-related businesses in New Marlborough, town voters made their wishes clear: they wish to take a closer look at the Town's zoning and decide how to best incorporate and regulate this new industry within the town. I hope that the Town will move quickly to begin this work and will consider ways that other communities have successfully and responsibly incorporated this kind of business into their zoning.

I do not necessarily view my own project and the Town's moratorium vote to be mutually exclusive. Although the moratorium vote does not impact my own pending application for a marijuana cultivation facility in town, it certainly expresses a widespread cautionary position among town residents. I will be proceeding with the Oasis Campus project with this sentiment in mind. I am hopeful that town residents who are interested in contributing to the Oasis Campus discussion will participate productively as public hearings proceed.

After recent hearings on the Oasis Campus project, town planners, residents, and others had many reasonable questions, and I plan to answer these questions more fully as our hearings proceed.

It's my plan to develop a safe, secure, and well-managed growing facility for cultivators who are thoroughly vetted and licensed. I believe that New Marlborough can indeed become a model community for responsible cultivation practices that provide full-time jobs and much needed local revenue.

I look forward to moving ahead, in parallel with the town's bylaw review process.

Thank you.

Joshua Seitz

Oasis Campus LLC



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## NEW ACQUISITIONS AT THE LIBRARY

### Adult Fiction

*Tangerine*, by Christine Mangan  
*Varina*, by Charles Frazier  
*Women in Sunlight*, by Frances Mayes  
*The Friend*, by Sigrid Nunez  
*The Knowledge*, by Martha Grimes  
*Our Little Secret*, by Roz Nay  
*The Ghost Notebooks*, by Ben Dolnick  
*The Italian Teacher*, by Tom Rachman  
*Macbeth*, by Jo Nesbo  
*The Overstory*, by Richard Powers

### Adult Nonfiction

*I'll Be Gone in the Dark: One Woman's Obsessive Search for the Golden State Killer*, by Michelle McNamara  
*In the Shadow of Statues: A White Southerner Confronts History*, by Mitch Landrieu  
*Scratch: Home Cooking for Everyone Made Simple, Fun and Totally Delicious*, by Maria Rodale  
*In the Enemy's House: The Secret Saga of the FBI Agent and the Code Breaker Who Caught the Russian Spies*, by Howard Blum

### Children's Fiction

*The Flying Beaver Brothers*, by Maxwell Eaton III  
*The King of Bees*, by Lester L. Laminack  
*What If...*, by Samantha Berger  
*Owl Diaries*, by Rebecca Elliott  
*Hello Hello*, by Brendan Wenzel  
*The Other Ducks*, by Ellen Yeomans

### Children's Nonfiction

*Frogs Play Cellos and Other Fun Facts*, by Laura Lyn DiSiena  
*Leaf Litter Critters*, by Leslie Bulion

### Books on CD

*The Knowledge*, by Martha Grimes  
*The Last Equation of Isaac Severy*, by Nova Jacobs  
*After Anna*, by Lisa Scottoline  
*The Kremlin Conspiracy*, by Joel C. Rosenberg  
*The Raspberry Danish Murder*, by Joanne Fluke

### DVDs

*All the Money in the World*  
*Florida Project*  
*Greatest Showman*  
*Phantom Thread*  
*The Post*



photo by Joe Pindexter

**The Easter Bunny**, a.k.a. Library Trustee Sally Turner, snuggled into her ride to New Marlborough Central School, where she presided over the annual Easter-egg hunt. On a bright Saturday morning, March 31, about thirty children swarmed the playing field behind the school to discover a trove of (not-too-well) hidden sweets to brighten their Easter festivities.

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### Town Times

**Board of Selectmen:** Every Monday at 6:00 p.m.

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

**Planning Board:** Second and fourth Wednesday at 7:00 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, 9:00 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.

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

**Building Inspector:** Monday 5:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.

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

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

**Post Office: Mill River** (413) 229-8582

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

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

**Southfield** (413) 229-8476

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

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

(The Southfield Post Office lobby is open from 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.)

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

**Tax Collector:** Monday through Friday 8:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

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

**Dog and Animal Control Officer:** John Springstube 413-232-7038

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

**Town Hall:** 229-8116

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

### Transfer Station Hours:

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

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

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

### PERMITS WERE DUE JULY 1

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### Emergency calls:

Police, Fire, Medical

911

### New Marlborough Highway Department

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Hours:

Monday - Friday 7:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

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(413) 229-8165

*We welcome advertisements from businesses owned by New Marlborough residents.*

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

### NM5VN Editorial Team

Larry Burke, issue editor; Diane Barth, designer;

Martha Bryan, Jane Burke, Barbara Lowman, David Lowman,

Joe Poindexter, Jodi Rothe, Peter Schuyten,

Barry Shapiro, Pam Stebbins, Sandra Fusco-Walker

Contributing writers and artists: Ann Getsinger,

Angus Kerr, Mary Richie Smith, Catherine Twing,

Tara White, and Michele Shalaby. Index: Donna Weaver

### New Marlborough 5 Village News

appears monthly,

also online at [www.nm5vn.org](http://www.nm5vn.org)

The next issue will be dated June 2018.

All copy must be submitted no later than May 17.

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

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- **Design+Planning:** Christopher Blair; Since 1986, creative, budget-aware design. Achieve your goals for additions, alterations to an existing home or new construction. (413)528-4960. chris@design-planning.com.
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- **One call does it all!:** Vinyl siding cleaning; pressure washing; deck refinishing; floors refinished; window washing; odd landscape jobs; all odd jobs. David Goewey, (413)229-2787
- **Susan M. Smith:** Attorney At Law; Concentrating in the areas of Estate Planning, Estate Administration, Elder Law, Real Estate and Zoning Matters. ssmithlaw@barringtonlawoffice.com or (413)528-4300
- **Reiner White:** General Contractor; (413)229-8450
- **Ter Mar Triangle Farm:** 106 Sandy Brook Turnpike (Rte 183), Sandisfield; (413)258-2898; fruits and vegetables in season; pork; jam; eggs; honey; sawmill; kiln milling; firewood
- **Woodruff Mountain Landscaping:** Excavation and landscape contracting, all forms of stone work and masonry, and outdoor services, including lawn mowing and yard work. (413)229-2919 woodruffmountain@aol.com

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