



New Marlborough 5 Village News

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A HIDDEN CRIME IN OUR COMMUNITY?

By Ellen Sweet

You have a friend at work. Her family lives in your town. She often comes to work with bruises or her arm in a cast. You suspect that her husband is beating her, but she doesn't want to talk about it. What do you do?

You're a new resident of a rural town. You've heard shouting from your neighbors' house, and one night the neighbors' kids show up at your house crying that their father is threatening their mother and they're afraid he'll hurt her. You call the police but when they arrive, the man appears to have calmed down. Shall they arrest him anyway?

The police in a small town call you one day for help with a woman who has come to them for a restraining order from her abusive husband. You work with troubled women and children, and you help her get the court order. For their safety, you think that she should leave town with her kids, but she wants to stay. Do you insist that she leave?

All three incidents happened in New Marlborough.

All of us know about the horrendous domestic murder/suicide that took place in Sheffield last year. That's right next door to us, but we may assume that, in our own town, that couldn't happen. We've had no major crimes, so all is well. That Sheffield incident was an aberration, a bad memory, maybe even a recurring nightmare if you were a police officer or a firefighter directly involved in responding to it. And yet, in Berkshire County over the past three years, ten women and children have died from domestic homicides. In Berkshire County in 2018, the rate of restraining or harassment orders requested and received was 33 percent higher than the state average. In Southern Berkshire County, more than 100 restraining or harassment orders are taken out each year. The rate of filings has increased 15 percent since 2015.

We can view domestic homicide as the most extreme version of gender violence, and so dismiss it as not relevant to us. But domestic violence is a hidden crime, one that may begin with emotional and psychological threats, control of daily activities, or of personal appearance, or of the family purse strings. It may escalate to physical harm. It may move from abusing the partner to abusing the children. Sometimes, it may even include harming the beloved family pet. Murder is the ultimate control. Although men may also be abused, about 85 percent of victims of domestic violence are women and girls. Every year in the United States, 1,200 abused women are killed.

The Covid-19 crisis only increases the potential for harm, because quarantining can put the victim of an abusive partner at greater risk. Victims who would ordinarily

continued



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Hidden Crime, continued

wait to be by themselves to reach out for help do not have the option when everyone is home together. Their partners may be monitoring the telephone. They may also be weighing the risk of staying at home or getting the virus by going to a shelter. But shelters, hospitals, and police are already overwhelmed. The only recourse for victims of abuse during this time may be to turn to a trusted friend or family member to call a hotline or 911 in an emergency, on their behalf.

New Marlborough Police Chief Graham Frank is in a prime position to observe the problem of domestic violence. A call to 911 is often the first line of response. The dispatcher alerts the closest police as well as the police in a neighboring town if backup is needed, so that the officers can work as a team to help separate the people involved. "We have places we go to pretty regularly," he says. "There's an incident, the couple breaks up, and then they get back together again. Then it gets worse. Sometimes it's a long-term relationship and they want it to work, but it creates a continuous cycle." He adds, "We've gone into some pretty bad calls, but domestic situations are probably the worst, especially when they involve physical or sexual abuse to a child. Those calls are just very emotional." In his experience, these incidents often involve alcohol, and sometimes they involve weapons.

Chief Frank notes that, according to guidelines updated in 2017 to protect the privacy of the people involved, entries in the official police log can no longer be cited as domestic violence but rather simply as assault. A reading of the *5 Village, News Police Log*, which includes only selected entries, would not indicate the full extent of the problem.

Although more research is needed, there seems to have been an increase in domestic violence in the county as a whole. Why? People working directly with children and families have been asking that question, but no one is sure. Patricia Zucco, the school resource officer for the Southern Berkshire Regional School District, is trained as both a police officer and a nurse. She floats between our elementary, middle, and high schools. "No child has ever verbalized domestic violence to me," she said, but without the kids spelling it out, she has seen an increase in anxiety, depression, and sleep disorders. "Behaviors and attendance seem to be an issue especially this year." She thinks the problem may be related to older children taking on parental roles because parents have to work

multiple jobs, or to parents struggling with substance abuse, or to homelessness. (Domestic violence is the third leading cause of homelessness in the United States.) Nan Smith, a New Marlborough resident and a fifth-grade teacher in the Berkshire Hills Regional School District, says that prior to the school closures in March, she and her colleagues had been noticing an increase in children with behavioral problems. "It appears we are seeing more students with emotional issues. There's a lot of trauma, but people don't want to talk about it."



Jennifer Goewey, shelter director at the Elizabeth Freeman Center

Jennifer Goewey, shelter director at the Elizabeth Freeman Center, which is based in Pittsfield, is equally puzzled. "Domestic violence is prevalent in every community," she says. "I'd like to think the increase in the number of restraining orders is because survivors are more aware, but it does feel like there has been an increase in violence." Ms. Goewey notes that domestic violence is all about power and control. "As someone who has lived and worked in very rural parts of the county, including New Marlborough, I know that sexual assault survivors may have very different degrees of resources. No two cases are the same. We do an okay job of recognizing physical abuse, but not so much recognizing psychological abuse, financial control, and privilege." Goewey insists that an essential part of moving forward is education, including training in basic definitions and understanding of different types of domestic violence. In her experience, addiction is not commonly involved, but sometimes the violence is worse when there's alcohol.

Ms. Goewey sits on an eighteen-member steering committee of the Berkshire Domestic and Sexual Violence Task Force, which District Attorney Andrea Harrington created last year in response to the increase in domestic homicides in Berkshire County. The committee includes representatives from local and state government, police, schools, hospitals, and nonprofit organizations working with children and families, among others. Their mandate is to engage communities, large and small, in our county in confronting this problem through conversations, training, and increased resources. More than thirty such discussions have taken place already around a communal reading of *No Visible Bruises*, an award-winning book by Rachel Louise Snyder about domestic homicide. (Snyder spoke at the Colonial Theatre in Pittsfield in February to an audience of more than 500 people.)

Ms. Harrington made gender-based violence a priority of her first year in office, and several initiatives in that area are already underway. She has worked in partnership with the Elizabeth Freeman Center, which operates a hotline, a shelter, and educational and counseling programs on domestic and sexual violence. (The Freeman Center hotline is available twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, at 866-401-2425.) In addition to the task force, Harrington has created the position of a domestic violence coordinator to assist in bringing evidence-based prosecutions to trial. Such prosecutions do not require the victim's willingness to testify. She has also held trainings for law enforcement, including a two-day workshop at Williams College on investigating domestic and sexual violence.

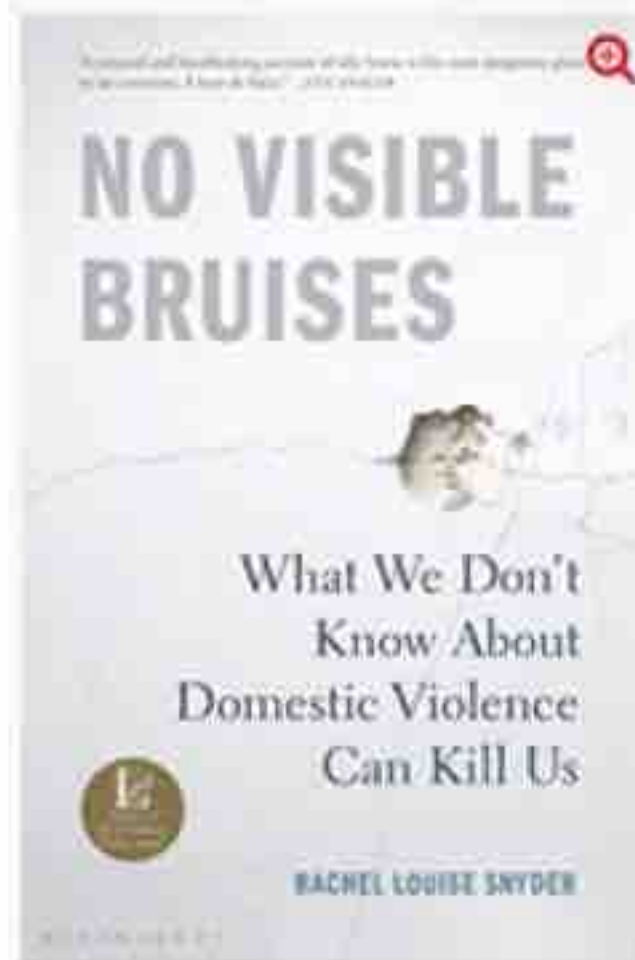
Harrington thinks that economic pressures and the high rate of addiction in our county are possible factors in domestic violence. She emphasizes that talking about the subject so that it isn't taboo allows people who need support to feel they can reach out. Rachel Louise Snyder's book refers to several key indicators that someone is at risk for domestic homicide. Signs of strangulation are particularly serious. Schools, police, first responders, hospitals, even hairdressers are in positions to spot these signs and to recognize that they could be indicators of a problem. So are friends and neighbors.

Ms. Goewey's impression, as she has gone around the county to provide training to law enforcement and other groups, is that the Berkshire community is coming together to do good work. "That gives me tons of hope," she says. Chief Frank's advice is that "if there is any inkling of abuse, address it, because you don't know how significant it is. People always say, I don't want to bother you to report this, but we're here for you to report it. It's not a bother."

A co-worker and friend who you think might be abused by her husband; a police officer who responds to a 911 call involving potential domestic violence; a social worker who is counseling a woman with a protective order. What does each of them do? What do you, a responsible resident of New Marlborough, do if you think you are witnessing domestic violence?

You can begin to learn more about how to detect and respond to this public health crisis by reading *No Visible Bruises*. The newly-formed New Marlborough Women's Collaborative was in the process of organizing a community discussion, based on the book, when the Covid-19 crisis suspended its plans. The Collaborative will resume planning and set a date for the discussion as soon as groups can convene safely. At that time, it will work with the New Marlborough

Town Library and other sources to make sure copies of the book are widely available. We have all seen how selflessly and humanely our township has responded to Covid-19. Our community discussion about domestic violence will be another opportunity for all of us to educate ourselves and make a difference. □




No Visible Bruises, by Rachel Louise Snyder

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Town Business Is Your Business BOARD OF SELECTMEN



March 27: The Board called a special Friday meeting to deal with the question of Town elections, including the caucus, which was to be held Tuesday, March 31. The meeting was convened by conference call at 12:18 p.m. with all three selectmen on the call. But before turning to the main, and basically only agenda item, Chairman Yohalem introduced Cable Advisory Committee Chair Steve Klein to discuss a **proposed improvement to the Wi-Fi signals outside the three public buildings in town, the library, Town Hall, and the fire station.**

As Mr. Klein explained, he was approached last week by concerned resident Marc Trachtenberg of Brewer Hill Road, offering to help the Town strengthen the signals available outside those three buildings. Right now, as Mr. Klein noted, users have to park their cars very close to the buildings in order to get any internet access at all.

“What people have to understand,” he said, “is that while we do have broadband service in those buildings, the service outside the buildings is quite limited both in terms of the signal strength and distance from the buildings.”

That service, he further noted, is being provided to the Town by Crocker Communications from the so-called Middle Mile network, which is jointly owned by the Massachusetts Broadband Institute (MBI) and private company Axia NGNetworks.

The proposal from Trachtenberg, who Mr. Klein described as an entrepreneur with “substantial expertise” in this area, was to **boost the bandwidth coming into those buildings from 5 megabit per second (Mbps), the lowest and least expensive internet service available from Crocker, to 250 Mbps, and to install om-**

nidirectional outside antennas on the three buildings to distribute the signal.

At the library, for example, Mr. Klein explained, boosting the signal there would make internet access available to cars parked anywhere in the Ormsbee parking lot, in front of the Mill River General Store, or even on the far side of the bridge over the Konkapot.

The cost of the five antennas – two for the library, two for Town Hall and one for the fire house, Mr. Klein said, would come to around \$2,400, which Mr. Trachtenberg has offered to donate to the Town, while the increase in the bandwidth would cost the Town about \$4,400 a month. However, Mr. Klein said he’s been in touch with both MBI and Crocker about getting some kind of break on the pricing, but hasn’t heard back yet.

He said, assuming the Board approves the proposal, the installation of the antennas, which would be handled by Highway Superintendent Chuck Loring, could take place this coming Monday, March 30, weather permitting, and that it would only take a couple of days more for the increase in the bandwidth to kick in.

When he’d finished, the Board, without further ado, voted by roll call vote – all votes during conference calls must be by roll call — to approve the higher bandwidth service for a minimum of two months and to recommend to the Finance Committee, of which Mr. Klein happens to be the chair, that the money be taken out of the reserve fund to pay for it.

The Board then got down to the main business at hand, agreeing in short order to **postpone the Town election until June 29 – June 30 being the latest date allowable under the law – and postponed the Town caucus to May 19.** And with that, the meeting



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was adjourned at 12:49 p.m.

March 30: With Town Hall closed, the Board once again met by conference call, with all three members participating. The first order of business was to take further action with regard to the Covid-19 pandemic, including postponing the Annual Town Meeting, putting a continuity of operations, or succession, plan in place and further clarifying Town Hall operations during the state of emergency declared by the Board.

With Town Moderator Barry Shapiro on the call, the Board voted to **postpone the Annual Town Meeting until June 22, which would put it one week ahead of the Town election, as is customary.**

The Board then voted to put a **formal line of succession in place** in the event the Chief Municipal Officer, which in this case is Chairman Yohalem, is unable to serve, with Vice Chair Tara White taking over, followed in turn by third Selectman Richard Long, then Town Administrator Mari Enoch and then finally, if none of them is able to serve, Police Chief Graham Frank. In addition, the Board directed Town department heads to do the same for their departments and to put it all in writing.

As for Town Hall operations, the Board voted to continue to pay Town Hall employees, whether they are working from home or not, for as long as the Town's state of emergency is in effect, but also stipulated there will be no overtime or compensatory time without the prior approval of Town Administrator Mari Enoch. The Board further indicated the same pay policy would apply to the rest of the Town's employees, again with no overtime or comp time without the prior approval of their department heads.

Marc Trachtenberg proposed installing outside antennas on three town buildings that have broadband service, which would greatly enhance the strength of signal and make it more widely available to residents outside those buildings.

Chairman Yohalem reiterated that no more than two employees at a time may work in the downstairs offices at Town Hall, that the recorded message on the main Town Hall phone line provide the hours and telephone numbers of all Town Hall employees, and that a daily schedule be set up for collecting and sorting the mail and that any correspondence sent to either the selectmen or Town Administrator Enoch be scanned and emailed to Ms. Enoch for action.

Finally, noting that real estate tax payments are due by May 1, the Board briefly discussed the idea of extending the deadline for tax payments without penalty, but dropped the idea when it was pointed out that according to state law, the tax collector cannot waive interest fees or penalties for late payment of taxes without a change in the law. *[That did in fact happen several days later when the legislature passed and Governor Baker signed An Act to Address Challenges to Municipalities and State Authorities Resulting from Covid-19, allowing towns among other things to delay property tax due dates to June 1 and waive interest and penalties for late payment.]*

Moving on, Selectman Long updated the Board on the status of the MassWorks Route 57 project, saying Highway Superintendent Loring received word the state Department of Transportation (DOT) was getting involved in the engineering of the \$2 million road rehabilitation plan, raising concerns on Mr. Long's part that involvement by the state could significantly delay the project. However, after looking into it further, including checking with DOT in Boston, Mr. Long determined that what the state will actually be doing is **reviewing hydraulic conditions along the 4.7-mile project route and taking core samples to determine pavement thickness and other subsurface conditions,** which, as he



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pointed out, will be useful information for the engineering plan and could possibly result in savings that could be used to pay for part of the repaving work.

Under Town Administrator updates, Ms. Enoch announced the Umpachene Falls Road bridge has been closed to pedestrian traffic due to structural problems uncovered when the construction work to replace the bridge got underway.

Related to that, Ms. Enoch said the Town has received a second request from bridge contractor, J.H. Maxymillian, to use a portion of Umpachene Falls Park as a temporary staging area for project materials. The company made a similar request last fall, but apparently it was never acted upon. So the Board asked Ms. Enoch to find out from the contractor exactly how large an area would be required and what would be stored there.

In other bridge news Ms. Enoch said that despite the pandemic, **design and right-of-way work for the repair or replacement of three other town bridges is still going forward**, although possibly at a slower pace due to people working from home. The bridges in question are the Norfolk Road, or so-called steel bridge in Southfield, the Lumbert Cross Road bridge, and the Canaan Southfield Road bridge.

And finally, the Board received a request from local realtor and town resident, Dan Alden, to prohibit the holding of open houses and house showings in New Marlborough. But it was the consensus of the Board that it doesn't have the authority to do so, and agreed instead to issue a strong recommendation that realtors refrain from holding such events.

There being no minutes to review, the Board voted to adjourn the meeting at 7:29 p.m.

Peter Schuyten

The Board postponed the Town caucus to May 19, the Annual Town Meeting to June 22, and the Town election to June 29. The first challenge will be to develop safe social distancing procedures for the Town caucus.

April 6: The meeting, attended remotely by all three selectmen, plus Town Administrator Mari Enoch and Board Secretary Sharon Fleck, got underway with Chairman Nat Yohalem **praising the effort to amplify the signal delivery from the three locations in town that receive enhanced, middle-mile broadband service.** "The Town and the Board of Selectmen," he said, "owe a tremendous debt to all involved." He singled out Marc Trachtenberg, Steve Klein, and Mari Enoch

for spearheading the project, in which antennae were placed on the three buildings and in which an agreement was reached with the owners of the network, Crocker Communications and the Massachusetts Broadband Institute, to boost capacity from 5 Mbps to 250 Mbps. The Board then passed a formal resolution of appreciation to the three. After discussing the repercussions of delaying the due dates to June 1 for property taxes and June 30 for excise taxes, the

Board decided to delay a decision until its next meeting, April 13. On another matter, Ms. Enoch noted that restaurants are now permitted to include alcoholic beverages in take-out orders.

Next, Selectman Richard Long, passing along the concerns of Highway Superintendent Chuck Loring, asked **whether the Highway Department should cease operations for the next two weeks.** Mr. Loring has reported that his crew practices social distancing and that he prohibits anyone but the driver from being in a highway truck at one time. He has tools and vehicles sanitized between uses.

The Board suggested that Mr. Loring look into minimizing the possibility of contact by dividing his crew into two shifts — for instance, 6:00 a.m. to noon and noon to 6:00 p.m. — and that **masks should be pro-**



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vided for workers when they are at the highway garage. Mr. Long said that Maureen Krejci of the First Responders and Scott McFarland of the Board of Health have offered protective masks. Ms. Enoch was asked to check with Mr. Loring about these suggestions.

Mr. Yohalem moved on to a **question of the chairmanship of the Board**, which normally passes to another Board member following the Annual Town Election. Since the election this year is being postponed from May 11 to June 29, Mr. Yohalem asked his two colleagues whether they wished him to remain as chairman until after the election or pass the chairmanship on, presumably to Tara White, who is next in line in seniority, in the second week of May when the transition ordinarily would have taken place. Ms. White said she had no problem with Mr. Yohalem continuing as chairman through June, and Richard Long concurred, adding that the question should be readdressed if the election is delayed beyond June 29.

The Board then accepted the bid of All States Asphalt of Sunderland, Massachusetts, of \$147,746 to **pave the southern end of Clayton Mill River Road** from its intersection with Konkapot Road to its terminus at Clayton Four Corners. Although All States was the only bidder, its bid came in at some \$30,000 less than Highway Superintendent Loring estimated the project would cost.

The Board acceded to a request from Maxymillian, Inc., the firm that is rebuilding the Umpachene Falls Road bridge, to use the lawn area between parking area and the river in Umpachene Falls Park for the temporary storage of soil. At the suggestion of Selectman Tara White, Maxymillian will be asked to clear its storage plan with the New Marlborough Conservation Commission.

Minutes of the Board of Selectmen meetings will be changed to describe simply what they decided, and why. A recorded transcript will be maintained.

Mr. Long reported that the **Human Resources study group** had completed job descriptions of the Town's employment positions and was in the process of ranking them in terms of responsibilities. Next, it intends to complete a salary survey, based on what is being paid in about a dozen nearby towns, and to have compensation recommendations ready for incorporation in the FY21 Town budget. Its final project will be to update the human resources manual, so as to be able to put in place a performance evaluation system.

Finally, the Board voted to **dip into the Reserve Fund to pay for the creation of the internet hot-spots** at the library, the Town Hall, and the fire house. The cost to the Town will be roughly \$3,000 per month for April and May, after which the Board will consider extending the service into June.

The vote to adjourn came at 7:20 p.m., eliciting a parting observation from Chairman Yohalem. "One good thing that has developed out of this crisis," he said, "is that we're having one-hour meetings."

April 13: Gathering once again by phone, the Board came to grips with whether or not to **extend the due date for fourth-quarter property and excise tax payments from May 1 to June 1**. While the selectmen were sympathetic to the financial stresses being endured by furloughed workers and half-shuttered businesses, they were also concerned with the Town's cash flow. In response to a question asked by Nat Yohalem, Town Administrator Mari Enoch reported that, as of the meeting date, the Town had a balance of \$943,000. A payment of \$677,000 to the Southern Berkshire Regional School District is due May 15, and the Town will have continuing payroll expenses of about \$22,000 a week and health insurance of \$14,000 a month. On the plus side, Ms. Enoch pointed out, tax revenues will continue to flow into the treasury, even if at a slower rate than in normal times.

Following further discussion on the possibility of short-term borrowing to meet a short-fall (yes) or dipping into the Stabilization Fund (no), Richard Long said he would **support a deferral of penalties and interest payments to June 1**. The other two selectmen concurred and so voted. Similarly, interest and penalties were waived for excise taxes paid by June 29. (However, payment beyond that date would trigger charges back to the original due date.)

Moving on, Tara White reported that traffic was moving smoothly through the Transfer Station, even

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as clients were being shepherded to the various stations one car at a time. The crew, which has received masks from Maureen Krejci of the First Responders, makes sure there is no congregating at the paper and bottle compactor.

A review of the stipend paid selectmen was next on the agenda, but Mr. Yohalem asked that the matter be put aside until a full-scale review of all board and committee stipends could be conducted next year. (The current budgeting process will be fully occupied with Town employee salaries, as guided by recommendations from the on-going human resources study.) The Board then agreed to set next year's stipend at its present level of \$2,850.

The Board was scheduled to meet next on April 20, but because it is Patriots' Day, an official holiday in five states, including Massachusetts, Mr. Yohalem requested that it be postponed to the following day. Ms. White and Mr. Long concurred. Expressing **concern about the logistics of the Town Caucus**, scheduled for May 19 — could the meeting maintain social distancing if it were to take place in the Town Hall parking lot? could caucus votes be cast by mail? — Mr. Yohalem asked that the matter be placed on the next meeting's agenda.

Review of the minutes of five previous meetings was postponed. Mr. Yohalem, anticipating that an entire meeting would have to be devoted to the approval of the backlog, advanced a perhaps radical new approach to their preparation. "We are **spending too much time writing and correcting the minutes**," he said. "I suggest we limit them to **describing simply what we did and why**." This, he went on to say, would eliminate reporting what individual selectmen said and the sometimes circuitous reasoning that led to a conclusion. With the assurance that a **recorded transcript of the**

meeting would be maintained, the selectmen swiftly welcomed this new, more svelte approach to the minutes. "We'll start with this meeting," said Mr. Yohalem.

Following its adjournment, at least one cheer sailed in from the faceless ether of the teleconference as Mr. Yohalem announced its length: just fifty-three minutes.

April 15: The Board called a special meeting (yes, by phone) to entertain a proposal from Marc Trachtenberg, New Marlborough's resident broadband technical expert, on behalf of Glenn Marcus. Mr. Marcus, co-owner of a software development company, is volunteering his know-how to establish a Covid-19 home monitoring platform for Mount Sinai Health Systems of New York City and other hospitals across the United States. **Coordination with those working on the project, arrayed nationwide, is daunting enough, but the problem is greatly exacerbated by the feeble DSL signal that reaches Mr. Marcus's home in Southfield village.**

To address this lack of robust broadband, Mr. Marcus originally won approval from State Senator Adam Hinds to allow him to tap directly into the Middle Mile fiber-optic cable that passes his house on Norfolk Road. Mr. Trachtenberg, however, had a **better, more cost-effective idea: piggy-back off the recently strengthened broadband signal emanating from the fire house.** This, he said, could be accomplished by installing an antenna on the fire house roof that would direct an enhanced broadband signal to Mr. Marcus's residence a few hundred yards to the north.

Needing the selectmen's approval, Mr. Trachtenberg assured the Board that the cost of the installation would be borne by Mr. Marcus and that it would not in any way degrade the delivery of internet to the area surrounding the fire house. The mounting and wiring of the antenna would take about an hour, he said, and would in no way impede traffic in or out of the fire house. In recognition that Mr. Marcus's effort was helping meet a nationwide need, and with the concurrence of Fire Chief Chuck Loring, the Board gave the project its blessing. The motion specified, however that if the Town decided to terminate the fire house as a hotspot and Mr. Marcus wished to continue to receive an enhanced signal, he would have to pick up the tab — about \$1,500 a month. □

Joe Poindexter

The COVID 19 pandemic is necessitating extensive changes in the daily operations of Town Hall and the Highway Department.

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VIEW FROM THE BOARD

Business Unusual

Don't worry. The Town is functioning. It's just functioning in an unusual way. Here is what's happening:

- All boards and committees continue to meet, but to conduct essential business only. Meetings are held by telephone conference calls, which are open to the public.
- Wi-Fi capability has been enhanced in three so-called "Hotspots": outside the library; the Town Hall parking lot; and a portion of the firehouse driveway. You can sit in these areas and receive Wi-Fi signals. It is free, open to all and requires no password. A great deal of appreciation goes to resident Marc Trachtenberg, Cable Advisory Committee Chairman Steve Klein, and Town Administrator Mari Enoch for making this happen.
- The Transfer Station is open, but the "Gift Shop" is closed. Employees will not remove trash from residents' vehicles, and the number of cars allowed on the premises at one time is limited.
- The payment deadline for personal property and real estate taxes has been extended from May 1 to June 1. Interest and penalties for late payment of excise taxes, which were due on or after March 10, have been waived if the tax is paid by June 29.
- Town Hall is closed to the public. Although Town

employees spend a part of each workweek at their desks in Town Hall, they are primarily working from home. They check their mail, email and phone messages daily.

- All Town employees are being paid even if they cannot work due to illness or the need to care for a family member who is ill.
- The Police and Fire Departments, emergency medical services, and the Highway Department continue their normal operations. The library is closed to the public.
- The Town Caucus has been postponed to May 19, the Annual Town Meeting to June 22, and the Town Elections to June 29. These dates may be further extended depending on the state of the Covid-19 crisis.
- The Board has declared a State of Emergency in New Marlborough. This will allow the Town to be eligible for state or federal funds as they become available.

Like many of you, perhaps, I have never in my life spent so much time on the phone. It is strange to be wearing gloves and a facemask and standing far apart when talking to Town employees. It is unusual, but it is enabling us to function and provide the services you rely on and to which you are entitled. Stay healthy! □

Nat Yohalem

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NOTICE TO NEW MARLBOROUGH TAXPAYERS

On Monday, April 13, 2020, the New Marlborough Board of Selectmen voted the following provisions as allowed by Sections 10 and 11 of Chapter 53 of the Acts of 2020 recently signed by Governor Charles Baker:

- 1) The due date for all FY 2020 fourth quarter Real Estate and Personal Property taxes has been extended from May 1 to June 1, 2020. Payments received in the Tax Collector's office on or before June 1 will be considered on time. Payments received after June 1 will be subject to interest and late fees.
- 2) Fees and interest on any Motor Vehicle excise tax bill that was due on or after March 10, 2020 will be waived if the tax is paid on or before June 29, 2020. No fees or interest will be waived on any bills that had an initial due date prior to March 10 or are paid after June 29.

These provisions are available to Towns as part of the Commonwealth's response to the Covid-19 pandemic and are tied to the current state of emergency.

Please contact Gina Campbell, Tax Collector, at nmtaxcoll@newmarlboroughma.gov or (413) 229-8963 if you have any questions.

THE FIGHT AGAINST COVID-19 – PART 2

By John Schreiber, MD, MPH

Last month when I wrote the first installment on the battle against the Covid-19 virus, the epidemic was just taking off in the United States. In the subsequent weeks, unfortunately, much of what was predicted to occur by epidemiologists and the infectious diseases medical community has happened. Our lives have been profoundly disrupted. The virus is very contagious and has spread widely. As I write this, the United States has over 900,000 people known to be infected, and probably many more infected but with mild symptoms. The U.S. has the world's largest number of deaths at 48,310, with expectations of hitting 60-75,000 deaths by the end of the summer. Unfortunately, the East Coast is severely affected with New York City particularly hard hit. Massachusetts also is badly hit with more than 35,000 cases (more than California!) as I write this and many deaths, and Berkshire County, despite its small population, has had hundreds of cases.

The good news is that as a society and in our town, we have adopted physical isolation and have greatly reduced our person-to-person interactions, which are required for the virus to be transmitted to others. There is no question that we are beginning to bend the curve so that the number of new cases and deaths is not increasing dramatically each day, but is leveling out. There is light at the end of the tunnel. However, like any great battle, it will take time and much effort to continue to move in the right direction. You don't just stop fighting when the tide turns in your favor. In the absence of effective medicines and vaccines, the only tool we have is to isolate and stick to it. If we do that, as hard as it is, we will see fewer and fewer new infections and deaths, and gradual reopening of the economy will happen.

We have learned an amazing amount about this virus in four short weeks. Its genetic material is 96 percent homologous with a bat coronavirus, so we know that

Covid-19 is not a human pathogen but from bats. We know that it binds to the ACE2 (angiotensin converting enzyme) receptor in human cells. This receptor is critical for the regulation of the integrity of blood vessels and is part of the system in humans that regulates blood pressure and renal function. We know that there is a lot of this receptor in the human nose, throat, and lungs which the virus binds to, enters the cell, hijacks the cell machinery, and makes millions of new viruses as it destroys the human cell. We know the exact protein that the virus makes which binds to the human ACE2 receptor. We know that in some people an overactive immune response unleashes a storm that does more damage than the virus itself. We know that antibodies (defense proteins that our immune system makes to attack pathogens) are made by infected patients within five days of infection and we think they may be protective from future infections. We have also found that 10-25 percent of all infected people do not have symptoms but are infectious and can pass the virus on to those who will get very sick and potentially die.

Despite all our new knowledge, this virus continues to puzzle and perform in a way we have never seen before as physician and healthcare providers. Children who are often more susceptible to a variety of infections are rarely killed by this virus. Most children get mild disease or are completely asymptomatic. We have seen a sprinkling of children under the age of ten who are sick enough to be hospitalized, but the number of deaths can be counted on one hand! The sparing of children is truly the silver lining of this terrible epidemic. By contrast, we see the virus attack adults with obesity, diabetes, high blood pressure, heart disease, and other chronic illnesses, and the elderly with very high hospitalization and death rates. Yet we have also seen healthy young adults, including healthcare workers with no predisposing conditions whatsoever, develop



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Covid-19 pneumonia and succumb very quickly. We have no idea why.

We are among the very best scientific communities in the world, and researchers and investigators here and in other countries have not been idle in searching for medicines and vaccines to treat and prevent infection. As I write this, large clinical trials that can tell us whether a medicine actually works to improve the illness are in progress and will yield results by the summer. A very promising medicine called remdesivir prevents the virus from replicating and may be a big help in critically ill patients. Hydroxychloroquine, although initially promising, may not pan out as an effective treatment. Serum therapy using antibodies obtained from the blood of patients who have recovered from Covid-19 is also being used both to treat and perhaps to prevent infections. Vaccine trials are already underway administering experimental vaccines to human volunteers so that we may have a vaccine available by the end of the year or early next year.

I wish I could say all is well, we are done with the hard work, let's go back to normal. Unfortunately, we are at the peak of the numbers of new cases and deaths in the United States. Yes, new cases and deaths are starting to go down in some parts of the country, but we have

weeks more of isolation and very careful management to reduce the number of new cases to a manageable level. If we let up now, we will see hospitals overwhelmed with a resurgence of new cases, and be back where we started.

Every one of us plays a role in getting this epidemic under control. Each time we prevent transmission from one person to another we have prevented many new cases and deaths. So, we need to double down on what we already know is working. Remember, it might be you who is the asymptomatic carrier infecting others. Physical isolation from strangers, increased hygiene, cleaning and disinfecting, wash hands frequently, wearing masks when outside, not visiting the elderly, helping them from afar. Don't let up until we have this under control. Stay smart on the facts, not the disinformation that is often on the internet. Go to MASS.GOV or CDC.GOV to get the facts.

I am confident that a vaccine and/or effective medicines will end this epidemic in future months. Until then, our best means is to do what we have always done in small towns in New England. Take care of each other by doing the right thing, even if it is hard. □

NM5VN TURNS TWENTY!

The *New Marlborough 5 Village News* has come a long way since May, 2000, but it has now completed its twentieth year. Starting as a monthly newspaper of eight to twelve pages, it now is routinely twenty-eight pages year-round, with more in the summer. As life in our Town becomes more complex, the coverage of issues of governance, zoning, infrastructure, and broadband has increased. Social and cultural activities in town expand in the summer, and so does our visual and narrative coverage of them.

Through the years, the support from contributors has

been strong and constant. The staff doesn't have to worry about being able to afford printing the next issue. Often, contributions are accompanied by notes of appreciation and support; that means a lot.

Please note that many of the staff have been doing this for years, as the average staff age approaches the mid-70s. New members to help cover meetings, town events, historical topics, and photographs are welcomed. Please contact any staff member to become involved. We need you! □



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THE NEW MARLBOROUGH COMMISSION ON DISABILITIES

By Tom Stalker

This year marks the thirtieth anniversary of President George H.W. Bush signing the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) into law. Congress intended that the Act “provide a clear and comprehensive national mandate for the elimination of discrimination against individuals with disabilities,” and ensure that a person’s right to participate fully in all aspects of society, despite any physical or mental disabilities, not be infringed upon by prejudice, antiquated attitudes, or the failure to remove societal and institutional barriers.

Two years ago at the Annual Town Meeting, New Marlborough caught up a bit by forming its first Commission on Disabilities (COD), with the mission of increasing opportunities and removing barriers for people with disabilities to create full and equal participation in all aspects of life within our town.

Small towns offer a variety of essential programs and services that are fundamental to the public and to everyday American life. Although the range of services offered by such towns varies, it is essential that people with disabilities have the opportunity to participate in the programs and services that towns offer. Applying for a building permit or business license, playing ball in the local park, marching in the Memorial Day parade, attending an annual street festival or a town meeting, or calling 911 for emergency police, fire, or medical help – all are typical town programs, activities, or services



Commission on Disability members Marsha Pshenishny, Tara White, John Pshenishny, Tom Stalker, Joan Hotaling, John Hotaling.
photo by Richard Long

covered by the ADA.

The current members of the COD are: Tom Stalker, chair/secretary; Marsha Pshenishny, vice-chair; John Pshenishny; John Hotaling; and Tara White, liaison to the Board of Selectmen. Our commission seeks to influence public policy by advising and working with the Board of Selectmen and other Town committees and departments on issues impacting persons with disabilities and their families, as well as the legal requirements to be met. We seek to educate and inform on disability issues and encourage all persons with disabilities to participate fully in the activities and governance of our Town.

As we got started, the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission (BRPC), on behalf of the Town, developed a Title II: Self-Evaluation and Transition Plan. The self-evaluation is a comprehensive review of all programs, activities, and services operated by the public entity. The transition plan lists the physical barriers that limit access and indicates the methods to remove those barriers and make the facilities accessible. Title II of the ADA applies to state and local governments, including towns and school districts. The ADA sets requirements for town facilities, new construction and alterations, communications with the public, and policies and procedures governing town programs, services, and activities.

Our Commission developed a non-discrimination notice, as well as a required grievance procedure for resolv-

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ing needs or complaints. For example, if you need auxiliary aids and services for effective communication (such as a sign language interpreter, an assistive listening device, or large print material in digital format), or reasonable modification to programs, services or activities, you may contact the Board of Selectmen (which currently serves as ADA Coordinator pending appointment of a specific individual), preferably seven days before the activity or event. There is an established process and requirements under the law for resolving a grievance. A brochure prepared by the COD is available at Town Hall.

In 2018 the COD applied for, and the Town was awarded, a grant for the purchase of hearing assistive devices. A significant segment of our resident population is disenfranchised from full participation in Town governance because of hearing impairment. Currently, Town facilities have inadequate provision of hearing assistance for such individuals in public meetings, whether regular Board of Selectmen's meetings, various Town committee meetings, and, critically, the Annual Town Meeting.

This grant is a start to removing one barrier.

In 2019 the Annual Town Meeting took place at the fire station in Southfield. This move allowed for full physical accessibility and participation. Also in 2019, a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) was awarded to the Town for a design that will result in the removal of barriers in our Town Hall. A large percentage of our Town's population is elderly or disabled, and many individuals cannot access the Town Hall for essential services and meetings. The proposed scope of the project consists of: accessible parking; accessible route from the parking to the building; vertical access between floors inside the building; accessible restrooms; accessible entry/egress at both the lower and main levels. The Town Design Selection Board has issued a Request for Qualifications from architects to design improvements, with the design cost to be paid by the CDBG grant.

For a copy of the Title II: Self-Evaluation and Transition Plan or for any other inquiries, please contact Tom Stalker, COD chair/secretary at tstalker62@gmail.com. □

NEW MARLBOROUGH MEETING HOUSE

Summer Activities Schedulem - Subject to Change

To the New Marlborough Community:

Over the past several months the Gallery and the Music and More Committees have worked on bringing to the Meeting House the usual assortment of stimulating visual, musical (and more!) events for the summer season. This season has had the promise to be one of the greatest in our history. However, as we are all aware, predicting with any certainty the viability of any in-person social events in the near future is impossible.

Gallery. It is with great regret that we announce the postponement of all three 2020 Gallery shows to the summer of 2021. The show titles remain the same: 1. *Go Figure*; 2. *Sticks and Stones*; 3. *New Marlborough Artists*. The Gallery Committee is exploring the possibility of maintaining a virtual presence via the internet.

Music and More. The six performances remain scheduled for successive Saturday afternoons in the late summer, running from August 22 to October 3 (with no performance September 19). The events include an all-star jazz tribute to Michael Ballou and the Castle Street Café, magician Carl Seiger, star performers from Shakespeare and Company in an afternoon of live theater, remarkable cellist Edward Arron and narrator Ben Luxon, internationally renowned pianist Simone Dinnerstein, and author Linda Greenhouse (commentator on the Supreme Court) in conversation with Simon Winchester.

To be realistic, there is a chance that some or all of these performances will not take place. However, since

the first performance is scheduled for more than four months from now, we do have some additional time to assess the situation. Needless to say, if there is any safety issue, we will cancel. We will issue an update later this spring.

In the meantime, please be careful. I look forward to the time when we can again gather together "in person."

Ben Harms, President

New Marlborough Village Association

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NEIGHBORS



As you travel out Brewer Hill Road toward Sheffield, you'll come across a pair of gigantic bulls in the field adjacent to the former Eggenberger barn. These bulls were commissioned by owner **Roger Tilles** from the sculptor **Peter Woytuck** about five years ago. At the time, Mr. Woytuck lived in Amenia, New York, but has since moved to New Mexico. He specializes in brass outside figures that weigh several tons. The bulls were cast in Thailand, shipped to New Marlborough, and required a large crane to install them. Roger explained, "I wanted them in the setting they are in so that the bucolic nature of the barn, silo, and meadow would enhance



photos by Joe Pondexter

them, so they would be able to be seen and climbed on by neighbors."

Just before you get to the bulls, Roger's driveway goes off to the right. About fifty yards along, on the left, is another Woytuck treat – a crow attacking an acorn. It's not as big as the bulls, but it's *definitely* outsize!

Roger's bulls resting in their meadow



Pity the poor acorn!

Mill River residents **Laura Endacott** and **Jack McLein** own **Tri-Point Stone, Inc.**, in Latham, New York, which builds commercial stone projects. One of their stone suppliers is located in China. The supplier's contact with them, **Bonnie Chun**, contacted Laura on March 20 and asked if she needed any N95 facemasks, since China's emergency was coming under control. Laura initially demurred, but a week later heard Governor Andrew Cuomo's urgent plea for respirators and N95 facemasks. Laura immediately emailed Ms. Chun and arranged to have 100 masks shipped to Mill River. It took two weeks for the masks to arrive because flights from Hong Kong were held up, but the masks arrived on Monday, April 13.

Laura and Jack contacted Fairview Hospital and the Berkshire and Albany Medical Centers. Fairview responded immediately; the others had fewer immediate needs, but were given Ms. Chun's contact information in case she could help. On Tuesday, April 14, Fairview administrator **Charles Harner** received the Tri-Point Stone donation.

Longtime New Marlborough resident **Nicholas Hardcastle** has passed away due to complications of preexisting medical conditions exacerbated by Covid-19. He had moved to Cornwall, England, about two years ago to be with family. He was sixty-eight years old.

Fairview administrator Charles Harner accepts masks from Tri-Point Stone and the full shipment of masks



photos by Laura Endacott



Nick was a dairy farmer in New Marlborough for more than twenty years. He was also a founding member of the *New Marlborough 5 Village News* staff; it is somehow fitting that he passed away on the paper's twentieth birthday. He was also a familiar face, bartending at the Old Inn on the Green and Gedney Farm. Although he left New Marlborough in early 2000, he continued to contribute to the 5VN for several years. His good humor and energy are fondly remembered. He is survived by his four children and their spouses, **Asa and Tracy Steady Hardcastle**, **Evan and Sarah Hardcastle**, **Tess Hardcastle** and **Anthony Mantegani**, **Celeste and Michael Decensi**, and his two grandchildren, **Winter and Nico Hardcastle**. □

compiled by Barbara Lowman: deeuell@yahoo.com



photos by David Lawson

Nick Hardcastle

PAUSE

For now
 The work is done
 For the moment
 Duty is fulfilled
 Demands fade away
 Stowed and stilled
 Put the papers down
 Don't pick up the phone
 Walk away from the clutter
 Turn away from the din
 Smile for no reason
 Step into the sun

–**Nicholas Hardcastle**
 June 6, 1952 – April 15, 2020

OUR WILDLIFE NEIGHBORS

photo by John Schreiber



A surprised red-backed salamander

On April 6, **John Schreiber**, from New Marlborough village, sent the accompanying photo of a **red-backed salamander**, along with a concise description – “under a rock.” An article by *New York Times* nature writer Dave Taft from May, 2018, offers the following points of interest about *Plethodon cinereus*: “Remarkably, red-backed salamanders lack lungs; they breathe through their thin skins. This is far more than just a metabolic oddity; it is a factor which delineates the salamander’s life. Red-backs must always remain moist to breathe. This is less of a problem during the wet spring months, when these salamanders can be found crawling through the leaf litter and even climbing the roots of mossy tree trunks in search of tiny insects, worms and other prey. A salamander’s life becomes increasingly proscribed during the drier summer months, leaving them to forage under logs or in small burrows.” Mr. Taft went on to report, “Red-backed salamanders are one of the most abundant species in our northeastern woodlands, and can be found from southern Canada to North Carolina and west to Missouri. By some estimates, populations of these salamanders can reach densities of nearly a thousand individuals per acre.”

photo by Ed Harvey



A look back at Tom turkey

Ed Harvey sent along a wonderful shot of a **Tom turkey’s** signature calling card: “The turkey’s posterior was taken on Hayes Hill after I wrapped up a minor medical call.” (Ed, if you do not know, is, among many other things, an EMT with New Marlborough Fire & Rescue. He pretty much always has a camera or two by his side.)

Don Beauchamp checked in on April 17 with the following report: “Lots of visitors – **purple finches**, a **Carolina wren**, a **pileated woodpecker**, **mating hawks**, **turkeys**, **merganser ducks**, a **northern flicker**, and a



A male common merganser on the Konkapot

yellow-bellied sap-sucker. There’s lots of singing and hopeful mate-chasing going on, and painted turtles are basking in sun. I’ve been trying to follow birds to their nest-building locations... very impossible.”

Near dusk on April 3, **Larry Burke** spotted a lone **sandhill crane** strolling in the field north of his house, and two days later **Collin Swartz** saw several on East Hill Road. Larry has also seen **wood ducks**, **hooded mergansers**, and a **great blue heron** on his farm pond. In mid-April, as in previous years, a pair of **Canada geese** has taken up residence in that pond. Larry got to observe the couple’s mating ritual one morning, which involved paddling side-by-side, dipping their heads in the water over and over again, first doing this in turn, as if in response to each other, and then proceeding to duck their heads underwater simultaneously. The culmination of this

photo by Larry Burke



A pair of Canada geese as synchronized swimmers

choreography was an ever-so-brief moment when the male mounted his mate. Later on, as the accompanying photo shows, the two geese settled into a beautiful symmetry as they drifted together on the pond. Perhaps the June issue of the NM5VN will feature a photo of this happy couple’s offspring! □



photos by Don Beauchamp

Eastern painted turtles catching some rays



A pileated woodpecker investigating a stump

Compiled by **Larry Burke**.
Send your wildlife sightings to him
at lburke2@me.com

MEASURING UP

New Marlborough Takes on the Challenge of Uncertainty

By Joe Poindexter

Solitude has acquired a whole new vocabulary: social distancing, sheltering in place, quarantining at home, but, oddly, we have in many ways grown together. As Covid-19 ravages the economy and threatens to reach into the most remote corners of town and country, an empathy, a sense of shared calamity, has infused our community.

It has been expressed in numberless offers of help, contributions to food banks, contributions of face masks, offers to pick up groceries for a neighbor. But we also are communicating this togetherness in less tangible ways: a word of appreciation for things we have till now taken for granted, such as the mail service or the operation of the Transfer Station; a wide berth and often a wave from motorists passing walkers on our town roads.

In one notable response to a community need, Mill River resident Marc Trachtenberg took the lead in expanding the reach of the middle-mile broadband signal that is delivered to the New Marlborough Public Library, Town Hall, and the fire house. In March, Mr. Trachtenberg noted the growing frustration of the town's residents with the clogged traffic of internet delivery through an overburdened DSL network. He proposed to Cable Advisory Committee Chairman Steve Klein that the installation of high-speed commercial grade routers, along with unobtrusive exterior antennae and a boost in the speed of the broadband signal, would create significant hotspots at the three locations. With the help of Town Administrator Mari Enoch in clearing the project with the Massachusetts Broadband Institute, which owns the middle mile, Mr. Trachtenberg got the go-ahead. He and his installation crew were on the roofs of the buildings in the first week of April and had the hotspots up and running two days later. The group may have set a modern-day speed record for cutting through red tape.

Projects such as this do not, however, erase the profound disruption to daily life or the perilous threat to the economic well-being of individuals and commerce in New Marlborough. But businesses are adapting. Starting with the state-wide closure of restaurants in early March, The Old Inn on the Green, Cantina 229, and the Southfield Store began offering takeout.

Peter Platt, co-owner of the Old Inn on the Green and the Southfield Store says that, while "lodging is completely shut down," the take-out business from both establishments, economy-priced in recognition of the stressed finances of many in the surrounding area, helps pay for his staff. One bright spot: the Payroll Protection Payment program. Mr. Platt applied for the federal grant

in the second week of April and was approved in a matter of days. "We were taken care of incredibly well," he says of the Lee Bank officer who processed his application.

"Incredibly dramatically." This is Josh Irwin's response to how the Covid-19 pandemic has affected the operation of Cantina 229. By this he is thinking not only of the abrupt transition from a restaurant to a purveyor of take-out, but also of the response of the people who work at Cantina, which he co-owns with his wife, Emily Rachel. "The entire staff has come together," he says. "I couldn't be more proud. The bills keep piling up, but keeping the staff working and the community fed helps me sleep at night." Mr. Irwin reports that he has made deliveries as far afield as Pittsfield and had at least one customer from Springfield.

Tom Brazie, too, is adjusting his workday to the reality of a locked-down customer. He has not only resurrected that icon of rural America, the milkman, he also delivers the pork and beef products he raises on The Farm New Marlborough — and a dozen or more other locally-produced food products — on Tuesdays and Thursdays and sells them, pre-ordered, from his farmstand on New Marlborough Southfield Road on Saturdays.

Meanwhile, the town continues to adjust — and remain flexible to the still-uncertain course of the virus. The Town Caucus has been postponed to May 19, the Town Meeting to June 22, and the Town Election to June 29, from noon to 7:00 p.m. The New Marlborough Village Association (see news item on page 13), has had to postpone the 2020 Gallery shows to the summer of 2021. At this writing, the Music & More array of entertainments is still planned for its late-August to early-October run.

Among the invisible but deeply engaging challenges of this pandemic is the persistence of uncertainty. The people of New Marlborough appear to be enduring it with remarkable resilience. □

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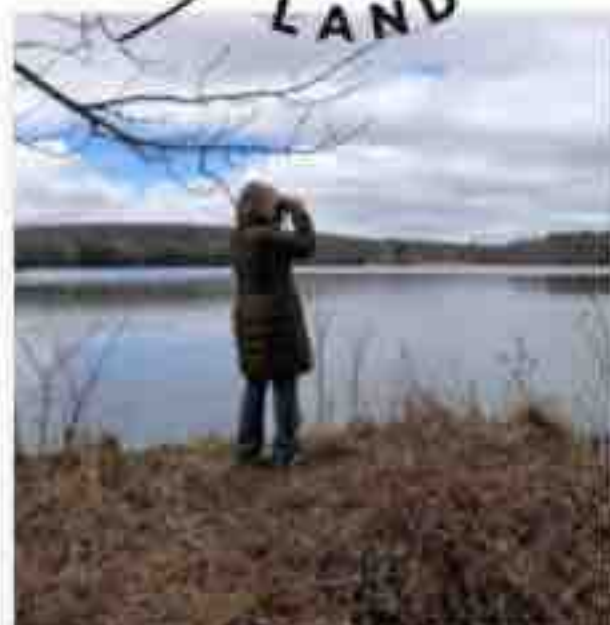
LAND TRUST NEWS

Here's a skip down memory lane to keep us inspired! Applause, applause for our volunteers! Look where we have been. The future will be tense...let's move there together.

In these extraordinary times, let's be extraordinary!

...river, tree, frog, robin, snowflake, ant, firefly, maple leaf, blue sky, bark, moss, soil, fresh air...

Martha Bryan



April 4, 2020
Thousand Acre Swamp



November 30, 2019 - Dry Hill



October 26, 2019 - Goodnow Preserve



October 22, 2019 - Lower Carroll Mill



August 19, 2019 - Goodnow Preserve



August 14, 2019 - Goodnow Preserve



October 8, 2018 - Goodnow Preserve Opening Celebration



July 6, 2017 - New Marlboro Preserve



July 16, 2016 - Steepletop



July 18, 2015 - Crosby Robbins Mill Goat Project



June 3, 2015
Joffe Nature Sanctuary

THE CHANGED FACE OF LOCAL DEMOCRACY

Towns Struggle To Adapt to the Pandemic

By Barry R. Shapiro

Across the Commonwealth, New England town meetings, caucuses, and elections, as much a rite of spring as crocuses and daffodils, are being postponed or taking on radically different forms.

"In order to ensure the safety of our townspeople during the Covid-19 pandemic, we've postponed our annual town meeting, as well as our caucus and town election," said Nat Yohalem, chairman of the Board of Selectmen. "The caucus was moved from March 31 to May 19, the town meeting from May 4 to June 22 and the election from May 11 to June 29. Hopefully, it will be safe for all of us to gather together on those dates but, if not, we will have to consider further delays or a change in the way we conduct those events."

Mr. Yohalem advised that the Board of Selectmen has not determined what steps will be taken so that voters can participate safely and in a socially responsible manner, but that outdoor settings and other creative approaches will be considered.

"The first event we're going to face is the caucus. Again, speaking only for myself since the Board hasn't yet discussed this in depth, having everyone gather together inside Town Hall to vote on who will appear on the ballot for the town-wide election is, as of now, not a good idea. Perhaps we'll have the caucus in the parking lot. People can stay in their cars or stand next to them at an appropriate distance from others. We'd make ballots available to them after we check them in, and we'll need to figure out all the logistics to keep people safe and still give them the right to vote in secret. Inclement weather could also be an issue. There's a lot to consider."

The annual election for town officers and anything else required to be on the ballot in June will require a different approach. Until recently enacted legislation, the only way to change the date of the town election

(set by the Town's bylaw as the second Monday in May) was by court order. The new legislation changed that to allow the board of selectmen to delay the vote during a declared state of emergency by the governor, which happened on March 10 and remains in effect. "We need to keep our poll workers safe along with our voters," added Mr. Yohalem. "Perhaps voting by mail will work. I don't know but we will need to review this carefully."

Most problematic may be the Annual Town Meeting. "Town meeting always was required to be held not later than June 30, the end of our fiscal year, and a new budget needed to be adopted by that date," said Mr. Yohalem. "New legislation, however, allows us to go into the new fiscal year without a new budget and rely on the old budget until a new one can be adopted. Essentially, we'd work off one-twelfth of the prior year's budget each month and we could invade free cash as needed but only with approval from the state. That's not ideal, but it may come to that. But I don't think we should have a meeting unless we are sure that people can attend safely and that they feel comfortable doing so." Interestingly, the governor's March 23 order, which limits gatherings to no more than ten persons excludes "municipal legislative bodies," meaning that town meetings are not banned by the order.

Other towns grappling with the issue of how to hold their annual meetings are getting creative, with one town holding an emergency special meeting outdoors, with the moderator standing in the back of a pickup truck. Other towns are exploring holding their meetings in parking lots where the distance between the middle of one space and the middle of the next is almost exactly six feet, in high school bleachers alongside the football field, in garages or hangars where people can be spaced more than six feet apart, using multiple rooms



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all connected via some kind of interactive conference system so people can further spread out, and even in a drive-in movie theater where available.

None of these approaches is ideal and there remain serious issues about proximity at check in and during the meeting as people move around, share pens and microphones and use the bathroom, the need to provide multiple means of ingress and egress so people are not bunched together, and the need for an audio system that allows everyone to participate and to hear.

No towns are going to hold their meeting “virtually,” given its doubtful validity under Massachusetts law and, of course, doing so while New Marlborough languishes in the internet backwaters is an impossibility here even if it were legal to do so.

According to a survey conducted by the Massachusetts Moderators Association, one thing which is universal among towns is the postponement of the annual meeting to a later date. Some towns are considering not

only postponing their annual meeting, but also limiting the warrant to just a bare minimum of articles, most likely budgetary and financial issues, so people can get out faster, and putting off the balance to a future special town meeting.

A newly adopted statute provides that the responsibility for postponing a town meeting “...in the event of an emergency that poses an immediate threat to the health or safety or persons...,” rests with the Board of Selectmen, but the moderator also has the authority to postpone the meeting after the warrant has been issued due to a “public health emergency.”

For now, the word coming out of town hall is “caution.” “We want everyone to participate in our local democracy but, until people can do so safely, asking them to do otherwise is too risky and unfair,” said Mr. Yohalem. □

MAILBOX



A letter to residents from the New Marlborough Cultural Council:

Greetings from the New Marlborough Cultural Council. We hope that you and your loved ones are well during this difficult time. We know we live in a special community that has generously supported our programs through the years and we greatly appreciate that support.

The New Marlborough Cultural Council works to enrich the lives of our residents and build community through our support of the arts and education. We had many plans for 2020. Through our annual grant program, we awarded over \$16,000 in grants to arts and education programs. Unfortunately, because of the COVID-19 pandemic, many of these programs will be delayed; some will be cancelled. We cancelled the town potluck and the biennial garden tour. We hope to host Burritt Day in mid-August. Other programs will need to be postponed to the fall.

Each spring the Cultural Council conducts a fundraising campaign, asking for your support of our grants and programming. We are always humbled by your generous support. However, we realize that this year is very different. We are all concerned about our physical, financial and emotional health. It's an anxious time. We are all trying to do what is necessary to get through this crisis so that we can return to normal life. For most of us, that is taking all the energy and determination we have.

For that reason, the New Marlborough Cultural Council has voted to forego our annual spring fundraising drive. Instead, we ask that you support those organizations in our greater community that are working hard to support those most affected during this crisis: emergency service workers, hospitals and social service providers, the homeless, the food insecure, to name just a few. There are many Berkshire organizations working on the frontlines and we ask that you contribute to the best of your abilities.

We hope that the fall will bring a return to normal. We look forward to hosting community gatherings and to awarding grants that will bring arts and educational programs to New Marlborough. We plan to conduct a fundraising drive then and look forward to your generous support.

Stay healthy and stay safe! We will keep you informed of our plans and projects as events unfold.

Sincerely,

The New Marlborough Cultural Council

Nancy Barbe, *Chair*, Eugene Cleary, Sue Cohen, Alice Fahs, Linda Fass, Joyce Hackett, Richard Long, Wendy Miller, Kathy Potoski, Marjorie Robins, Margie Shapiro, Holly Valente, Louise Yohalem

THE LOG

Police Department (selected entries)

- Mar. 2 1:11 p.m. After being alerted to a large, unattended fire off Hartsville New Marlborough Road, officer determines that the property owner had the requisite burn permit.
- Mar. 3 7:34 a.m. An officer assists a driver who has locked herself out of her SUV in Mill River village.
- Mar. 4 7:09 p.m. A caller reports being trapped in his house by a threatening dog loose outside his Canaan Southfield Road residence.
- Mar. 5 9:10 p.m. The Department is asked to help restore the peace in a dispute at a residence on Hewins Street, Sheffield.
- 11:47 p.m. A car fire is reported at a residence on New Marlborough Hill Road.
- Mar. 6 3:00 p.m. A caller reports the installation of cameras at a farm stand where petty theft has recently become an issue.
- 3:48 p.m. The animal control officer is notified after a Canaan Southfield Road resident complains of continuing trespass by a neighbor's dog.
- 9:13 p.m. A motorist, stopped at the intersection of Adsit Crosby and Mill River Great Barrington Roads, is taken into custody after failing a sobriety test.
- Mar. 7 9:03 a.m. National Grid is called after a resident reports a power outage in Southfield village.
- 10:38 p.m. The driver of a pick-up truck reports hitting a deer on Mill River Southfield Road.
- 12:46 p.m. Alerted to a suspicious vehicle on Brewer Hill Road, an officer learns that the car is disabled and is awaiting assistance from AAA.
- Mar. 9 9:45 a.m. An officer assists a driver who has locked herself out of her vehicle on County Road.
- Mar. 10 1:23 p.m. An officer assists in the transportation of two Hewins Street, Sheffield, residents, who have been booked for resisting arrest, to Southern Berkshire District Court.
- Mar. 12 6:01 p.m. A resident alerts the Department to a loss of power after a truck hits a utility pole on Cross Road to Canaan Valley Road.
- Mar. 14 10:08 a.m. A caller reports a dispute at a Mill River village residence.
- 6:13 p.m. A caller reports vehicles racing past his South Sandisfield Road property.
- Mar. 16 5:56 p.m. In a continuing complaint, a caller reports being chased by a neighbor's dog that has come onto his Canaan Southfield Road property.
- Mar. 17 5:01 p.m. Alerted to the presence of what appeared to be a sick skunk on the property of a Cross Road to Canaan Valley Road resident, the Department notifies the animal control officer.
- 5:35 p.m. A caller alerts the Department to a possible incidence of abuse at his rental property in Mill River. One of the parties to the dispute is asked, but fails, to lodge a complaint at the Police Department office.
- Mar. 19 1:32 p.m. A Lumbert Cross Road resident reports an attempted Medicare phone scam.
- Mar. 20 3:19 p.m. A driver requests assistance with his disabled vehicle on Idle Hour Road.
- 6:44 p.m. A driver reports that the vehicle ahead of her stopped, switched drivers, and then sped off at well over the speed limit.
- 11:08 p.m. An officer assists a caller, who says he is unable to locate his car keys, in transporting a seven-week-old puppy, its head injured by a falling object, from a residence on Mill River Great Barrington Road to a veterinarian.
- Mar. 21 10:20 a.m. National Grid is notified of a power outage in the village of Hartsville.
- 5:59 p.m. Following a complaint from a neighbor, an officer requests that a New Marlborough Hill resident wrap up a weapon-firing session.
- 9:59 p.m. National Grid notified after a Foley Hill Road resident reports a power outage.
- Mar. 29 3:23 p.m. A caller reports hearing gunshots in the woods near his Brewer Hill Road home.
- Mar. 31 6:54 p.m. A caller reports finding two keys on a rock in the parking area at the New Marlboro Preserve.

Graham Frank, Chief of Police

FIRE AND RESCUE

Mar. 2	1:15 p.m.	Hartsville New Marlborough Road Fire Alarm	Mar. 21	2:03 p.m.	Mutual Aid to Sandisfield Structure Fire
Mar. 2	11:04 p.m.	Cross Road to Canaan Valley Road Medical Call	Mar. 21	1:25 p.m.	Mill River Great Barrington Road Medical Call
Mar. 3	9:55 a.m.	Mutual Aid to Sandisfield CO Alarm	Mar. 23	10:45 a.m.	Stone Manor Drive Fire Alarm
Mar. 5	11:48 p.m.	New Marlborough Hill Road Car Fire	Mar. 23	1:09 p.m.	Norfolk Road Fire Alarm
Mar. 7	9:50 a.m.	Mutual Aid to Canaan, CT Standby	Mar. 23	3:14 p.m.	Mill River Southfield Road Fire Alarm
Mar. 8	1:14 p.m.	Mill River Great Barrington Road Fire Alarm	Mar. 23	7:36 p.m.	Cagney Hill Road Fire Alarm
Mar. 14	11:26 a.m.	Pine Street Medical Call	Mar. 25	8:51 a.m.	Cross Road to Canaan Valley Road Medical Call
Mar. 15	8:19 p.m.	Sisson Hill Road Medical/LifeStar	Mar. 26	7:36 p.m.	Campbell Falls Road Fire Alarm
Mar. 15	10:32 p.m.	Mutual Aid to Sheffield Structure Fire	Mar. 28	11:35 a.m.	Hartsville New Marlborough Road Fire Alarm
Mar. 17	7:13 p.m.	Brewer Hill Road Fire Alarm			
Mar. 20	1:41 a.m.	Hartsville Mill River Road Medical Call			
Mar. 21	10:04 a.m.	Mill River Southfield Road Fire Alarm			

Fire Company President David Smith

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Bev & Kim Kimball; Mike & Kay Jaffe; Anonymous; Pat & Tom Rajala, and Connie Sussman



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Broadband Update

COVID-19 AND BROADBAND

Could the Combination Be Any Worse?

By Barry R. Shapiro

Residents suffering from a lack of high-speed internet before the arrival of Covid-19, are now feeling their pain more acutely than they could have anticipated only weeks ago. And it now appears that broadband installation won't be completed until May 2021, months later than originally anticipated.

Over the past weeks, as the nationwide lockdown continues, while some residents appear to be coping, others are not. Maggie's List has lit up with a litany of woe from internet-deprived residents, those struggling with children trying to learn remotely, people suddenly working from home who can't adequately communicate with colleagues and clients and who can't make adequate use of the now-ubiquitous Zoom conferencing, and people unable to connect digitally with family while locked away from them. And then there are those who have some connectivity but have watched it slow to a digital crawl with additional users both in the home and the neighborhood. Some have to spend most of the day in their cars, parked in front of one of the community's wireless hotspots, while they and their children engage in the kind of 21st century activity which much of the country takes for granted.

Some residents have attempted to connect to the so-called "Middle Mile" that brings high-speed service to the library, fire station, and Town Hall, only to find out that the cost of doing so is prohibitive, running into the thousands of dollars, a frustrating situation if they live along the "Middle Mile" route and can only gaze forlornly at the cables from their living room, the solution to their digital problems, so near and yet so far.

Of course, the primitive conditions affecting many in New Marlborough are not unique among rural communities, a fact that is of scant comfort to those

staring at a frozen computer screen. A recent article in *The Guardian* reported that 62 percent of counties in the United States do not have the government's minimum recommended download speed and that 42 million Americans are without internet altogether.

The results of this kind of disconnect from the rest of society are quite familiar to town residents and include not only the inconvenience of being unable to stream a movie or video conference with friends, but very real life-threatening issues such as being unable to have video conference calls with their doctors who might not want them to come to the office, or to research, for example, symptoms of Covid-19 or the status of the virus's spread.

Steve Klein, chair of the town's Cable Advisory Committee, which is charged with the responsibility of managing Charter Communications as it works to provide internet service to the town, is well aware that the timing of the Covid-19 lockdown couldn't have been worse. "It's very unfortunate that this happened at this time," said Mr. Klein, "but everyone should know that things are moving as quickly and as diligently as possible, and that Charter has been very forthright and cooperative with the Committee."

According to Klein, the make ready portion of the installation is now about 80 percent complete. "Make ready" refers to the work that needs to be done before cable can be strung and includes pole surveys and obtaining licenses for Charter to place its wires on the poles.

"Charter now has eighteen of the twenty-three required licenses and should have the remaining few shortly," said Klein. "There are a few poles near New Marlborough village which are in the process of being replaced and that needs to be done by National Grid. Some of these replacement poles are lying on the side of the road, ready



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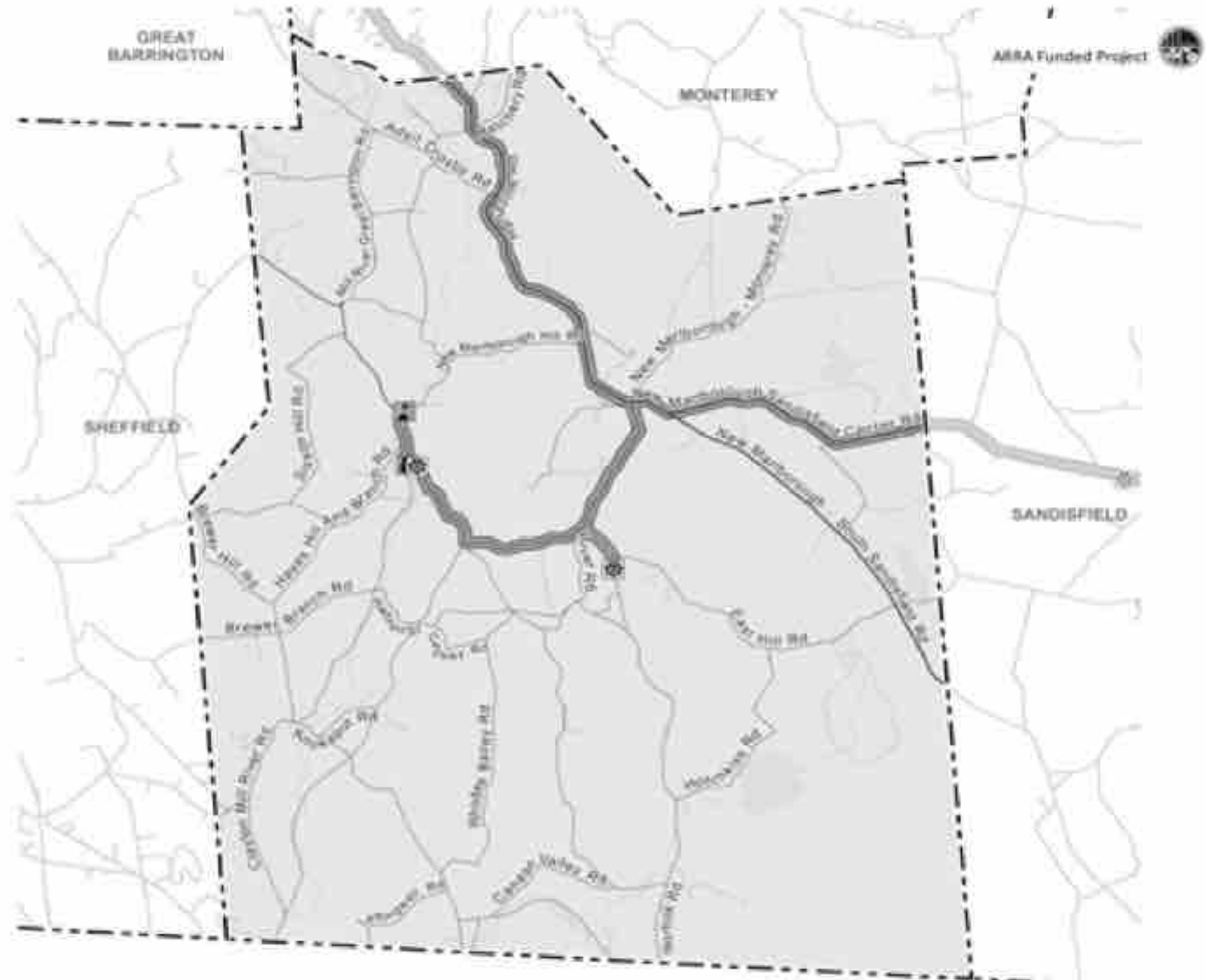


MassBroadband 123

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-  Fiber-Optic Network
-  Internet Point of Presence

The Middle Mile fiber optic cable, running along Route 57, supplies high speed broadband to the fire house, Town Hall, and the library via a spur running from New Marlborough village to Southfield to Mill River.



to be installed. After they are up, National Grid has to move the power lines and Verizon then moves its lines to the new poles, but there are only a few places where this needs to happen and I'm reasonably confident that all the make ready will be done by the end of May."

Mr. Klein then delivered some news which will disappoint many.

"By late May, we expect to see Charter trucks stringing cable all over town which should take nine months. Then, Charter would begin connecting individual homes and businesses which will take approximately another three months so the entire town should be lit by May, 2021. Everyone should please remember that at no point did we believe or was it represented by any of the parties, that our Charter-provided service would be up and running by now."

Mr. Klein acknowledges the delay from the originally anticipated fall of 2020 completion date (the contract with Charter was signed on January 14, 2019), but that everything that could be done to expedite installation has been done. "It's been an accumulation of things and I'm reluctant to point the finger at any one company or cause. Verizon has been slower than we expected and there were some delays due to National Grid not replacing poles as quickly as we had hoped. The good news is that we expect that sections of the town will be lit during the final three-month period as soon as they are ready to go, so we expect that people will begin to see service before May, 2021."

This entire painstaking process has been overseen by the Town's volunteer Cable Advisory Committee, consisting of Mr. Klein, as chair, along with John Valente,

Broc Kerr, Michael Shocket, and Doug Newman.

"Our committee has worked hard and stayed on top of this diligently. The Massachusetts Broadband Institute [the state agency providing some of the funding for the project] has a weekly call with Charter and all the utilities about progress in all towns where MBI is providing funding and we speak regularly with all of the players to stay on top of things," said Mr. Klein. "In the interim, and knowing how important this is to everyone, we have augmented the three wireless hotspots in town at the library, Town Hall and the fire station. By combining upgraded bandwidth speeds with omni-directional exterior antennas, residents can now log onto a high-speed connection from a wider range around these locations than previously. This will allow more residents to use the connections at the same time and at much higher speeds than was previously possible, supporting all important internet applications. Thanks go to resident Marc Trachtenberg, who proposed and outlined the project and managed its implementation, my fellow Cable Advisory Commission members, who coordinated with both the state and its contractors at the middle mile, and Town government, especially Mari Enoch, town administrator, and Chuck Loring, highway superintendent."

So, while efforts to bring broadband to town are continuing, any thoughts of a near-term solution need to be dispelled. Beleaguered residents will need to find alternatives, to the limited extent available, to obtain fast, or, indeed, any connectivity, or look forward to a happy day when they and their children can safely leave their homes and return to work and school.

Until then, stay tuned.



RECIPE OF THE MONTH

This month my son Digby is sharing one of his favorite snacks to make. They're really easy, quick, and don't use a lot of dishes, but don't forget to ask an older sibling, dad, or mum for help if you need it when cooking the pikelets.

Fiona Kerr

G'day fellow kids of New Marlborough! I'm lucky enough to be back in Australia for a few weeks and have been eating all my favorite foods – meat pies, lamingtons, Tim Tams and chocolate hot cross buns. But one of my favorite Aussie foods is pikelets and they're really easy to make. Pikelets are a bit like pancakes but are often eaten cold with jam and whipped cream. Yum!

Here is a recipe from my mum's favorite cookbook, the *St. Aidan's Church Mothers and Friends Cookbook*.

Digby

Pikelets

Ingredients

1 tablespoon butter	2 - 1/2 tablespoons sugar
1 cup all-purpose flour	1 egg, lightly beaten
1 teaspoon baking powder	1/2 cup milk
1/2 teaspoon baking soda	1 teaspoon white vinegar
	Extra butter for cooking

- Melt the butter.
- Mix the flour, baking powder and sugar together; make a well in the center of the bowl
- Add the vinegar and baking soda to the milk
- Pour the milk into flour, mix together and then add the egg and the butter
- Heat a skillet over medium heat, melt some butter in the pan. Add large dessert spoonfuls of the batter; turn over once the bubbles start to pop on the top.
- When golden brown (like pancakes) remove and cook the next batch, adding more butter to the pan to stop them from sticking, if necessary
- Can be served warm with butter and jam or golden syrup or let cool and serve with jam and a dollop of whipped cream

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THE NO-SCHOOL REPORT

On the opening day of the Southern Berkshire Regional Districts Schools last fall, the teachers, administrators, staff, and School Committee members welcomed students wearing new bright blue t-shirts imprinted in gold with "SBRSD Cares." Since the start of the Covid-19 crisis, it has become very clear what that caring really means. Administration, staff, and teachers have gone above and beyond.

Providing food for families in need when schools closed on March 13 was the number one concern. Jeremy Wells, director of food services, started small with Superintendent Beth Regulbuto and Principals Jesse Carpenter and Charles Miller as helpers in the kitchen. Now he works with school employees Zoe Nelson, Cathy-Jo Wilig, and Sue Petrucci to prepare weekday breakfast and lunch for eighty children for pickup at school or delivery. On Fridays the crew provides food for the weekends for fifty families. Mr. Wells said, "For a family of four we also distribute Salvation Army boxes that are packed with a week's worth of non-perishable goods, and meals prepared by the Marketplace which are funded by a community-initiated project, whereby donors pay the Marketplace directly. On April 17 forty boxes of goods and sixty meals from the Marketplace were available." The district received a \$10,000 grant from the Berkshire United Way for the purchase, preparation, and distribution of the food. Produce and milk from local farms is donated by the Berkshire Grown organization.

Mr. Wells added, "All families adversely affected financially by Covid-19 can apply now for Free and Reduced (the National School Lunch Program). Approval for this program makes families eligible for other benefits that could help alleviate some of the costs of utilities and cable, and would allow them to enroll in SNAP benefits." (formerly known as food stamps).

Meanwhile, it took a frustrating two weeks to design and implement a remote learning program that was sensitive to the needs of all. For Superintendent Regulbuto



Every two weeks the buses take packets of materials to the homes of all students attending SBRSD. Because not all homes have internet sufficient for remote learning, teachers are preparing both digital and printed curricular activities. Buses carry finished work back to the campus where teachers see the work. No grades will be issued as there is only a credit or no credit policy but valuable feedback can be given by the teachers.



Tom Masters, Connie Broggi, Sue Krom, Liz O'Donnell, Nancy Crawford, and Shannon Ruane getting masked up to deliver packets to NMC students in five different towns.

materials printed. Paraprofessionals collated and labeled over 650 packets. On April 3 the buses were lined up around the school while administrators, teachers, and staff made sure that each packet got on the right bus. This whole process was repeated for a second delivery on April 17. The New Marlborough Central teachers took on the responsibility of driving around to deliver their packets in person! Finished work is put onto the bus and delivered back to teachers for review.

Ms. Regulbuto stated to teachers and parents, "The purpose of remote learning is best expressed by our vision statement, 'to be resilient, curious, ethical global citizens who embrace the challenges of an ever-changing world.' In the days, weeks, and months ahead, we have encouraged our educators to take this vision to heart. Teachers will no longer be expected to focus on mastery of content for students; instead, the purpose of remote learning in the SBRSD Schools will be to engage students in deeper learning." Evaluation is now credit or no credit.

Teachers have been invited to try new curricular ideas while they take on technological challenges. Curriculum Coordinator and Professional Development Director Amy Lyn has set up a very extensive list of resources

two things were clear from the start. Keep staff and teachers employed and safe; provide students and families with excellent learning resources. She worked with the administrators to determine how to connect teachers and their students in our internet-challenged region, and stay within the state-mandated equal access for all. She collaborated with the School Committee, the teachers' union, and legal counsel in a very positive process to craft new work agreements for how teachers and staff would deliver an equitable remote learning plan.

Teachers were asked to prepare a block of lessons that would be delivered every two weeks by school buses, as well as provide on-line lessons and resources for students. The school buildings were fully sanitized, and with masks and gloves available, teachers and staff were at school April 1 and 2, to get

to help teachers. Technology Director Chris Thompson has gone to untold lengths. First he got laptops out to families who need them. Then he has assisted teachers with navigating the virtual world including using Google Classroom, Zoom, and FaceTime to make interactions more engaging. He even helped get cable and phone companies to improve service to accommodate students.

How does this actually work in practice? The word from parents is very positive about the quality of what is being sent home, but mixed in terms of how able they are in getting their children engaged. One parent said her child told her she wasn't as good a teacher as Mr. M so he wasn't going to do the work. Other parents report that their children are loving doing the work and stay focused for hours. All appreciated the support that teachers are providing in phone calls and emails. A grandmother wrote, "I just want praise the fifth grade teachers at Undermountain Elementary School who coached us through the on-line challenges. At a Zoom meeting for the class it was great to see them with all their students. It was so clear how much they truly care and love their students even when they have their own families to take care of at the same time." Middle school students seem to be responding well to science assignments that give them choices and have hands-on components. A senior commented that the most time-consuming assignments are for chorus and band where she has to send in recordings of her singing and playing her instrument.

Teachers reported that the principals have been very supportive of their efforts. They are using emails and Zoom to work with their colleagues to solve problems that arise for particular students. Their days consist of Google classroom sessions, FaceTime with individual students, emails and phone calls from parents and students. One teacher said, "My favorite emails and calls are the ones from parents who are thanking me for all I am doing. It makes a difference to know that I am helping my students and families even though we can't be together." Another teacher said, "The teachers at NMC have been talking together almost daily to discuss what works and what doesn't as far as remote learning is concerned. I have loved having students



Materials for 80 students from 11 different teachers being collated so they can be delivered.



Tracy Weston works with First Grader James Dawson on reading via FaceTime.

read to me over the phone and share drawings over FaceTime. Nothing can replace the magic of teaching in a classroom, though! I really miss getting to see the children in person."

The emotional health of the students is a big priority for the leadership, teachers, and staff. In the latest communication with the families, Ms. Regalbuto wrote, "There is a saying in schools that sharing is caring. During these isolating times, we are inspired by the way our community members are staying connected, shining a light on our collective strength. Starting this April 20, we are inviting any families to share what remote learning looks like at home by sending your pics to sbrsdathome@sbrsd.org. After we have collected a bunch, we will post them to our Facebook page or Instagram account." The Administrative Council came up with weekly themes for this

shared conversation: Community Thank You; Small Learning Wins; Embracing Failure; and Outdoor Education. The high school seniors are of special concern. Student Services Director Sandi Hubbard understands the sense of loss for the seniors who had looked forward to prom, senior trip, and graduation. She said, "The administrators have been discussing how we can celebrate this momentous time. Student input will be important."

Ms. Regalbuto has been on many conference calls with Commissioner Jeffrey C. Riley since schools were closed. How many school days are required? What will happen with state MASC achievement tests? What about April vacation? When can we reopen? The current date for the end of school is June 15 for SBRSD. The MASC tests were cancelled in early April. April vacations were cancelled in most schools. On the April 21 call he revealed that schools would not reopen this year. Nothing concrete has been said about providing learning opportunities in the summer.

Plans to create a graduation experience for seniors are a work in progress in schools across the nation. The entire SBRSD team cares deeply about making sure that these students' accomplishments are acknowledged, and this important transition is celebrated in some way. □

Jane Burke, Chair, SBRSD School Committee

Contributions are needed to continue the paper!

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Building Inspector: Monday 5:00 - 7:00 p.m.; Thursday 8:00 to 10:00 a.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

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

Dog and Animal Control Officer: New Marlborough Police Department 229-8161

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Town Hall: 229-8116

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New Marlborough 5 Village News

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All copy must be submitted no later than MAY 18.

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

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