



# New Marlborough 5 Village News

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Clayton • Hartsville • Mill River • New Marlborough • Southfield

## MILL RIVER MERGER

### *Jan Johnson Acquires the Mill River General Store*

By Robbi Hartt

The Covid-19 pandemic is not the only reason Mill River residents have missed their bustling meeting place in the village center. Since January 20, 2020, when Jess and Todd Holcomb ended their nearly three-year run as proprietors, the Mill River General Store has been operating on a limited basis with Dave Herrick as the owner/operator selling newspapers, coffee and pre-packaged sandwiches, a side wall full of household necessities, and (more recently) beer and wine. Village residents, second homeowners, and out-of-towners alike have been anxiously awaiting the removal of the “For Sale” sign and the next iteration of the property to be revealed.

Dave Herrick, owner of the property for twenty-nine years, bought the business from Jim Edelman in 1992 and the building from Jane Carpenter in 1995. For the past few years, Dave has been looking to sell both the building and business. Several offers were considered during



Photo by Joe Ponderexter

Jan and son, Peter Chapin

the pandemic, but as the economy inched toward fully reopening, a prospective buyer with long ties to Dave Herrick, motivation, and considerable investment in the Mill River community took the lead. Enter Jan Johnson and Mill River Farm. Transfer of the property from the Herricks (Dave and Dick Herrick and their sister, Mary Jo Piretti) to Jan and her son, Peter, was scheduled to take place as this issue of the *5 Village News* went to press.

“In keeping with its history since 1840, it was important to me that it remain a general store,” says Dave. Jan was not the only potential buyer planning to do that, but he and Jan have a history together that appealed to him. “Jan and I go way back,” he says. Known to restaurants throughout the Northeast as owner of Mill River Farm and to locals for the bounty of her farmstand on Brewer Hill Road, Jan admits she was not initially focused on the store. It was her son Peter who pointed out, “We need more space.” Encouraged by Dan Alden to consider the Mill River General Store, Pete later persuaded Jan to go and take a look.

What Jan saw when she visited the property intrigued her first and foremost as a place to increase the market for Mill River Farm products, but the “value-added possibilities down the road” were also important selling points, with space for a full kitchen, potential for more storage, an apartment to rent out, and the chance to bring the Post

*continued*

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Mill River Merger, continued

Office back to Mill River. She also welcomed Dave Herrick's promise to help during the transition. "They'll need an introduction to the sales people, suppliers, and rules of operation that I know, so they thought that would be beneficial," Dave explains.

What drew Jan, a former Walt Disney Co. vice president/attorney, to become an organic farmer in the foothills of the Southern Berkshires? While she had no roots in New Marlborough before 2013, she has had a long-time passion for farming.

Long before Google searches made it easy to access information, she attended classes and read books on farming. Retiring from a very successful career, Jan planned to buy some "nice, flat farmland," but Herb Abelow and Betsy Calhoun (previous owners of the house and land where she now lives) showed her that the hills, views, and local community offered a huge agricultural opportunity — and much more. "I was so impressed with Herb's involvement in and love for the local community," Jan explains, "I felt it was even more perfect than the place I originally had in mind."

It was Dave Herrick, in fact, a friend of Herb's and one with long ties to the Board of Selectmen, who accompanied Jan to the Board meeting in which she presented her initial plans for the farm. "That is a particularly New Marlborough story," she reflects. The Board was so enthusiastic and welcoming, she knew she had found a unique community.

Jan credits Joel Salatin of Polyface Farm in Virginia with mentoring her in organic farming techniques and proper stewardship of the land, showing her that it takes diversity of plants on the surface and micro bio-



Pete Chapin will manage day-to-day operations.

photo by Joe Poindexter

organisms beneath to produce the most nutrient-rich food. She is proud of her certified organic distinction; while it is more expensive, she feels good knowing that standard organic practices with regard to soil and feed are transparent and audited regularly. "We are constantly working to improve the quality of our soil," she says, pointing out that the evolving soil metrics are a sort of report card. "This is by far the hardest job I've ever done," she adds. "It requires every skill I have ever mastered. 'Is this all you've got?' it seems to ask, demanding 'Today we have to do more than yesterday.'"

Pete, thirty-one, was living in New York City when his mother decided to buy the farm. He jokes that he came to help with a dinner Jan was hosting ten years ago and never returned. He has had more than one hiatus from the farm, however — working for another farm for a while, joining a catering company, working as a line cook, and then working for three restaurants in New York state (Simon's Cat in Kinderhook, Blue Plate in Chatham, and Local 111 in Philmont). How does he feel about his return to farming? "I like the solitude," he says. He is quick to note that, while he plans to oversee operations, "We'll need a team to run the store, too." He and his girlfriend, Melany Dobson (chief brand officer of Hudson Hemp and daughter of Ted Dobson of Equinox Farm of Sheffield), plan to help behind the scenes, but he will hire "a manager and some young people" to cover the day-to-day work.

Mill River Farm, which owns thirty-two acres in Mill River and leases ten from Equinox Farm, currently supplies farm products to thirty to forty restaurants in



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Connecticut, New York, and the Berkshires, with distribution in Boston and Rhode Island as well. Plans for growth? “Not with the current price of land,” says Pete, adding that it’s hard to predict the future, but he is looking forward to more normal restaurant systems in the coming months.

Before the pandemic, Mill River Farm sales included some online orders from individuals, but the bulk of the business was with restaurants, schools, Fairview Hospital, and local farmers’ markets. Once the pandemic hit, according to Jan, “everything dried up” — no wholesalers buying, restaurants and schools closed, and farmers’ market crowds way down. Being resourceful, Jan bought more coolers to store her eggs, pork, and chicken, which left customers visiting the postage-stamp sized Farm Store with barely enough room to turn around. “The retail business held things together,” Jan notes, “but we were doing things in a very labor intensive way — filling orders, restocking coolers, recalculating inventory. The general store was the next logical step.”

The plan for the future Mill River General Store is a hybrid of farm and store practices. “We plan to stick to the basic concept of the general store,” says Pete. “That’s what it is and what people need.” There will be old standbys like deli sandwiches, convenience items to avoid a trip into Great Barrington, and beer and wine (“better wine,” he chuckles). And there will be new items like Mill River Farm fresh greens, honey, eggs, and chicken and pork products, possibly boxed lunches for picnics at Umpachene Falls, and definitely a working ice cream machine. As Jan noted in her presentation to the Board of Selectmen last month, there will be items sourced from other farms as well — products from local purveyors like Hosta Hill Farm, Burle Farm, High Lawn Farm, Tom Brazie’s The Farm New Marlborough, and Freddy Friedman’s farm.



Dave Herrick, right, his brother, Dick, and Jan celebrate the changing of the guard.

photo by Joe Poindexter

that means there’s a section that’s curtained off while it’s under construction. Then in late fall/early winter we’ll likely shut down for a longer period of time.” Initial plans call for the store to continue operate from 7:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Will the Post Office return? Dave Herrick has been working for months to get it back, including writing letters to members of Congress and addressing issues raised in the building code inspection. Jan says she is “highly enthusiastic about bringing it back.” Mill River residents miss being able to access their mail in the village and long for the return of the little yellow slip indicating they have a package. Perhaps even more, they miss the camaraderie of squeezing into the tiny aisle beside neighbors and friends. At this point, according to Dave, whether



Peter and Jan Johnson at their Mill River Farm store.

photo courtesy of Jan Johnson

or not the Post Office returns hinges on resolving much-disputed claims of electrical code violations. “We agree with the Herricks that there are no violations or unsafe conditions,” says Jan. “We’ve done our homework.”

Following the official transfer, Jan and Pete will begin tackling renovations and setting up shop. That and the lifting of Covid-19 restrictions will undoubtedly breathe new life into the village as spring turns into summer. New Marlborough residents can only hope that the Mill River General Store will once again be the beloved heart and hub of the community. □

## Town Business Is Your Business BOARD OF SELECTMEN



### April 20: The Capital Planning Committee's recommendations for borrowing and strategies for managing a \$3.8 million budget shortfall

With all three members joining remotely via Zoom, the Board met in joint session with the Finance Committee for an hour-long presentation by Michele McAuley, a member of both the Finance and Capital Planning Committees. She explained that the goal of a five-year plan developed by the Capital Planning Committee was to address the long-term capital needs of the Town while at the same time controlling tax growth.

The Committee began, said Ms. McAuley, by surveying Town department heads to get an estimate of capital needs over the next five years. With capital expenditures defined as investments in vehicles, equipment, infrastructure and real property greater than \$10,000, the Committee looked at the recent history of capital purchases by the Town and sources of capital going forward.

The committee did not, however, prioritize capital requests or judge their worthiness to the Town. "We're presenting a financial plan here, not a priority list of items," she said. Similarly, it did not address possible school district borrowings, saying the Town does not have control over those. "They're just presented to us to vote on."

What they got back from the department heads was "a big number," as McAuley put it, capital requests totaling \$8.5 million — a huge increase over the \$1.3 million in capital spending over the previous five years. Some of the bigger items include road projects totaling \$4 million and \$2.1 million to renovate Town Hall. But there were also trucks for the Highway Department, including a \$295,000 ten-wheeler, a tractor, a new ambulance, fire

department vehicles, a police cruiser, a bottle compactor, and an all-terrain vehicle.

For the purposes of its analysis the Committee broke the sources of capital funding into two broad categories: controllable and contingent sources. Controllables, Ms. McAuley explained, are "more or less guaranteed" sources of funding, including the state's Chapter 90 road repair fund, the Town's Stabilization Fund (basically a Town savings account), the Enterprise Fund, and taking on debt. Contingency sources of funding are those over which the town has little or no control. These include the Town's Free Cash, state and federal grants, and excess capacity, which is the difference between what the Town is legally allowed to tax under Proposition 2½ and what it actually taxes.

The Committee recommended that the Town can prudently borrow up to \$2.4 million for the duration of the five years of the plan. But this calculation comes with caveats. Debt can be taken in either ten-year or fifteen-year terms, but the lower-cost fifteen-year debt may be used only for buildings and road projects. The five-year plan calls for taking down \$600,000 of debt in each year of the four first years. Vehicle and equipment debt must be paid off in ten years.

Conceding that an increase in debt of this magnitude would put the Town well above the average level of debt in comparably-sized area towns, Ms. McAuley said the Committee nevertheless "feels comfortable with it because in looking at the tax impact, we didn't think it was too significant for taxpayers to bear." According to the Committee's calculations, \$2.4 million debt would add 37 cents to the tax rate, which on an average-value home of \$427,860 works out to an additional \$158 per year in taxes. To pay for vehicles and equipment, the Committee recommends that the Town commit itself to raising and



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appropriating a minimum of \$100,000 annually to the Stabilization Fund. "This is a key component to the plan," Ms. McAuley explained.

With the addition of some \$1.5 million (\$300,000 a year) in Chapter 90 money, plus \$150,000 from the Enterprise Fund (revenues collected from bills for ambulance services) to purchase a new ambulance, the town would be looking at a total of approximately \$4.7 million for capital investment over the next five years, according to a projection by the Committee. Ms. McAuley conceded that this amount would cover only 55 percent of the \$8.5 million request from department heads, leaving a funding gap of \$3.8 million. As the Committee views it, there are two ways of dealing with this shortfall: one is simply to postpone projects and purchases that exceed the \$4.7 million available to a future five-year plan; the other would be to hope that enough contingency funding comes available to fill in at least some of the gap.

Following her presentation, Ms. McAuley opened the floor to questions, but there was surprisingly little discussion. Ultimately, it will be up the Board to determine how much, if any, of the plan is adopted.

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**April 26: Fiber Connect's request for pole-placement permitting on North Road: discussion of road repair priorities; need for a curb-cut bylaw**

The Zoom meeting opened with a brief presentation by Fiber Connect President Adam Chait on his intention to extend fiber optic cable to Mark Walker's hilltop residence on North Road with the installation of twenty-two utility poles. **Highway Superintendent Chuck Loring said he would prefer that some of the planned pole placements be relocated farther from the road and that vulnerable trees be removed.** Mr. Chait agreed to confer

with Mr. Loring on pole placement and tree removal.

The Board then called for comment from Christine and Greg Ward, present at the Zoom meeting, who own property at the juncture of North Road and Old North Road. Ms. Ward said the property, on which they plan to build, was not yet connected to the electrical grid and asked Mr. Chait if Fiber Connect was coordinating with National Grid to have utility pole installation carry both fiber-optic and electrical cables. The sticking point, said Mr. Chait, is distance between poles. Fiber Connect can space them 400 feet apart; National Grid no more than 250 feet. He has been in touch with National Grid but so far has not worked out a relationship, which, based on past experience, he thought would remain unresolved for at least a year. Furthermore, Mr. Chait was of the opinion that if National Grid ran electrical service north (beyond the residence of Richard and Pam Stebbins) on North Road, all services would be combined on one set of poles.

The Fiber Connect application for pole permitting was sparked by its negotiation with Mark Walker to have his home connected to robust internet service via fiber optic cable. (Mr. Walker gets electrical power and phone service from Monterey.) Mr. Chait said he would be happy to speak with National Grid but that any decision of theirs to run utility poles up North Road was probably more than a year off. Mr. Walker interjected that he could not wait a year. In response, the Board suggested that the Wards talk to Mr. Walker about extending electrical power south of his residence to their property, and **Mr. Chait said he would reopen negotiations with National Grid about combining broadband and utility pole installation northward on North Road.**

Moving on to the FY22 budget, discussion centered on several capital projects and how to pay for them.

*Some of the bigger capital requests include road projects totaling \$4 million and \$2.1 million to renovate Town Hall.*

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Chairman White said that of two roads in need of attention, Canaan Valley Road would take precedence over Knight Road. (Amounts actually budgeted came to a vote at the May 22 Annual Town Meeting and are summarized in our ATM report, page 14.)

In further discussion of the Annual Town Meeting warrant, the selectmen pondered the need for a curb-cut bylaw, since there are no sidewalks in New Marlborough. They also debated the wisdom of reducing the number of complainants about junk cars from six to two — an abutter and one other town citizen — to instigate removal of the offending vehicle. Selectman Mark Carson said that the Planning Board, of which he is chairman, was concerned that a resident might resist calling out his junk-car owning abutter for fear of exacerbating neighborliness. He also asserted that what appears to be junk might in fact be a useful vehicle, citing an unregistered truck he owns with which he plows his driveway. Bylaw decisions were postponed to the May 3 meeting.

The Board approved the appointment of Caitlin Dawson Lalby to the Umpachene Falls Park Commission — for the remainder of the term ending June 30. Finally, it accepted a letter of resignation from Bob Noonan, who is recuperating from an illness, as Town treasurer. Ms. White said she would work on identifying candidates to fill the position.

### May 3: Granting of Fiber Connect pole permit; Hartsville residents' complaints of speeding vehicles; the Police Department's quarterly report

The Board (still Zooming) deliberated once more on Fiber Connect's request for a permit to put in twenty-two poles on North Road and granted the application subject to the company's assurance that it will remove trees that might jeopardize the cable and Highway Superintendent Loring's okay on pole placement. It also

granted a permit to Building Inspector Don Torrico for a trailer home on his property for up to one year while he builds a house there.

Zoom time was then turned over to Hartsville resident Sarah Jackson, who had joined the meeting to address the dangers, as she put it, of drivers speeding through her village. **Particularly during morning and evening rush hours, she said, "you take your life in your hands."** Abigail Crine, also of Hartsville, recalled that a radar speed sign at one time installed on Route 57 as it passed through Hartsville had helped, but it is no longer there, and "anyone walking on Main Street in Hartsville is in danger."

Various remedies were suggested. Principal among them was more comprehensive placement of speed-limit signs and speed limits painted on roadways throughout New Marlborough. Doug Newman, with Ms. Crine's concurrence, promoted the efficacy of speed bumps. Carrieanne Petrik of Mill River village informed the Board that state grant money is available to promote "traffic calming measures" — with applications due in September. Chairman Tara White said she would talk to Mr. Loring about these ideas. "We'll work on it," she said. (A story on how the Police and Highway Departments view the problem appears on page 13.)

Up next was a reading of the newly prepared quarterly report of Police Department activity from January to March by Police Chief Graham Frank. Noting the challenges imposed by the Police Reform Act, Chief Frank cited not only the pressure on the Department's budget to train part-time officers but also on the time it took from his regular policing duties in order to attend workshops and meetings. **It also enumerated calls for service (464), arrests (14), and citations for driving violations (109).**

A new cruiser, said the report, was put into service in January, replacing one that has been transferred to the Cemetery Commission. The Department was applying for a grant to purchase radios for the two cruisers still in operation and an upgrade to the computer in the older vehicle. Finance Committee Chairman Steve Klein, present at the meeting, thanked Chief Frank and remarked on the value of regular reports to show trends in Department costs and efficacy. He offered to help in the collation of data collected on a quarterly basis.

Most of the items in an hour-and-a-half long discussion of FY22 capital expenses were deferred yet again to a future meeting (see report below). The Board agreed that of the three roads most in need of repair, Hatchery Road was the most urgent and a budgeting request would be placed on the Town warrant for FY22.

**According to the Committee's calculations, \$2.4 million debt would add 37 cents to the tax rate.**

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The other two, Knight Road and Canaan Valley Road, would be put over to FY23.

With an agreement to sign a Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness grant request for a culvert assessment, the meeting was adjourned.

**May 7: Approval (mostly) of the FY22 budget proposal; signing on to a group purchasing agreement; allowance of a trailer home on private property while a residence is built there**

A special Friday morning meeting was called to come to agreement on the FY22 budget, bylaws, and other articles that will be proposed at the May 22 Annual Town Meeting. With the exception of whether to pay for certain Highway Department capital expenses out of savings or by incurring debt, the Board approved the FY22 budget and tuned up the wording on proposed bylaws for publication on the Town warrant.

It also signed an agreement with the Franklin (County) Regional Council of Governments that will enable New Marlborough to join other towns in the group purchasing of Highway Department materials and goods. The partnership takes effect starting July 1.

The Board postponed awarding a permit for a deck that is planned as an expansion of dining space at the rear of The Old Inn on the Green until it could make a site visit. It then discussed a trailer on Mill River Southfield Road where Great Barrington resident Gavin Pollack plans to build a home and determined that it was “officially” not a residence and therefore did not abridge any Town bylaw.

**May 11: Finalization of 2021 Annual Town Meeting warrant**

At long last, the Board signed off on the budget requests to be presented to voters on the warrant at the May 22 Town Meeting. (For results of the Town Meeting vote, see page 14.) The approval was preceded by

a lengthy discussion of whether to go into debt or savings to pay the \$295,000 purchase price of a ten-wheeler truck. Or as Selectman Richard Long put it, “Basically, it’s a philosophical question: pay now or pay later.” The Board elected to pay now and to ask voters to appropriate that amount from the Stabilization Account. Ignoring a Finance Department recommendation, the Board also approved borrowing \$210,000 for the long-awaited repair of Hatchery Road.

Before adjourning, the Board voted to cede to the animal control officer enforcement of the bylaw that prohibits dogs running unleashed on any but the owner’s property.

Joe Poindexter

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*The Board agreed that of the three roads most in need of repair, Hatchery Road was the most urgent.*

**May 17: Reorganization of the Board; approval of Charter Communications pole permit;**

**granting of a conservation restriction on North Road to The Trustees; Memorial Day plans; award of contracts to resurface sections of Mill River Great Barrington and Canaan Southfield Roads; authorization to auction certain pieces of Highway Department equipment; approval to hire a municipal borrowing consultant; rejection of a Police Department request to cover a \$6,000 shortfall in its FY21 budget**

The first order of business, following Town elections, was to reorganize the Board. The selectmen voted to appoint Richard Long chairman, replacing outgoing chairman Tara White, and then appointed selectman Mark Carson vice chair.

The Board reviewed and approved an application for a pole permit from broadband contractor Charter Communications. As presented by Charter’s John Decker, the thirty-five-foot wooden utility pole will be located at the corner of Bock Way and Hartsville New Marlborough Road to serve the three homes



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on Bock Way along with seven homes on Hillside Avenue that otherwise would not be served under the 4 percent exclusion permitted under Charter's contract with the Town.

The Board reviewed and granted a conservation restriction to the Trustees for a three-acre parcel on North Road. As explained by the Trustees' Vanessa Farny, the restriction provides protection in perpetuity of the scenic values along the North Road corridor, including water resources and wildlife. Interestingly, as Ms. Farny noted, the restriction was actually recorded twenty years ago, but due to a bureaucratic oversight was never approved by the Town or by the state's Environmental Affairs Department, now called the Department of Energy and Environmental Affairs.

In a memorandum of support, the Town's Conservation Commission wrote that the restriction "will ensure that the Premises will be retained in perpetuity predominantly in [its] natural, scenic and open condition and will prevent any use of the Premises that will significantly impair or interfere with the conservation value of the Premises." It was signed by Committee Co-Chairs John Schreiber and Freddy Friedman.

The Board met with Memorial Day coordinator David Hastings for an update on his plans for this year's celebration, which is being observed on Monday, May 31. He said that as of this moment there will not be a parade, that under school district restrictions the musicians in the Mount Everett High marching band must be ten feet apart and the road simply isn't wide enough to accommodate that kind of distancing. Instead, the band will perform in the Ormsbee Garage parking lot across the road from the library, where the

ceremony will be held, and will provide two trumpeters to play taps at the ceremony.

As Mr. Hastings noted, citing the May 17 announcement from the governor's office that virtually all Covid-19 restrictions are being lifted as of May 29, things are changing very quickly. He said he's still not

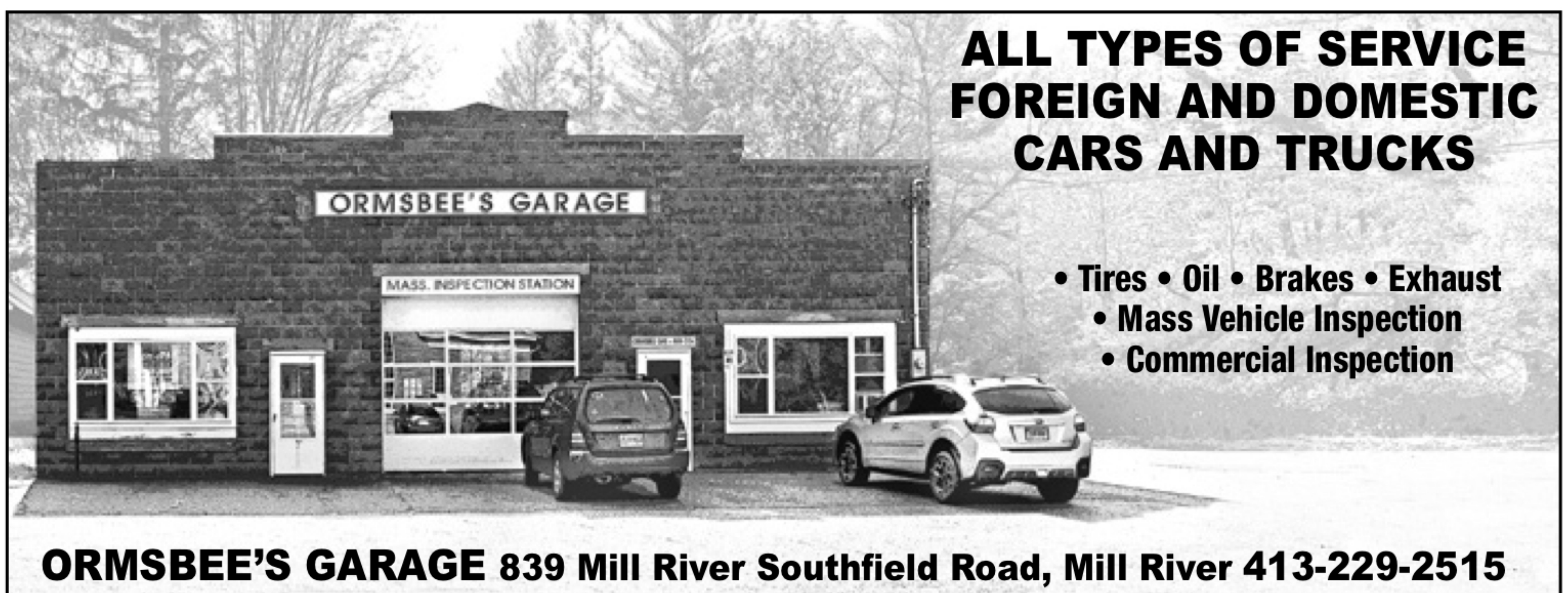
sure whether there will be a Town chorus and is looking to Board of Health Agent Scott McFarland for guidance. He also hasn't resolved whether the troupe from Gymnastics Unlimited will participate and is looking to the Board for a decision. Mr. McFarland said if the governor's lifting of restrictions goes forward on Saturday, the 29th, there will be no restrictions on a Memorial Day

gathering. A decision on the Town chorus, he added, would be up to Mr. Hastings. Similarly, Mr. Hastings would determine whether the gymnastics troupe would perform. The guest speaker this year will be Jim Parrish, an archeologist and local historian, who will appear in Revolutionary War garb, complete with musket (which he plans to fire) and deliver a talk about the life of a Revolutionary War soldier.

In other matters, the Board voted to award a contract to LB Corp. of Lee to repave Mill River Great Barrington Road from the Great Barrington town line to its intersection with Adsit Crosby Road. **LB's was the lowest of five bids at \$156,980 — and \$30,000 less than Highway Superintendent Chuck Loring estimated the repaving would cost.** Mr. Loring said LB, which is also repaving Route 57, should be ready to start on Mill River Great Barrington Road this week and is expected to complete it within about two weeks. LB was also the lowest of five bidders for the Adsit Crosby Road project at \$38,120.

Moving on, the Board awarded a chip-seal contract

*"Basically, it's a philosophical question: pay now or pay later."*



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for the upper portion of Canaan Southfield Road, from Norfolk Road to just past the Hadsell Street bridge, to All States Construction Inc. of Sunderland, Massachusetts, for its bid of \$156,493. There were no other bidders. All States did the chip seal work on the southern portion of the road last year.

The Board also authorized Mr. Loring to put up for auction ten pieces of surplus equipment on the Municibid online government auction. To his knowledge, said Mr. Loring, none of the road equipment going up for bid has been used in his eight years as highway superintendent. The list includes a fourteen-year-old ice and snow sander, a forty-plus-year-old drag box, a seventeen-year-old snowplow, and a military surplus generator with trailer. He estimates the individual items will bring less than \$10,000 each. Also going up for bid is the 2004 police cruiser and the nineteen-year-old recently decommissioned Amman road roller.

In order to better manage the Town's grant application process and to ensure adequate staff is available to administer the grants, the Board endorsed a grant management policy that requires its pre-approval of all municipal grant applications. The policy applies to all Town departments, committees, and commissions, with memos going out to that effect.

The Board reviewed and approved a three-year municipal borrowing advisory agreement with the Fiscal Advisory Services unit of Unibank of Whitinsville, Massachusetts, to advise and assist the Town in the authorization, sale, and delivery of general obligation bonds, notes, and other certificates of indebtedness. The Board wondered whether the fees involved were on the high side, but Mr. Long noted that it is a standard agreement and that there are no exclusivity clauses in the agreement. "So if we sign [the agreement], we don't necessarily have to use

it," he said.

Finally, the Board dismissed a request from Police Chief Graham Frank for nearly \$6,000 from the Reserve Fund to cover his overdrawn budget. According to Selectman White, who is also the Town accountant, the request included money for uniforms and equipment

for part-time officers, repairs to the cruiser, and some \$3,000 in gasoline bills. The Board's exasperation with his spending and budgeting skills was evident from the discussion. "I just don't understand why he's gone over budget so much," said Mr. Long, "so before taking any action on this I would prefer to see a line item account of what's been spent versus what was budgeted. I'm concerned we're not taking budget limitations seriously.

We have to control our budgets and live within them." The Board did recommend making a Reserve Fund payment of \$1,370 to Watson Automotive for cruiser repairs, mainly because the selectmen felt uncomfortable with making Danny Watson, a local businessman, wait an extra month for his money. Chief Frank did not attend this evening's meeting.

Following a one-hour review of recent meeting minutes, the meeting was adjourned at 7:59 p.m. □

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***The Board dismissed a request from Police Chief Graham Frank for nearly \$6,000 from the Reserve Fund to cover his overdrawn budget.***

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## VIEW FROM THE BOARD

Another Annual Town Meeting is now past. Many key topics were addressed, including most significantly the annual operating budget, capital expenditures, new bylaws, and bylaw revisions. (See story, page 14.) There are other pending Town issues of which you should be aware.

The new Capital Planning Committee is focused on a five-year planning horizon for needed capital investment in our Town, most of which is for physical infrastructure along with related equipment needs. Other large requirements coming at us include fire-protection equipment, a new ambulance, and certain Town Hall renovations. The Committee identified substantial capital requirements for the next five years that exceed past spending. While much of the need can be addressed through known sources, including the Stabilization Fund, contingent Free Cash, reasonable debt, and, hopefully, grants, we will be challenged to fill the gap in total needed funding. Over the next year, we will seek to provide you with more information and seek your feedback on these needs and their financing.

Another important item of which you should be aware is that the Historical Commission has been working on a draft bylaw that would impact your property rights. A public hearing is tentatively scheduled for late June. All residents will want to be fully informed on the details of what the Commission is proposing.

Significant roadway improvement work is now underway on Route 57, Great Barrington Mill River Road, and Adsit Crosby Road. These projects total \$1.2 million in cost, all of which we have been able to fund with state money. Repair of the severely deteriorated Hatchery Road was addressed in Annual Town Meeting. We are submitting a grant application to the state MassWorks program in early June for an additional \$1 million to continue further rehabilitation work on Route 57.

Over the past year we have sought to address improved, competitive wage rates for Town employees. A corollary to this effort is to revise and update all Town personnel policies. This task primarily is being done internally, but with external consulting advice from human resource consultants at the University of Massachusetts' Collins Center. We hope to further strengthen the human resources function by obtaining access to a professional HR Director to be shared with the towns of Great Barrington, Monterey, Sheffield, and Egremont.

At the start of each new fiscal year, the Select Board appoints dozens of volunteers to serve on numerous committees and commissions to aid in accomplishing the work and needs of the Town. We are always in need of new volunteers. If you have an interest, browse the various committees on the Town website, and send a written indication of your interest to [nmbos@newmarlboroughma.gov](mailto:nmbos@newmarlboroughma.gov).

The Board looks forward to keeping you informed throughout the new fiscal year. □

*Chairman Richard Long*



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## CONSERVATION COMMISSION

**May 18:** Mark Stinson, Circuit Rider from the Department of Environmental Protection, joined the Zoom meeting convened by Commission members Freddy Friedman, Doug Hyde, John Schreiber, and Nanci Worthington. Mr. Stinson assists and educates Massachusetts conservation commissions in the interpretation and enforcement of the Wetlands Protection Act.

The meeting started with Mike Kulig of Berkshire Engineering, appearing on behalf of his clients, Mitchell and Diane Feinberg of Konkapot Road, to clarify for the Commission that the work permitted in the Notice of Intent (NOI) dated March 1993 never commenced. The Commission agreed to file the order of conditions as “invalid,” which effectively will clear the property deed.

Next, Vanessa Farney for The Trustees addressed the Commission regarding a glitch in the filing of a conservation restriction on its property on North Road, recorded in 2000. Ms. Farney asked the Commission for a letter of recommendation addressed to the Board of Selectmen indicating their approval that the restriction has public value. The Commission agreed to draft such a letter.

Next, the Commission discussed a request from Emily Renshaw of Morgan, Lewis and Bocklus LLP on behalf of her clients Margaret and Joseph Koerner of 2128 Canaan Southfield Road. Ms. Renshaw, who did not join the Zoom meeting, had requested an emergency permit to remove a dead tree threatening a bridge on the property. The Commission asserted that the tree removal did not warrant an emergency permit and denied the request. It then recommended that Ms. Renshaw re-submit a revised NOI (originally submitted on May 10, 2021) with upgraded engineering plans describing the work to stabilize the river bank in the area of the bridge.

Jonah Harshbarger of Mill River Great Barrington

Road joined the Zoom meeting to seek clarification of a recently issued enforcement order from the Commission. At issue is tree removal and planting in a riverfront area without proper permitting. Mr. Stinson confirmed for Mr. Harshbarger that any work within 200 feet of a river requires permitting with the Commission. Mr. Harshbarger explained that he did not realize the work was in a regulated area and agreed to seek professional consultation to pursue remediation.

Moving on to new business, the Commission agreed to sign off on a special permit for the Old Inn on the Green to build a new outside terrace. It found that the work did not impact any jurisdictional wetland resources.

Finally, the Commission discussed at great length how to address a recent complaint from an abutter to property owned by Grassmarket LLC on Konkapot Road. At issue is a new road constructed next to the abutter’s property. The Commission had made a site visit to the area and observed from the road what the abutter was complaining about. Mr. Stinson stepped in to assist the Commission in determining where jurisdiction is applicable and where it is not. He reviewed what conditions would exempt agricultural activities from wetland regulations, described the partner role of the Massachusetts Endangered Species Act, and suggested next steps the Commission might take. It agreed to hire a consultant to determine if the observed activity is jurisdictional.

The Commission noted the recording of a Certificate of Compliance for Sanford Panitch of Adsit Crosby Road and receipt of a new draft of the Massachusetts Priority Habitat Map. After approving minutes of the previous meeting as amended, it scheduled its next meeting for June 26. □

*Martha Bryan*



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## PLANNING BOARD

**May 12:** This bi-monthly meeting of the Planning Board, via Zoom, was attended by all members of the Board, plus Peter Platt, Freddy Friedman, and Sharon Fleck. As the first order of business, Chairman Mark Carson asked the members to weigh in with their thoughts on a special permit application from Old Inn on the Green owner Peter Platt to erect a large tent for outdoor dining directly behind the Inn. The plan for the space includes a platform, and the north edge of the tent will run parallel to North Road, set back twelve feet from the edge of the road. The tent and platform would be removed for the winter months.

Planning Board member Bob Hartt said, "As a business management person, I feel we should bend over backwards to support our restaurants. We would not be doing our job if we don't push the Board of Selectmen to approve." Paul Marcel, however, had some concerns about the closeness of the tent to the road. Mr. Platt said he understood, but that the physical limitations of the property dictated the proximity to the road.

Mr. Carson asked for a vote on sending the Planning Board's recommendation to the Board of Selectmen. Four members were in favor, with only Mr. Marcel voting in the negative, saying that he could not support the plan without input from Highway Superintendent Chuck Loring.

Moving on, Mr. Carson expressed his appreciation for the fine job Sharon Fleck is doing as the recording secretary.

Mark Carson then described to the other members the strategy that will be used at the Annual Town Meeting with regard to the two bylaw proposals – junk cars and curb cuts – that will be on the warrant. He said that, rather than bringing them forward as additions to the Town's Protective Bylaws, which would require a two-thirds vote to pass, these will be presented for inclusion in the General Bylaws, needing only a simple majority to pass. He added that, going this route also bypasses

the requirement for a public hearing on each of the proposed bylaws. He said that he had heard there might be some pushback from the public, particularly on the junk car bylaw. Bob Hartt observed, "If the community doesn't want it, it doesn't want it."

Mr. Hartt then asked what might be on the agenda for the May 26 meeting, and it was agreed that the Dark Sky initiative would be one of the topics. There was mention of a list of future areas of interest that had been developed by the former chairman, Daniel Doern. Mr. Carson said he would ask Mr. Doern for the list, which he believed includes such topics as ridgeline protection and population density around Lake Buel. He also said that he hoped the Board would look into the possibility of common driveways, so land owners can better develop back acreage, and to cut down on the number of new curb cuts. Tom Sebestyn pointed out that this topic might have to be examined in tandem with the Subdivision Control Bylaw.

Lastly, Bob Hartt suggested that the Board touch base with the Historical Commission about the possible creation of a regulation governing the demolition of buildings within the historic districts. □

*Larry Burke*



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# WHAT'S THE HURRY?

## Addressing an uptick in Speeding

Four citizens joined the May 3 meeting of the Board of Selectmen to express their concern about a dangerous road condition in town. No, it wasn't potholes; it was speeding vehicles. The residents of Hartsville, in particular, expressed their fears for dog walkers and bikers on the main thoroughfare through their village. During morning and afternoon rush hours, "you take your life in your hands," said Sarah Jackson of Hartsville.



A speed limit reminder in Southfield village

photo by Joe Poindexter

In a memo to the Board, Ad-sit Crosby Road resident Lucinda Shmulsky concurred. "Traffic through the village centers and on small side roads... often moves much too fast for the safety of everyone involved," she wrote. "We seem to have many more people, families, children, baby carriages, dogs, and bicyclers enjoying walks and/or bike rides outside on these rural county roads. It would be nice if residents could do so safely with drivers using normal common sense and respecting pedestrians' right to use our roads as well."

Suggestions advanced at the Board meeting included more speed limit signs, speed limits painted on the roadways approaching villages, speed bumps, electronic speed readers, and an increase in police surveillance. Helpful remedies, perhaps, but there are impediments.

Police Chief Graham Frank agrees with the prognosis. There are more people in town, he says, and therefore more traffic and more drivers unfamiliar with the town's rural roadways. The Police Department owns a speed trailer, but the solar-powered battery inside it is not recharging, and new trailers would have to come out of an already stressed budget. Similarly, according to Chief

Frank, there is as much traffic enforcement as his budget will allow — the Department wrote 109 citations, most of them for speeding, in the first quarter of 2021. Rumble strips, to remind drivers they are entering villages might be useful, he says. Speed bumps, however, are not permitted on public roads.

"I don't disagree," says Highway Superintendent Chuck Loring, regarding the speeding problem. Increased signage might help, "but we lose signs every year," says Mr. Loring.

The stop sign at the junction of North Road and New Marlborough Hartsville Road was recently unbolted, and signs at Rhoades and Bailey Road and Shea Lane (twice) have disappeared in the past year. Mr. Loring plans to secure signs with anti-theft bolts and is considering spraying grease on concrete signposts to discourage vandalism. Warnings painted on roadways might help, said Mr. Loring, but these, too, come at a price: one worker to paint the warning, two to guide traffic for up to two hours around the wet paint.

On the other hand, the current speed limits in New Marlborough were established in 1977, when cars were a lot less maneuverable, and might, in Mr. Loring's view, be moved up a bit. The state determines speed limits (the white signs; yellow advisory signs are placed at the discretion of local governments) and where signs should be placed.

Finding the solution is almost always harder than defining the problem. New Marlborough has made a start. □

Joe Poindexter

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# THE 2021 ANNUAL TOWN MEETING

By Larry Burke

A fairly modest crowd, numbered around 75, gathered under a very large tent behind the New Marlborough Central School on a comfortably warm morning on Saturday, May 22, to participate in the business of the town. After introductory remarks by Moderator Barry R. Shapiro, extolling the traditions of the New England town meeting, the business end of the meeting got underway around 9:15 a.m. Within minutes, Mr. Shapiro had guided the assembled crowd very efficiently through the first seventeen of the thirty-nine articles on the warrant.

On Article 18, which proposed the amounts for salaries and expenses relating to the protection of persons and property in New Marlborough, Prudence Spaulding put a hold on the line item for compensation of the Animal Inspector (herself), using it as an opportunity to hold forth on various rules and regulations relating to dog ownership, as well as to praise the efforts of the animal control officer, Cassie Keeley. She was rewarded with a nice round of applause.

Moving smoothly along to Article 26, which asked the Town to raise and appropriate \$8,000 to support the work of the Regional School Planning Committee (the group that is working on the possible consolidation of the Southern Berkshire and Berkshire Hills school districts), School Committee member Carrieanne Petrik urged the public to become as involved and aware as possible concerning the actions of the Planning Committee, as the result of its work could have a major impact on the future of



photo by Larry Burke

*Lingering effects of the pandemic contributed to sparse attendance.*



*Police Chief Graham Frank directed voters to the sign-in table.*  
photo by Joe Poindexter



*Moderator Barry Shapiro kept the meeting moving briskly.*  
photo by Larry Burke

our smaller schools, New Marlborough Central for one.

Possibly the longest and most contentious debate of the morning took place over Article 33, which asked that the voters approve a transfer of \$295,000 from the Stabilization Fund for the purchase of a 10-wheel dump truck for the Highway Department. John Pshenishny, a member of the Finance Committee, stood to object to this purchase, saying that the Highway Department had plenty of trucks

that are underutilized, and those should be sold before a new truck is purchased. A number of Town officials – Finance Committee members Barbara Marchione and Douglas Newman, and Selectman Mark Carson – countered Mr. Pshenishny, who, in turn, fought back with his opinion that the fleet of trucks outnumbers the available drivers. Eventually, though, the arguments in favor of the new truck won out, and the article passed



From Left, Town Administrator Mari Enoch, Selectmen Mark Carson, Tara White, and Richard Long, and Town Counsel Jeremia Pollard

photo by Joe Poindexter

with a clear two-thirds majority.

The next article that demonstrated a difference of opinion between Finance Committee members was Article 34, which sought to raise money by borrowing for the purpose of repairing Hatchery Road in Hartsville. Committee Chairman Steve Klein said that, while the committee is “not opposed to the project in principle,” the majority of the committee felt that action on the deteriorated road should wait until there is a full plan in place for roads town-wide. Douglas Newman backed up Mr. Klein, saying, “road projects should not be funded by debt.” He also thought that the Town should wait until the outcome of the national debate on funding for infrastructure is known. Ms. Marchione, on the other hand, held forth that Hatchery Road needs to be done this year. Selectman Richard Long agreed with Ms. Marchione, saying the road is falling apart, and, countering Mr. Newman, said that the Capital Planning Group feels that long-term debt is the best way to finance major road projects. Citing environmental concerns, Carrieanne Petrik questioned the advisability of continuing to reconstruct an asphalt roadway alongside the Konkapot River. The discussion ended in a vote with thirty-seven in favor and fourteen against, clearing the two-thirds required for approval.

The only article on the warrant to go down in defeat was Article 37, which



Carrieanne Petrik made an impassioned argument against the proposed junk car bylaw.

photo by Larry Burke

proposed to expedite the process of removing junk cars, boats, or trailers. Planning Board member Paul Marcel told the audience that the existing bylaw required six complaints to be lodged in order to initiate action, where the new version would only require two – an abutter and any other town resident. The stated purpose of the revised bylaw would be “to protect property values and the aesthetic character of the community.” Mill River resident Carrieanne Petrik spoke passionately against this article, saying it penalizes people with lower income. Carrieanne Petrik said that this kind of restriction would open the door to ever more intrusive regulations by the Town, and closed with, “It’s not our business.” Douglas Newman of Hartsville stood to say he was swayed by Carrieanne Petrik’s remarks, and would oppose such a bylaw. The article was then put to a vote and failed by a wide margin.

The other bylaw proposed by the Planning Board, having to do with regulation of new curb cuts for driveways (Article 39), did pass with no pushback.

Moderator Shapiro then asked David Hastings to say a word, and that turned out to be an invitation to all to attend the somewhat down-sized Memorial Day observance at the library in Mill River on May 31. With that, the meeting was adjourned at 10:15 a.m. – an exercise in efficient governance. □



Selectman Mark Carson defended the purchase of a new Highway Department truck.

photo by Larry Burke

# CHANGE OF HEART

*For the Purchaser of Cassilis Farm, the Financials Didn't Work Out*

A much anticipated newcomer to New Marlborough won't be moving in after all. The John Dewey Academy's planned relocation from Searles Castle in Great Barrington to the Cassilis Farm in New Marlborough village, as reported in the January 2021 issue of the *5 Village News*, has been cancelled. Skyrocketing construction costs and unforeseen renovation issues have caused the project to be abandoned, says John Dewey Academy owner Dr. David E. Baum.



Cassilis Farm

photo courtesy of LandVest

"The costs of renovating the farm are prohibitive," says Dr. Baum. "There are just too many factors affecting us as a school trying to make the property work. Trying to bring 19th century buildings up to 21st century building codes for schools is close to impossible." Even if construction prices go back to their pre-pandemic level, says Dr. Baum, returning to the farm is a non-starter. "The only way we would be able to manage Cassilis Farm would be to get waivers across the board — to allow us to occupy and use the property as if there were no change in use. It would take years to get such waivers in Boston and locally, if at all," he says. He does not say why he failed to anticipate the magnitude of necessary renovation before he bought the property.

Dr. Baum purchased Cassilis Farm in November of 2020 with the expectation of opening the Dewey Academy there this fall. For the time being the school has continued to operate in Searles Castle, but it will now

move to Great Barrington's Thornewood Inn in June while a permanent residence is located. Although the students are disappointed, they seem to be taking it in stride, says Dr. Baum, and are excited about moving to the inn.

Putting the farm behind him, Dr. Baum acknowledges that while the future is undecided, it does leave the school's choice for its new location wide open.

"We're taking it slowly as we reconsider our long-term home," he says. "We have a lease on the Thornewood Inn that gives us some time to look at a variety of options, including building from scratch rather than trying to retrofit an existing property."

"I'm disappointed that we won't be making New Marlborough our home in the short run," says Dr. Baum. "We may be considering some undeveloped property in the town, so down the road, who knows?"

Cassilis Farm is being offered by Landvest, an affiliate of Christie's International Real Estate, at \$1.89 million. (According to the website Zillow, it was purchased by Dewey Academy last November for \$1.24 million.) Cindy Welch of Landvest says there is buyer interest, including for such diverse uses as an art center, a congregate living facility, or even returning it to its original function as an active horse farm. Ms. Welch is optimistic: "I think there are creative uses for the farm, and there are people who can make a contribution to the town by putting it to use." □

Steve Nester

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# LAND TRUST NEWS

Long live the Rooney farmhouse! After five years of vetting ideas from the community for a viable “use” for the abandoned farmhouse — from a commercial kitchen to affordable housing to demolition and everything in between — the Land Trust is thrilled

to have connected with a young family willing to restore the farmhouse and make New Marlborough their home.

After much discussion with the couple to secure and clarify our shared goals, the Land Trust agreed to a private sale of the farmhouse and 1.24 acres. The sale accomplishes our goal to preserve the integrity of the natural landscape along with the historical, social landscape held in the Rooney farmhouse. As a result of the sale, the Land Trust maintains stewardship of the remaining 114 +/- acres of the New Marlboro Preserve including Willow Creek, the Umpachene River and their associated habitats; the farmhouse is restored; New Marlborough grows and gains a young family; the new parcel gets added to the tax rolls. We feel lucky to have found a “partner” who shares our commitment to the land and the town.

We look forward to seeing the Rooney farmhouse come back to life.

*Executive Director Martha Bryan*



photo by Martha Bryan

The Rooney farmhouse on New Marlborough Southfield Road



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# THEN & NOW

In last month's foray into the New Marlborough Then & Now archives, we left off with Ethel Stannard expressing her regret that she had not taken up the offer by Marcus Rogers to be his wife Electa's companion during their winter months' residency in Florida back in the early 1900s. So, who then was Marcus Rogers? In short, he was one of New Marlborough's most accomplished native sons - journalist, publisher, holder of patents, owner of *The Berkshire Courier*, and, to the town's lasting thanks, the force behind the building of the original public library in Mill River.

What follows is biographical information, assembled from Marcus Rogers's own writings, by another fine Mill River resident, Mary Wrinkle, that appeared in the July 1979 issue of *Then & Now*. This first-person account leaves us hanging in mid-career with a "to be continued." So, to flesh out the rest of the story, we are including excerpts from a piece that appeared in the 1975 *Informal History of the Town of New Marlborough, Massachusetts*, published by the New Marlborough Bicentennial Commission and written by longtime Berkshire Eagle columnist Gerard Chapman.

## THE STORY OF MARCUS ROGERS

By Mary Wrinkle

Marcus H. Rogers was born in Mill River, October 14, 1835, in the old inn across the street from the Town Hall. He was the son of Hebron Rogers, proprietor of that inn, and his wife, the former Levisa Harmon, a descendant of one of the first settlers.

At the age of thirteen, a cousin gave him a blue matchbox half-full of old type. This aroused such enthusiasm for printing that he worked to get money to purchase more. To quote him: "I became clerk in Hollister's store and post office (at \$12.50 a month) during the school vacation of 1854, and I bought for \$14.00 twenty-

nine pounds of type, a pair of cases, and a composing stick. They were received the day before the end of my employment in the store - I had never known a day that seemed so long, and, horrors, the next day was Sunday!

"I had a picture of the press at which Ben Franklin had worked, and, with my mother's cheese press for a model, I built a very good and substantial printing press. I made an ink roller of buckskin leather, having read that inking balls were made of it in the early days of printing. Then, in November of 1854, I commenced publication of a little paper, naming it *The Rising Sun*, and continued it monthly while I was attending high school." It had nearly 200 subscribers, and each issue had an article on astronomy. "The last issue was named *The Setting Sun*, for which I made the additional letters required by casing them in plaster of Paris molds.

"In drifting about the world, I went to Pittsburgh in 1858, where I secured a position with *The Pittsburgh Post* by showing a little booklet of seventy-two pages I had



Marcus Rogers in his prime, circa 1870

printed on my old press during the summer. This so pleased the proprietor, after saying he did not wish to hire another, that he made a place for me.

"After three months, however, the opportunity opened to form a partnership and take management of *The Berkshire Courier* at Great Barrington. The first issue under my charge was dated January 2, 1862. After three years, I purchased the establishment and displaced the old hand-powered press with a modern power press, bought with borrowed money.

"The paper's circulation increased and it became important to get a machine for folding the newspaper. There were folding machines at the time requiring a separate feeding of the sheets. I wanted one that could be attached directly to the press, but was told it was not practicable. This spurred my mechanical ideas into activity. Employing a mechanic to do the work under my direction, in eight weeks I had a folding machine in successful use: the papers being printed, folded, and packed in a box by one operation. The machine was the first that ever worked successfully, attached to a drum cylinder press, and was subsequently patented. It added greatly to the *Courier's* supremacy in its field and something to its fame and importance. (And, it made a fortune for its inventor. - M.W.)

"Country papers at that time did not publish much local news. A copy of *The Pittsfield Sun* in 1848, for instance, did not contain a single local item. An incident had occurred when I was clerking at the village store in the summer of '54 which had a wonderful influence, not only in promoting the prosperity of the *Courier*, but

directly upon country journalism all over the country. The village blacksmith, Jonas Cone by name, abundantly endowed with the 'gift of gab,' took his still more abundant wife out in a row boat upon one of the mill ponds for recreation. He deemed it amusing to frighten her by rowing near the brink, when, the current being strong for him, the boat fell twenty-two feet flat upon the rocks below, the occupants not being injured beyond a thorough soaking.

"Somehow that incident was deemed of sufficient importance to be printed in the *Courier*. When, a dozen years later, I was casting about for a means to make the *Courier* more popular, I recalled how eager people had been to read about Jonas Cone's adventure. Just around that time, a gentleman from a nearby town came into my office one day, and, on my suggestion that he send in some local news from his town every week, he decided to try it. The man, George Shepard from Sandisfield, developed into a first class correspondent, and the number of newspapers sold weekly in his town increased from eight to fifty-two. I engaged correspondents as fast as I could find them, with the result that the circulation of the *Courier* increased by leaps and bounds.

"I was invited to deliver an address before the New York State Editors and Publishers Convention, and that was the first of its kind giving practical suggestions for the betterment of country journals, and was printed in the *Newspaper Gazette*, which went into every major newspaper in the country. Portions of it were copied into the London newspaper, *The World*. Immediately, my nearest newspaper editors began to adopt my methods, and some of them tried to hire my correspondents away from me! Many old fogies made noisy protest against it. Some made threats of horse-

**UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.**

MARCUS H. ROGERS, OF GREAT BARRINGTON, MASSACHUSETTS.

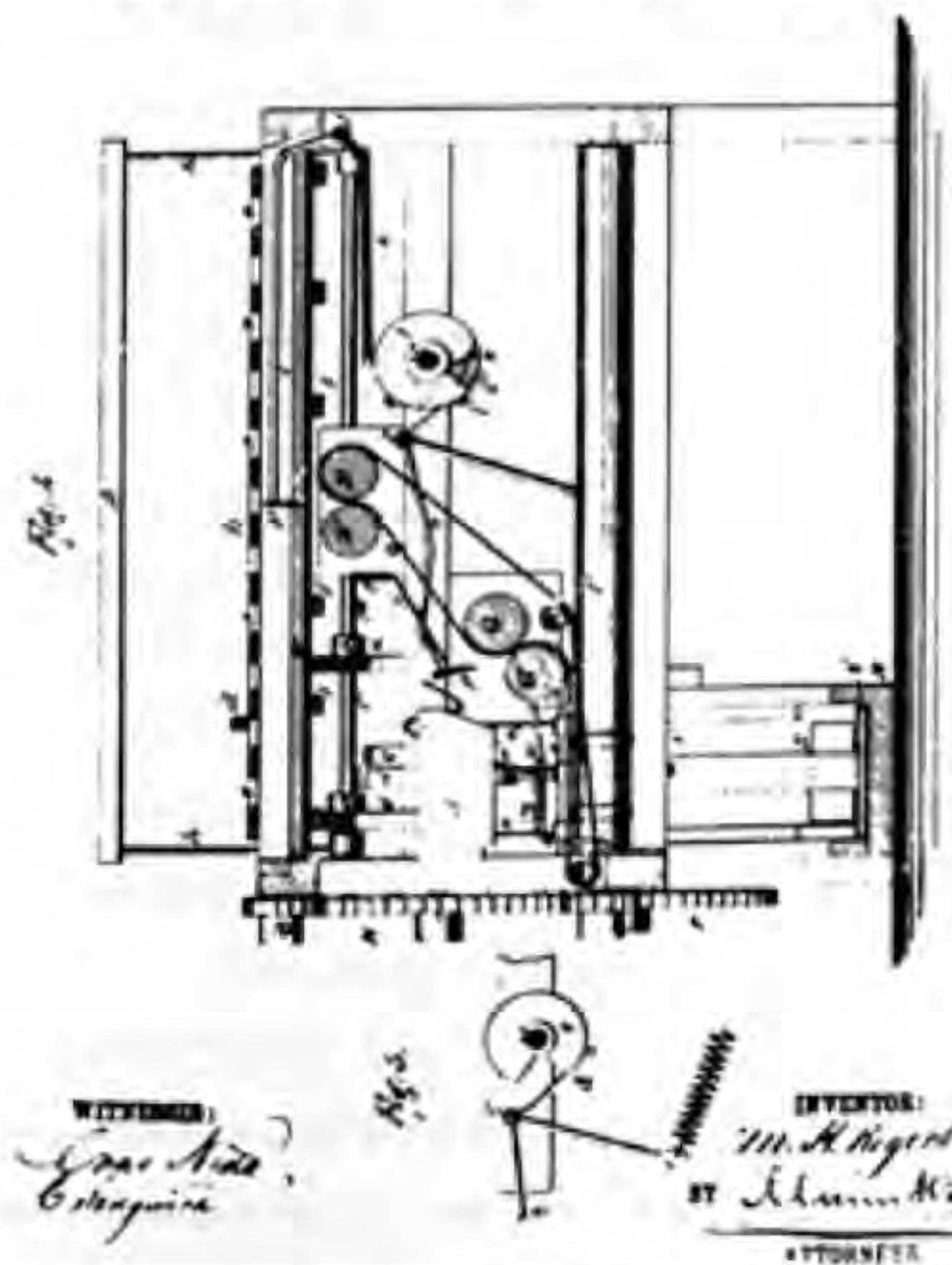
IMPROVEMENT IN NEWSPAPER-FOLDING MACHINES.

Specification forming part of Letters Patent No. 205,301, dated June 25, 1878; application filed January 14, 1875.

To all whom it may concern:  
Be it known that I, MARCUS H. ROGERS, of Great Barrington, in the county of Berkshire and State of Massachusetts, have invented a new and Improved Newspaper-Folding Machine, of which the following is a specification:

MARCUS HARMON ROGERS,  
Witnesses:  
R. N. COOPER,  
FRANK DURANT.

M. H. ROGERS.  
Newspaper-Folding-Machine.  
No. 205,301. Patented June 25, 1878.



The patent for the newspaper folding machine invented by Marcus Rogers

Pittsfield in 1887. Owing to ill health, however, he sold the *Eagle* in early 1889, and, "finding the Berkshire winters too severe and debilitating, he and Mrs. Rogers resumed spending their winters in Florida."



whipping, and I still preserve an anonymous letter threatening to burn the new *Courier* Building (which I had built in Great Barrington), if I did not stop printing 'gossip.' I did not stop, and the *Courier* Building still stands." [The building is currently the home of Rubiner's Cheesemongers & Grocers on Main Street in Great Barrington.]

We now turn to Gerard Chapman to finish the story of Marcus Rogers.

Following the construction of the *Courier* Building in 1870 and his marriage to Electa S. Shaw in 1873, and "after seventeen years of responsibility for *The Berkshire Courier*, Rogers sold it on December 31, 1878, to Clark W. Bryan of Springfield, a newspaper owner and book publisher. He and Electa thereupon spent several winters in Florida, travelled in Europe and around the world, and lived for a year in Spain."

Chapman goes on to write that Rogers, "yearning to smell printer's ink again," bought *The Berkshire County Eagle* in

As Marcus Rogers entered his 80's, he set his sights on one last great enterprise. As Gerard Chapman writes, "However far he wandered, Marcus Rogers loved the village of his birth, and determined to leave his beneficence upon it." He decided that the town should have a proper library, and, despite the opposition of a group of taxpayers, he promised to set up a trust fund 'to share with the town forever in its mainte-

Marcus Rogers' first printing press, now a part of the New Marlborough Historical Society's collection

photo by Larry Burke



*Crews of men and their teams of horses worked on the grading of New Marlborough's first public library in 1920.*

nance.' He also took it upon himself to solicit funds from Andrew Carnegie, the steel magnate, for a free public library, and the town was rewarded for his efforts with a check for \$5,000 from the Carnegie Foundation.

Design and construction of the library was undertaken by local tradesmen on a lot left vacant by a fire that had destroyed the general store several years prior. Again, from the Chapman article, "Marcus Rogers himself, at age 84, cast the twenty white concrete sections of the four fluted concrete sections of the four fluted columns which grace the front of the colonial style structure." The building was completed in December, 1920. [The library in Mill River was destroyed by fire in June 1996. The current one, largely modeled after the original building and including those signature four columns out front, opened in December 1998.]

Marcus Rogers died in 1926, at the age of 91. He and his wife are buried in the Mill River Cemetery. □

*Note: The focus on local news that Marcus Rogers pioneered in The Berkshire Courier, and that became*

*an accepted practice in small town newspapers across the country has been, fittingly, the practice of The New Marlborough 5 Village News for the twenty-one years of its existence. Whether the editors were fully aware of it when we started back in 2000, our hometown lad set the standard that we now follow. Thank you, Marcus Rogers!*



*Marcus and Electa Rogers outside the homestead in Mill River*

### **Thank You to Our Contributors:**

Anonymous; Jay & Betty Reba; Ann Khouri Bass; Mary White;  
Paul Clark & Carol Parrish; and Florence Bernstein.



## MAILBOX

To the Editor:

Within the past few weeks the Town of New Marlborough has had a caucus and a town election. Both events were well organized by Town staff. Our Town Hall staff works in an old building, frequently cold in the winter months and hot in the summer. Their work areas are defined by cabinets. This staff functions as an effective team. This was particularly evident at both the caucus and the election held on May 10. Surely our town is blessed to have such an efficient and devoted staff.

Yours truly,  
Prudence Spaulding  
Sisson Hill Road

To the Editor:

The New Marlborough Historical Commission would like to clarify a misconception about the bylaw being developed to pause historic structure demolition that appeared in an article in the April 5 *Village News*.

The intent of the proposed historic building demolition pause bylaw is to create opportunities for owners who are considering demolishing a historic building to consider alternatives to demolition of a historic structure in our town. Such a bylaw would encourage but not mandate preservation of our beautiful historic structures for the next generation and for generations to come.

The proposed bylaw does not seek to impose a one year moratorium on demolition of historic structures in New Marlborough. **Rather the bylaw proposes to pause the demolition of an historic building for up to one year to provide an opportunity for the owner to find alternative uses that might preserve the structure. If at the end of that process no such alternative use or rehabilitation can be found, the owner would be free to demolish the building.** If the building inspector determines that the historic building is a danger and there is no reasonable alternative to immediate demolition, the building may be demolished without any pause.

Finally, given the critical cultural and visual nature of our unique history and buildings in Berkshire County, many of the surrounding towns already have such a demolition pause bylaws for historic structures — including among others Sheffield, Lenox, Great Barrington, Stockbridge, Williamstown, and Pittsfield.

We will post the draft of the proposed New Marlborough Historic Structure Demolition Pause Bylaw on the New Marlborough website in late May.

The Historical Commission's next meeting is June 28. Given the improving pandemic conditions we hope to have this as an in-person outdoors meeting and welcome the public to come and discuss strategies for historic preservation in New Marlborough, including the proposed bylaw. Stay tuned for details and we look forward to seeing you there!

New Marlborough Historical Commission  
Claudette Callahan  
Fiona Kerr  
Deanna Mummert  
John Schreiber (Chair)

## NEIGHBORS



Marlborough community.” Thank you, Claudette, for your part in this process. □

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

After nearly thirty years as a library trustee, Claudette Callahan, of Hartsville, felt that it was time for someone else to have a chance to serve. She began as a trustee of the old library in 1992 with Eleanor Stalker, and helped to bring the library through the fire and rebuilding with Deb O’Brien. She summed it up: “I’m a reader and an educator, and I firmly believe in libraries. It has been a pleasure to serve through these years, watching and helping the library to grow and become such an important, vital part of the New



photo by Debbie O'Brien

Helping celebrate Claudette Callahan’s retirement as a library trustee are, standing, from left, Robin Tost, Sally Turner, and Carrie Liba.

## WILDLIFE NEIGHBORS

From late April to mid-May, woods, ponds, even backyards, were teeming with visitors. Herewith, reported sightings:

**April 27:** Larry Burke looked out his bedroom window around 6:30 this morning to see something big and brownish moving below the garden, somewhat obscured by a line of trees and bushes. Gradually, the creature, actually two creatures, came into full view – a pair of **sandhill cranes**. The couple poked around for over an hour, giving Larry a chance to take some photographs, first through the window, and then, when the sandhills crossed the lawn toward the chicken coop, he got outside, and quite close.



photos by Larry Burke

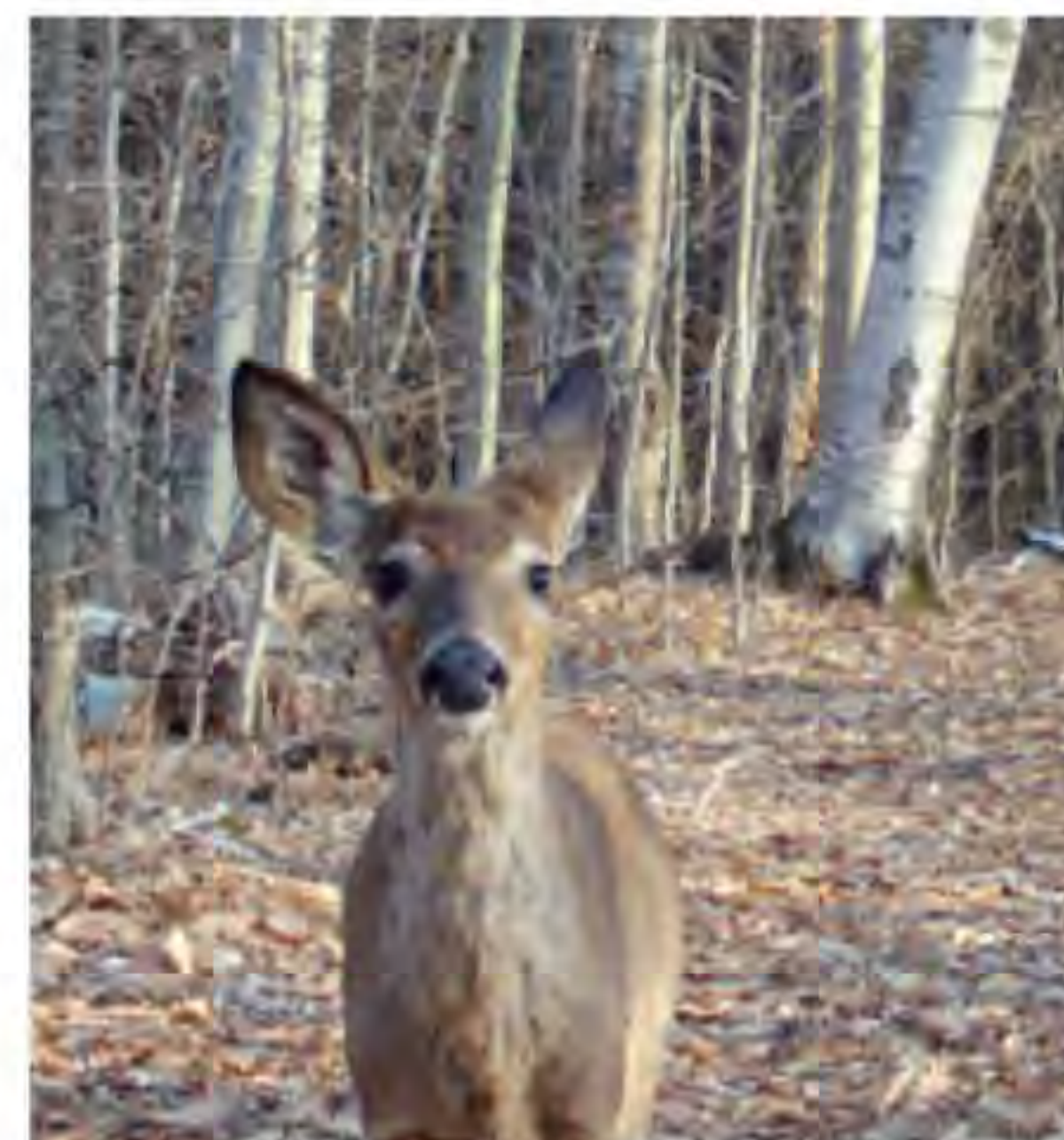
Above, the sandhill pair taking a gander at the photographer, and below, expressing their disapproval of his presence

When he rounded the corner of the barn and came upon them not twenty feet away, they started to take flight, but then decided to come back to earth and give him a full dose of their primordial clacking calls. These are by no means the first sightings of the New Marlborough sandhill crane colony this year. **Ed Harvey** caught one on his trail camera up by Harmon Pond.

**April 28:** A very curious doe gave Larry Burke’s trail camera a good looking over. Larry is new to the use of the trail camera, and, with the exception of this deer, his results so far have mostly been of himself trying to set up the camera.



Above, the couple stroll in sync across the lawn, and to the right, a closeup look at the male sandhill



photos by Larry Burke

A young doe checks out a trail camera

photo by Scottie Mills



Scottie Mills' stocking feet present no threat to a hungry chipmunk

**May 2: Robin Tost** wrote, "A big day today – an oriole, a rose-breasted grosbeak, and a gray catbird all showed up for the first time this year!" She followed up on **May 12** to say, "Lots of grosbeaks, cardinals, orioles, catbirds, jays make for a wonderful display, but they're everywhere. The daily orange lasts for about an hour after I put it out. Suet is very popular with everybody, including those with non-grasping claws who have to flap in place to eat. Birds give such pleasure, well worth many times over their weight in seed, but I do take the feeders in at night. **Sorry, bears....**"

**May 10: Barry Shapiro** has been busy snapping shots of the birds coming to his feeder, and, while most of us are knocked out by the flashy



photo by Barry R. Shapiro

A female rose-breasted grosbeak

colors of the male **rose-breasted grosbeak**, Barry's attention went to the less flamboyant, but nevertheless elegant, female of the species, with her signature white chevron above the eye. Also on **May 10**, **Scottie Mills** sent the accompanying photo of a **chipmunk**, cheeks full of treats, not deterred in the least by the looming proximity of pair of human feet. "I sit on my front step so often that the critters have become used to me." She sent a similar picture of her feet posing with a **titmouse**.

photo by Ed Harvey



A wood duck at Harmon Pond

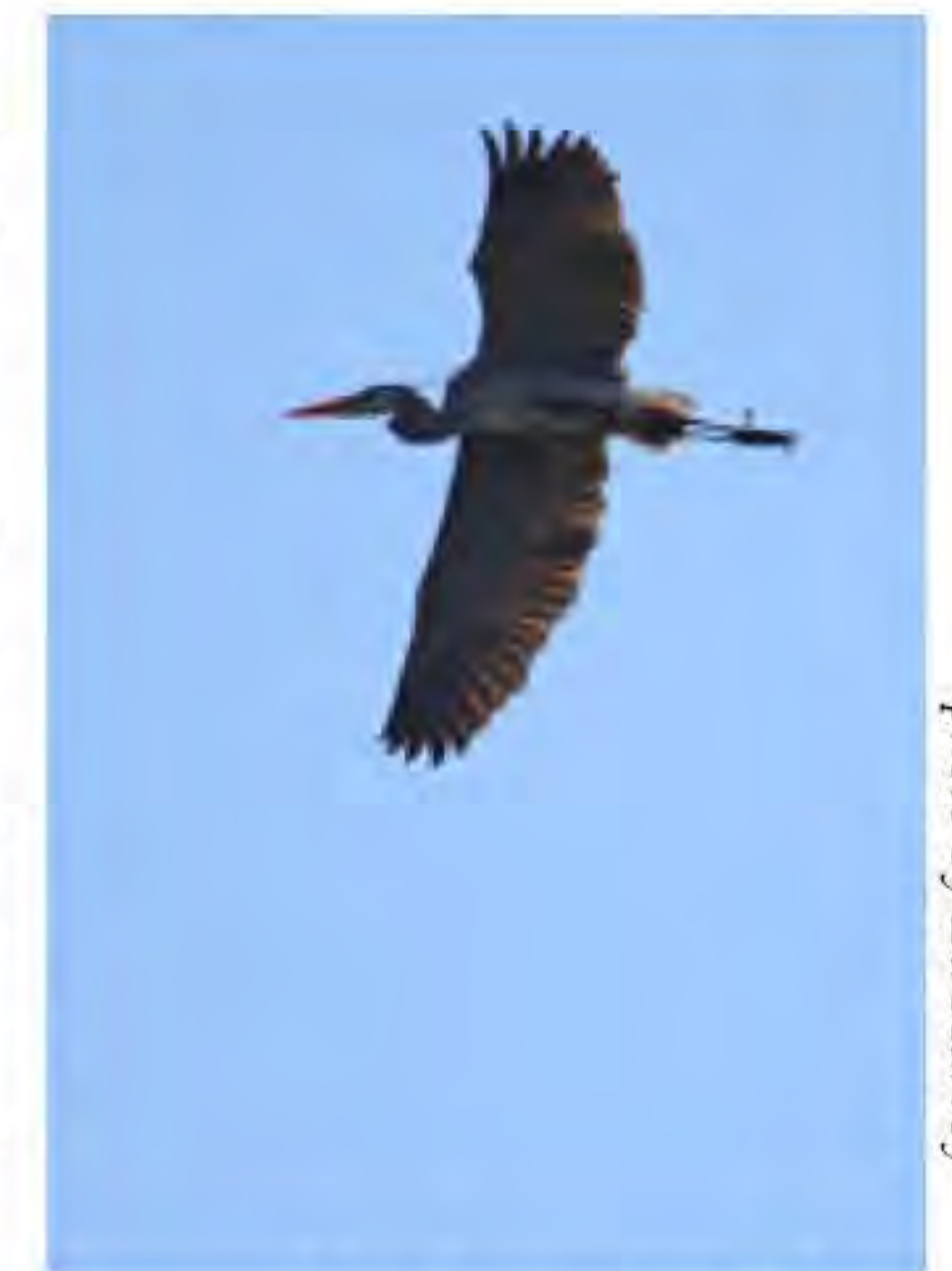


photo by Ed Harvey

A great blue heron in flight

**May 12: Ed Harvey** sent in two beautiful shots, one of a **wood duck** on a log at Harmon Pond, and the other capturing a **great blue heron** in flight.

And also on **May 12**, and getting right down to ground level with some of our tinier wildlife neighbors, **John Schreiber** found a **red-backed salamander**, a **red eft**, and, remarkably, a **salamander tadpole**. "Note the external gills. It is still inside its egg casing." What is truly remarkable about this shot is that John was able to get such close-up detail, not with a microscope but with his iPhone.

photo by John Schreiber



A red-backed salamander



photo by John Schreiber

A very red eft



photo by John Schreiber

A macro view of a salamander tadpole

Finally, on **May 13**, **Liz Goodman** sent along a video clip of her fierce — but very, very, very small — terrier, defending her backyard from a full-grown **black bear**. In the video, **Bitsy**, who made a name for herself in Wildlife Neighbors just about this time last year for her schooling of another bear, yaps incessantly at the bear, coming within feet of it, retreating briefly when the bear lunges toward her, and eventually driving the poor thing off into the woods. Later the same day, Liz says that Bitsy chased off another visitor, either a small **coyote** or a large **gray fox**. This terrier is a terror! □

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

# PHOENIX RISING

## New Marlborough Awakens from a Year of Pandemic

The first sign that the curtain was lifting on pandemic claustrophobia was spotted recently at the Transfer Station: the Gift Shop has reopened. After a year of inattention, contents of the Gift Shop have gathered dust, and the shop itself needs sprucing up. So it opened for take-out only, but it will be accepting new items around the middle of June. While a lot else at the Transfer Station is in transition, it is in this respect, returning to a welcome normalcy.

And there are other indicators that the isolation is over — or getting there:

### Art and Music

The Meeting House Gallery will open its doors on July 23, for a 5:00 p.m. reception for **Sticks and Stones**, the first art show of the season. This will be followed by a one-day **Children's Art Show** on the lawn outside the Meeting House on August 7, noon to 4:00 p.m. Then comes **Go Figure**, opening August 21, and **Wonder in the Wander**, a show of Berkshire artists under the age 40, which opens September 17. All shows can be viewed Friday to Sunday for four weekends after the opening.

Words and music will reappear



Bill McKibben and Sue Halpern

upstairs in the Meeting House starting August 14 with talks by environmentalist **Bill McKibben** and novelist and *New Yorker* essayist **Sue Halpern** (and Mr. McKibben's wife). Pianist **Simone Dinnerstein**

will present a concert on August 28. Members of the cast of **Shakespeare and Company** will be on stage September 11, followed by pianist **Jeewon Park**, cellist **Edward Aron**, and narrator **Ben Luxon** presenting a bit of programmatic music on September 18. Magician **Carl Seiger** will take the stage (or make it disappear) September 25. **Simon Winchester** will wind up the Meeting House

season on October 2 with a discussion of his latest book, *Land: How the Hunger for Ownership Shaped the Modern World*.

### Food and Drink

New Marlborough's four restaurants are easing back toward full-time service. **The Old Inn on the Green**, which has admirably maintained a socially-distanced dinner hour throughout the pandemic, will continue with its al fresco dining under a tent, but this summer slightly civilizing the experience with a wooden deck under the canopy. Because of the ninety-minute limit per table, the tasting menu, a tradition since 2002, will



Jewon Park and Edward Aron

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not be offered. In its place: a \$55 prix fixe menu. “We just keep reinventing ourselves,” says Old Inn co-owner Peter Platt.

Take-out will continue to be offered by the Old Inn kitchen, as it will at sister establishment, **The Southfield Store**, whose parking lot was recently expanded to accommodate increased drive-in traffic. Indoor dining is planned to resume early in the summer.

The restaurant at **Gedney Farm** has resumed serving dinner Wednesday to Saturday (though, starting the July 4 weekend, Saturday dining will be reserved for wedding parties, as couples rediscover the beauty of a big bash). Gedney recently fired up its grill to offer dining that looks onto a hillside meadow.

After a year-long hiatus, **Cantina 229** opened May 1 to offer prix fixe and regular menu dining with seating inside or under a gleaming white canopy. On Friday and Saturday starting at 4:30 p.m., and Sunday brunch beginning at 11:00 a.m., Cantina will offer pork, beef, and chicken barbecue prepared on a newly installed outdoor smoker. “The year has been incredibly challenging,” says Cantina owner Josh Irwin, “but if the world is going to shake, I am going to try to land on my feet.”



Newly installed tented dining at Cantina 229



Memories of The New Marlborough Farmers Market, 2019...



... and Elihu Burritt Day 2019

photos by Larry Burke

**Elsewhere**

Yes, **Elihu Burritt Day** is on. So, is too, the book sale — this year with a twist. Under a tent in their corner of the village green, the Library will be offering bags of five books, at a price of \$5 per bag. The catch is that all you will know about the contents of the bag is the category of the books inside — spy, politics, history, romance, etc. The format appeals to many book lovers, who at the last mystery bag sale bought \$700 worth of books. The White Elephant sale will again take up quarters on the east end of the Green. Contributions of items will be accepted on the Green itself in the afternoon of August 19 and all day August 20, the Thursday and Friday before Elihu Burritt.

**The New Marlborough Farmers’ Market** has already taken up residence on the Village Green, Sundays from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. until October 10, and **The Mill River General Store** is about get a new lease on life under the stewardship of new owner Jan Johnson (see page 1 for details).

The sun is brighter, the days are longer, and New Marlborough is once again finding its stride. □

Joe Poindexter



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# THE LOG

## Police Department (selected entries)

- Apr. 2 1:17 a.m. A vehicle collides with a utility pole, knocking out electric power to a Mill River Great Barrington Road residence.
- 8:52 a.m. National Grid is notified after a driver loses control on a slippery section of South Sandisfield Road and hits a utility pole.
- 3:02 p.m. A caller reports that the owner of a camper parked on his property has failed to remove it despite multiple requests to do so.
- 3:12 p.m. The animal control officer, having noted the poor living conditions of more than eight dogs at a Southfield residence, alerts the Department to the possible need for a warrant to make contact with the dogs' owner and, three hours later, is joined by an officer to investigate the situation.
- 3:26 p.m. A contractor for the Department of Conservation and Recreation alerts the Department to the need to close the bridge on the roadway to York Lake for four days to take soil samples.
- Apr. 3 10:16 a.m. The animal control officer informs the Department of an upcoming visit to a Mill River residence for a "dangerous dog inspection."
- 6:26 p.m. A Hartsville resident reports a verbal altercation between members of his family.
- 10:18 p.m. An officer assists a driver in changing a tire on New Marlborough Sandisfield Road.
- Apr. 6 5:00 a.m. A caller reports intruders throwing objects at his Clayton residence.
- 11:45 a.m. A Mill River resident reports that a visitor's car had been broken into at some time the previous night.
- 1:15 p.m. A Hartsville resident, arriving at the Police Department office with a paper bag full of nip-sized Smirnoff vodka bottles, expresses his concern for the sobriety of drivers in town.
- Apr. 8 7:51 a.m. A pick-up truck reported stolen from a New Marlborough village address is located abandoned in Hartford.
- Apr. 9 3:15 p.m. An out-of-state visitor to Umpachene Falls Park is advised against smoking marijuana in public.
- 4:49 p.m. Utility companies notified after a driver damages a pole in a vehicle collision on Mill River Great Barrington Road.
- Apr. 12 10:11 a.m. A Clayton resident reports finding a knife in her driveway.
- Apr. 14 1:12 p.m. The animal control officer asks for assistance in dealing with a porcupine struck on Hartsville New Marlborough Road.
- Apr. 15 9:58 a.m. Following a call from a passerby, a cow is located in the woods off Hartsville New Marlborough Road.
- Apr. 16 7:07 p.m. National Grid notified of a tree on wires on Leffingwell Road.
- 9:13 p.m. A driver, obstructing traffic on South Sandisfield Road while twice slowing to 15 mph, explained she was checking a map on her cell phone.
- Apr. 18 2:00 p.m. Relating her findings following a bit of detective work, a caller informs the Department that a decomposing pocketbook found near her Hartsville New Marlborough Road residence was robbed from the car of a Connecticut woman while parked in 2004 at the Lake Buel entry to the Appalachian Trail.
- Apr. 20 10:30 a.m. An officer shuts down the work of tree company obstructing traffic on South Sandisfield Road and working without a detail officer.
- Apr. 21 9:52 p.m. The Highway Department is alerted to a tree down and blocking one lane of Clayton Mill River Road.
- Apr. 22 3:54 p.m. National Grid is alerted to a tree on wires on Campbell Falls Road.
- Apr. 24 11:45 p.m. A Southfield resident, alerted by her barking dog, reports seeing three figures near her car parked at the head of her driveway.
- Apr. 27 7:06 a.m. A caller reports multiple vehicle break-ins in Clayton, adding that a knife was found in the roadway near one residence.
- 8:11 a.m. A caller reports a break-in to his vehicle parked at his Konkapot Road residence.
- 11:20 a.m. A caller reports cars passing her Adsit Crosby Road at speeds in excess of 50 mph.
- Apr. 28 9:42 p.m. A caller reports her suspicions about a person with a flashlight walking near her Mill River property.
- Apr. 29 2:27 p.m. A Mill River resident asks for assistance in removing a large snake from her garage.
- Apr. 30 11:20 a.m. After a caller reports finding a pearl necklace while walking in Southfield village, an officer picks it up for safe-keeping.
- 4:34 p.m. National Grid is alerted to a tree on wires on Hartsville New Marlborough Road.
- 4:59 p.m. National Grid notified of a power outage in Hartsville.
- 5:36 p.m. National Grid notified of a power outage in Southfield.

Graham Frank, Chief of Police

## FIRE AND RESCUE

April 1	5:17 p.m.	Hadsell Street Medical Call	April 17	5:19 p.m.	New Marlborough Southfield Road Medical Call
April 1	8:34 p.m.	South Sandisfield Road MVA	April 21	6:42 p.m.	Mutual Aid to Great Barrington Medical Call
April 2	8:54 a.m.	South Sandisfield Road MVA	April 22	3:55 p.m.	Campbell Falls Road Tree on Wires
April 3	4:17 p.m.	SBVAS Great Barrington Standby	April 22	5:21 p.m.	Hartsville New Marlborough Road Medical Call
April 3	6:32 p.m.	Old Hitchcock Road Medical Call	April 24	3:54 p.m.	SBVAS Great Barrington Standby
April 5	4:37 p.m.	Brewer Hill Road Medical Call	April 24	6:02 p.m.	Pine Road Medical Call
April 5	7:08 p.m.	Shunpike Road Medical Call	April 27	3:21 p.m.	Hartsville New Marlborough Road Fire Alarm
April 8	5:35 p.m.	Mutual Aid to Great Barrington Medical Call	April 30	3:14 p.m.	Hartsville New Marlborough Road Tree on Wires
April 9	4:51 p.m.	Mill River Great Barrington Road MVA			
April 11	1:30 a.m.	East Hill Road Fire Alarm			
April 11	2:40 a.m.	Clayton Mill River Road Medical Call			
April 14	1:14 p.m.	SBVAS Great Barrington Standby			
April 15	6:15 p.m.	Cagney Hill Road Fire Alarm			
April 16	5:16 a.m.	Mill River Great Barrington Road Medical Call			

*Fire Company President David Smith*

## HIGHWAY NEWS SPRING UPDATE

The Highway crew stayed busy during what seemed to be an average winter for our area. Throughout January and February there were two large storms that dropped twenty-four inches of snow at our elevations above 1,000 feet. And then in March we had about a week of incredibly bad mud requiring a lot of stone to keep the gravel roads somewhat passable. Stone is not my first choice of materials on our dirt roads, but sometimes it's necessary. Covering the roads with gravel and blending the stone into the roads is costly and time consuming. Keeping up with the unpaved roads along with all of our other spring projects such as patching potholes and grading felt a bit overwhelming at times.

Our Route 57 project of reclamation and paving started in April and is expected to be finished in early June. Reclamation with asphalt injection is the process being used. This is accomplished by injecting liquid asphalt into the reclaimer (a large piece of road equipment that grinds pavement) during a second grinding of the road. Then the road is regraded making a very strong, stable base for new asphalt to be applied. While this process is not new, it is the first time we have used it in New Marlborough.



*Rebuilding the Campbell Falls Road bridge*

Demolition of the Campbell Falls Road bridge started in late March. Most of the new concrete has been poured. New beams will be delivered and placed in June with the hope that it will be completed before winter.

After being closed for about 10 years, work on the Umpachene Falls Road bridge was completed and the bridge was open to traffic on May 14.

The Town put out a bid for reclaiming and paving Mill River Great Barrington Road from the town line to just below its juncture with Adsit Crosby Road, plus approximately 1,200 feet of Adsit Crosby Road and the intersection where the two meet.

The Town also put out a bid to rubber-chip seal the upper part of Canaan Southfield Road. This process is where a liquid asphalt with 20 percent ground rubber from recycled vehicle tires is sprayed on the existing road, followed by a 3/8 inch stone wearing course. This project is part of our road preservation program.

Needless to say, it has been a very busy spring so far. Thank you for your patience and understanding. We appreciate your support. □

*Chuck Loring  
New Marlborough Highway Superintendent*

## THE SCHOOL REPORT

# TAKING ON CLIMATE CHANGE

By Jane Burke with Isabella Kemp

The Sustainability Coalition at Mount Everett Middle and High School is finishing its first full year of work on a high note. According to Cece Caldwell of Southfield, one of the founding members, the group had limited opportunities to spend time together in person, and it was difficult to engage students in extra-curricular activities. These challenges, however, did not hold back this group of eight passionate juniors and seniors. Isabella Kemp of Mill River, another founding member of the group, said it this way: “I believe climate change is a problem where our generation can make a difference. There are many young people who want to take action against global warming, inspire change, and gain a greater understanding of sustainability. If we start now, practicing simple, everyday actions in our households and within our community, we can have a significant collective impact.”

The Coalition has found an inspired faculty advisor in Lindsey Berkowitz, a Hartsville resident who teaches environmental science at Mount Everett. “These students have been inspired to ask relevant questions about promoting school and community sustainability,” she says. “The group has been collaborating with other Mount Everett groups, including the Social Justice League and the Future Farmers of America, to explore environmental justice and agriculture on a local scale.”

Last summer, Isabella Kemp conceived of the Sustainability Speakers Series that came to fruition this February. With the support of a \$7,000 grant from the Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation, she led the coalition in formulating a plan to present six speakers. The first three presentations were viewed by 207 people, both locally and beyond. According to Ms. Berkowitz, there have been 300 tickets reserved by community members for the entire series. Recordings of presentations thus far, posted on the Coalition’s website for free access, have been viewed 75 times. More than thirty Mount Everett students and a dozen faculty and staff have participated in the events.

The launching of the speaker series exemplifies the depth of learning that occurs when students are empowered to follow their own goals. Ms. Kemp outlined an astonishing number of valuable experiences she had in launching the series: “I learned how to make a work plan. I reached out to each speaker to plan presentations, created the club’s website and speaker series pages, set up an Eventbrite platform for audience registration, wrote a confirmation email to be sent out to registrants automatically, developed a shared spreadsheet to clarify student roles and responsibilities for speaker presentations, created presentation production timelines and drafted a script for student hosts and moderators, created feedback survey for each event, and gathered

responses to improve future presentations.”

And it didn’t end there. “I made a public relations and promotion plan,” says Ms. Kemp, “drafted a press release about the series, which I distributed to multiple media outlets, local organizations, community list-serves, chambers of commerce, libraries and town halls, and participated in virtual and phone-in interviews with local newspapers and radio stations.” The promotion paid off, with publicity and support from almost two dozen publications and organizations — including *The Berkshire Eagle*, *The Berkshire Edge*, WSBS radio, Robinhood Radio/NPR, and *Berkshire Magazine*.

Three more programs are lined up for the remainder of the series: The schedule includes Jamie Samowitz, co-director of Roots Rising, speaking May 28 about the ways youth can inspire change in our community and beyond; Rob Koenen, chief marketing officer of Boxed Water, on the effects of plastic and aluminum pollution and the future of sustainability at an institutional level on June 4; and, on June 25, Natalie Narotzky, associate program director at Urban Sustainability Directors Network, on equity in sustainability and policy work at a local level, as well as ways youth and community members can engage in local climate justice work.

The Coalition members plan to sew and sell recycled food bag totes made from repurposed fabric, with a portion of the proceeds going to a local social justice organization. The founding members, seniors bound for college next fall, will begin preparing the younger members of the group to take over the leadership next year. Cece Caldwell plans to study anthropology with a focus on food equity. Isabella Kemp will be pursuing a degree in environmental studies and environmental policy.

To register for the upcoming events go to <https://tinyurl.com/SC-speaker-series-2021>. □



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## RECIPE OF THE MONTH

Today feels like summer, and this lovely light cake is the most perfect summer cake. It's perfect for a special occasion but is so easy that it can be made just because you want something yummy. It originally came from a small picnic cookbook by the Australian Women's Weekly, which I owned twenty years ago, lost along time ago, and have never been able to find again. Luckily, I had written the recipe down for a friend so I could retrieve it. Unfortunately, I failed to record a perfect brownie recipe, also in this cookbook. Meanwhile, however, this lemon cake is every bit as good. □

Fiona Kerr

### Lemon Sour Cream Cake

<b>Ingredients:</b>	1 lemon, juice and zest	2 eggs (at room temperature)
	1/2 cup sour cream	4 oz butter
	1 cup self-raising flour OR	1 cup of caster sugar
	1 cup plain flour with	(or a fine golden sugar)
	1 teaspoon of baking powder	

#### Directions:

- Preheat oven to 320° F, grease and line an 8" round cake pan with parchment.
- Beat the butter for 2 mins, gradually add the sugar and mix until light and fluffy.
- Add the eggs, 1 at a time, combining well between each egg (don't worry if it separates, just add a tablespoon of the flour between eggs)
- Alternate folding in the flour, with the sour cream and lemon juice.
- Pour into the tin and bake for 35-40 mins.
- Serve with a dollop of creme fraiche or whipped cream and fresh seasonal berries.

Enjoy!

nm5vn.org

### A Message from Our Animal Control Officer and Animal Inspector

State law (MGL Chapter 140, Section 138) requires that all dogs six months or older belonging to residents of the town (including those belonging to part-time residents), must be licensed. Dogs belonging to part-time residents qualify if they stay longer than thirty consecutive days per year.

Please mail a current rabies certificate and a check covering the appropriate fee to:

Town of New Marlborough, P.O. Box 99, Mill River, MA 01244.

A license fee for spayed or neutered dogs is \$7.00 and for unaltered dogs the fee is \$15.00.



For any questions, do not hesitate to call Cassie Keeley (Animal Control Officer) at 413-429-7603 or Prudence Spaulding (Animal Inspector) at 413-229-8407.

# THE NEW MARLBOROUGH PUBLIC LIBRARY

## Adult Fiction

*The Other Emily*, by Dean Koontz  
*Three Hours in Paris*, by Clara Black  
*Brood*, by Jackie Polzin  
*The Stationary Shop*, by Marjan Kamali  
*The Invisible Life of Addie Larue*, by V.E. Schwab  
*Who is Maude Dixon?* by Alexander Andrews  
*Of Women and Salt*, by Gabriela Garcia

## Adult Nonfiction

*Radio Free Vermont*, by Bill McKibben  
*Eaarth*, by Bill McKibben  
*Knit Like a Norwegian: 30 stunning Patterns from Scandinavia's Top Designers*  
*Philip Roth: The Biography*, by Blake Bailey  
*The Barbizon: The Hotel that Set Women Free* by Paulina Bren

## Children's Fiction

*Peace Train*, by Cat Stevens  
*Do Not Bring Your Dragon to the Library*, by Julie Gassman  
*InvestiGators: Off the Hook*, by John Patrick Green

## Children's Fiction

*Katie's Light: Kate Walker at Robbins Reef*, by Elizabeth Spires  
*Mars Is: Stark Slopes, Silvery Snow and Startling Surprises*, by Suzanne Slade



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

**For the safety of our staff and our patrons, we ask that masks still be worn in the library.**



(413) 229-2544  
 Free Estimates

- Roofing
- Tiling
- Decks
- Porches
- Sheet Rocking
- Flooring
- Additions
- Odd Jobs

**Herbert W. Eichstedt III**  
**Jason W. Eichstedt**

## Contributions are needed to continue the paper!

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

New Marlborough 5 Village News, P.O. Box 243, Southfield, MA 01259

YES, I WANT THE *New Marlborough 5 Village News* TO CONTINUE!

HERE IS A TAX DEDUCTIBLE CONTRIBUTION OF \$\_\_\_\_\_ (payable to NM5VN)

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

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CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

### Town Times

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**Post Office: Mill River** (413) 229-8582 — if and when it re-opens:

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

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

**Southfield** (413) 229-8476

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**Town Hall:** 229-8116

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

**Library:** 229-6668

### Transfer Station Hours:

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

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

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

### PERMITS ARE DUE JULY 6

and can be purchased for \$150

by mail or online at

[www.newmarlborough.gov](http://www.newmarlborough.gov).

Please enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope. No admittance without a permit after August 15

### Emergency calls:

**Police, Fire, Medical  
911**

### New Marlborough Highway Department

Located on Mill River-Southfield Rd.

Hours:

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

PO Box 99, Mill River, MA 01244

(413) 229-8165

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

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

### NM5VN Editorial Team

Joe Poindexter, issue editor; Diane Barth, designer; Martha Bryan,

Jane Burke, Larry Burke, Robbi Hartt, Barbara Lowman,

David Lowman, Peter Schuyten, Barry Shapiro.

Contributing writers and artists: Ann Getsinger, Fiona Kerr.

Index: Donna Weaver

### NM5VN Board of Directors

Roy Blount, Jr., Larry Burke, Barbara Lowman, Deb O'Brien,

Joe Poindexter, Peter Schuyten, Barry Shapiro,

Nan O'Shaughnessy Smith, and Tara White

### New Marlborough 5 Village News

appears monthly,

also online at

**[www.nm5vn.org](http://www.nm5vn.org)**

The next issue will be dated July 2021.

All copy must be submitted no later than June 17.

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

PO Box 243, Southfield, MA 01259

**[5villagenews@gmail.com](mailto:5villagenews@gmail.com)**

New Marlborough 5 Village News  
P.O.Box 243, Southfield, MA 01259  
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CHANGE SERVICE  
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## SERVICE SECTOR 6/21

- ♦ **Dellea.biz Computer Services:** has provided local residents with on-site Windows computer repairs and technical support since 1996. Book appointments online at <https://dellea.biz> or call (413) 528-1141.
- ♦ **Design+Planning:** Christopher Blair; Since 1986, creative, budget-aware design. Achieve your goals for additions, alterations to an existing home or new construction. (413)528-4960. [chris@design-planning.com](mailto:chris@design-planning.com).
- ♦ **Fine Jewelry:** Designers and manufacturers; custom orders/commissions welcome; expert repairs. 45 years experience. Sachs Reisman, Inc. 25 Maple Ave., Sheffield (413)229-0050
- ♦ If you are looking for short term rehabilitation, physical therapy, senior living, skilled nursing or memory care, look no further than **Noble Horizons**, proud recipient of Medicare's premier 5-star rating. Just over the border in Salisbury, CT. [www.NobleHorizons.org](http://www.NobleHorizons.org) 860-435-9851; 17 Cobble Road, Salisbury, CT.
- ♦ **One call does it all!:** Vinyl siding cleaning; pressure washing; deck refinishing; floors refinished; window washing; odd landscape jobs; all odd jobs. David Goewey, (413)229-2787
- ♦ **Susan M. Smith:** Attorney At Law; Concentrating in the areas of Estate Planning, Estate Administration, Elder Law, Real Estate and Zoning Matters. [ssmithlaw@barringtonlawoffice.com](mailto:ssmithlaw@barringtonlawoffice.com) or (413)528-4300
- ♦ **Reiner White & Sons, Inc:** A family-run general contractor business serving the MA and CT area since 1988 - new construction, additions, remodeling, and more. Licensed and insured. Call (413) 229-8450 for free consultation.

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