



New Marlborough 5 Village News

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Clayton ♦ Hartsville ♦ Mill River ♦ New Marlborough ♦ Southfield

HOMING IN ON WHAT WORKS *Technology Lends a Hand at the Mill River Farm*

By Maria Black

Jan Johnson seems perfectly suited for the hard work she undertook over a decade ago when she bought the thirty-two-acre parcel on Brewer Hill Road she has developed into Mill River Farm. Rosy-cheeked, bright-eyed, and equipped with a warm, brisk style, Ms. Johnson brims with enthusiasm. (“I love it, I love it,” she says of farming.) One has the sense that once she latches onto something, she masters it, top to bottom.

Homemade kombucha is front and center now, and even with only three batches behind her, she is deep into its production, a beverage that combines symbiotically fermented bacteria and yeast with black tea. “I can take all of the fruits that we have at the farm and all the herbs and combine them and make new flavors,” she says, as she zips around her big kitchen, quieting Nick the dog and showing off the bottles in her refrigerator as well as her “SCOBY hotel,” the vessel that houses the symbiotic culture of bacteria and yeast that looks like a dead jellyfish but is the fermentation engine for her concoctions. She has already brewed peach, raspberry, blackberry, apple, carrot (spiced with cayenne), and beet kombucha.



Photo by Maria Black

Jan Johnson and her son, Peter Chapin, at the Mill River Farm

Ms. Johnson moved to Massachusetts — from a career in law — two decades ago and bought Mill River Farm after having taken a class that helped her clarify what do with the next chapter of her life. “The class,” she says, “helped me give voice to a belief that healthy living can make the world a better place.” Recently, she has refocused her energies on this theme: baking sourdough bread, making kraut and kimchi, and brewing kombucha, and, inspired by the likes of chef and teacher Alice Waters, diving into the latest research on nutrition. “My generation figured out how to make junk food more addictive,” she says. The younger generation, she hopes, will turn the tide.

Of course, time to pursue this passion depends on her farm succeeding.

“The farm is eleven years old,” Ms. Johnson says, “and not that many farms started in our lifetimes actually live to be eleven, so I feel very proud of that. As we’ve gotten better and better at the farming part, we realize that who we are and the soil we have lends itself to certain things and not so well to others. The boys, or men,” Ms. Johnson corrects herself, referring to the farm’s co-managers, her son, Peter Chapin, and Codey Mead, “have really taken the lead in figuring out which enterprises make sense for us, and getting to a pared-down, efficient business.”

For example, the farm, which obtained its organic certification years ago, used to have goats, heritage Tamworth hogs, and young pigs, raised for four to six months until they reached slaughter weight. While *that* livestock doesn’t currently make economic sense for a variety of reasons, the farm continues to raise laying hens,

continued

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broilers, turkeys (at Thanksgiving), and honeybees.. Then, too, there are plenty of vegetables the farm does not grow commercially (for example, the basil, radishes, and Habanada peppers in Ms. Johnson's kitchen garden) because they are "too fussy in their harvesting or storage" or simply for lack of demand.

On the other side of the equation, the team at the farm continues to introduce labor-saving devices. During a 2021 visit to her father's home in Hunterdon County, New Jersey, Ms. Johnson and Mr. Chapin discovered at an auction an egg-washing device that represented a substantial labor-saving advance. They bought the machine and brought it back to the farm in pieces. Now housed in the garage behind the Mill River General Store, which Mr. Chapin now owns, the machine uses considerably less labor than their previous method.

Another technological improvement, a roll-away nest box, removes an egg from the hen as soon as she lays it. When a hen sits on an egg overnight, says Ms. Johnson, "you get dirty eggs." Still, some eggs do require washing, and that's where this new cleaner comes in. After being checked for cracks with a light and a mirror, the egg goes into the washer, a device consisting of a system of rotating brushes and water, and then a dryer. That machine was replaced by a commercially made system.

Then comes packaging. A suction device, operated manually, picks up a dozen eggs at a time and drops them gently into a carton. Or if eggs are bound for restaurants, the machine can load thirty at a time into flats. It can also sort eggs by size. The first time Mr. Chapin and Mr. Mead got the suction device working, Ms. Johnson recorded the moment on her phone. "That's me yelling 'Yea!'" she says, laughing. "That's my main role some days, to be cheerleader." As a result, the farm will be able to add more laying hens next spring.

As with egg washing, the latest improvements in the washing of greens have also taken about two years to come online. Anyone who has washed lettuce knows that just running water over a leaf doesn't guarantee cleanliness. The farm started with a big tank that re-

quired someone standing over it and "basically do the breaststroke" to churn the water. This manual labor was replaced by a device using a motor made for circulating water in a hot tub. It was hooked up to piping cut with holes at three and six o'clock that ran the length of the water tank. An air valve set below the motor allows an operator to regulate the strength of churn in the tank. Spinach, for example, requires a stronger current than micro-greens. That machine was replaced by a commercially made system.

With eggs or greens, says Ms. Johnson, once deterioration starts, it accelerates, so the crew has reduced the minutes the greens are exposed to warmth. They cut their greens early in the morning into bins, which then go into a box fashioned to fit the front of the tractor. To keep the greens cool, the box has a top but no front. From there, the greens go into a refrigerated van, and then, after washing and drying, into a walk-in refrigerator.

Drying the greens presents another challenge. The farm started with something very like a kitchen salad spinner, only larger. Now they use a commercial device the size of a garbage can that can spin the greens powerfully enough to dry them thoroughly but without bruising. "We can now get them bone dry," Ms. Johnson says, and that's important to preserving them. "My greens last me at least two weeks in the fridge.

"So," Ms. Johnson concludes, "what we can do here is grow what we're good at growing, animals or vegetables, and do it really well. We started very humbly with no crops, no animals, and no customers! I joke sometimes that we've learned all the other ways to do it, and now we're homing in on the most efficient way. I'm not saying we don't have a lot more to learn, we do, but we've come a long way, and I'm really, really proud of this crew."

But for Jan Johnson, it all comes down to what nutritionally dense, pesticide-free food can do for health. It's why she started down this road to begin with. "The reason we're doing this," she says, "is this is what we like to eat. I think," she adds with her accustomed modesty, "I've learned a little something about plants." □



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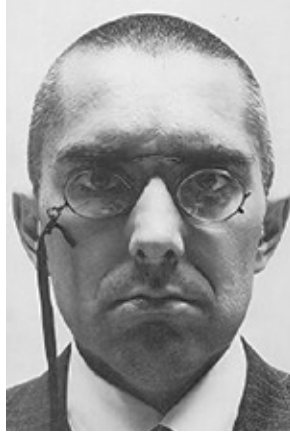
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CASSILIS, THEN

Fifty years ago, Cassilis Farm, the grand estate in New Marlborough village that once housed a world-renowned Hackney Pony breeding operation, marked a curious chapter in the world of avant-garde art.

In the mid-1970s, performance artist George Maciunis took up residence at Cassilis as a refuge from debt collectors who had physically assaulted him in New York City. He could be seen around town wearing a black eye-patch — the result of the loss of an eye in the debt-collector attack — and a black cape.



George Maciunis

He brought with him his intense interest in performance art, expressed in one remarkable instance at an event at the town dump — it had not yet achieved the status of a transfer station — whose participants included Cassilis visitors John Lennon and Yoko Ono.

Cassilis Farm's brief moment as a stage for outsider art will be the subject of a talk by Ann Getsinger at a program sponsored by the New Marlborough Historical Society, October 6, at 7:00 p.m. in the Meeting House Gallery — the Society's sole First Friday event this year.

... AND NOW

As readers of the *5 Village News* know, Cassilis is entering a new, but no less striking chapter of its history. This fall, it will begin to assume its role as the town's first affordable housing. While the conversion of the main house into eleven living units is still three years away, the larger of two outbuildings will accept its first tenant, a member of the New Marlborough Fire Department, in a month or two.

Meanwhile, a drawn-out negotiation between the Town and Construct, inc., the affordable housing organization that owns Cassilis, over an annual payment in lieu of taxes, has been resolved. A three-year agreement stipulates that Construct will pay the Town \$2,991 in the first year and in the second and third, following the sale of one of three lots on the



A residence behind the Cassilis Farm main estate is nearly ready for occupancy.
Photo by Joe Poindexter

Cassilis property to a private individual, \$2,422. A new contract will be negotiated to take effect starting in FY27. □

Joe Poindexter

CULTURAL COUNCIL GRANTS

It's Time To Apply

The New Marlborough Cultural Council is delighted to announce that it will award up to \$15,000 in grants in 2024. The Council's funds are intended to support organizations and individuals who provide programs in the arts, humanities, and interpretive sciences. Our priorities are as follows:

- the applicant is a resident of New Marlborough;
- the project will directly benefit New Marlborough;
- the creative work is done by a New Marlborough resident
- the project occurs in New Marlborough.

Applications for funding must be submitted on line at www.massculturalcouncil.org/local-council/

new-marlborough. Applications, on line as of September 1, are due by October 31. For the 2024 grant cycle, the Massachusetts Cultural Council is providing \$5,500. An additional \$9,500 has come from generous supporters through their donations and participation in Cultural Council events.

Agendas and Minutes of the NMCC, a committee of the Town of New Marlborough, are posted on the Town website. All of the activities of our Council are done by a dedicated committee of volunteers; new members are always welcome. For questions about the grants, contact Jane Maser at 845-406-8464 or Louise Yohalem at 413-528-1409. □

Correction: The owners of Best Damn Espresso, a mobile coffee service described in the August 5 *Village News*, are Angelea and Asio Highsmith, not Highwater. The editors apologize for the error.

Town Business Is Your Business

SELECT BOARD

July 24: Following a Pledge of Allegiance and a moment of silence for fallen veterans, Chair Tara White called on New Marlborough Historical Society President John Schreiber, attending the meeting, to update the Board on the potential hazard presented by the white pines that have been allowed to grow in town cemeteries. Dr. Schreiber recalled that former Society President John Sisson had obtained a \$50,000 grant from the commonwealth to address the repair of headstones in the New Marlborough Village Cemetery.

In addition to the hiring of a consultant to guide volunteers in the cleaning of headstones and mending those that had been broken by falling branches, said Dr. Schreiber, the fund had been used to remove ill-placed trees. He added, however, that some eight to ten white pines remain in the New Marlborough Cemetery, and John Fields Tree Service has agreed to remove them all at a price of \$24,720, with payments stretched out over four or five years. Dr. Schreiber, noting that Mr. Fields had withdrawn a billing to the Town of \$3,000 to remove fallen branches in the New Marlborough Cemetery, asked if that amount could be devoted to the first-year payment for removal of the cemetery's remaining trees.

While that request remained open for discussion, **Dr. Schreiber and the Board broached the question of budgeting over the long term for protection of the Town's eleven cemeteries, many of which have tree problems similar to those of the New Marlborough Cemetery.** Both sides agreed that an inventory of potential tree problems was needed, and Dr. Schreiber proposed that he would meet with Tammi Palmer, chair of the Cemetery Commission, to determine how to develop a report. This report would then go to the Capital



Planning and Finance Committees for their recommendations as to the financing of tree removal.

With that, the Board turned its attention to a request from CVE North America, owner of the solar field on Knight Road, that it be permitted to convert a cash escrow account to a surety bond. The escrow is being held by the Town as insurance that the parcel on which solar panels are installed be properly restored if and when the installation was no longer being used for electricity generation. Ms. White, backed by Selectmen Bill West and Beth Dean, was reluctant to accept a surety bond without assurance that the company backing the bond was reliable. A CVE executive, joining the meeting via Zoom, agreed to provide further information.

Next, the Board agreed to a one-year extension of the Town's contract with Emergency Communications Services to handle and redirect 911 calls from town residents. The fee of \$11,921 is \$347 more than this year. The Board then signed off on a quitclaim deed from Erik Mandel, whose Hartsville Mill River Road property abuts the Konkapot River where the Town is undertaking riverbank restoration.

The Board moved on to a discussion of a Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT) by Altus Solar, whose field is located off Mill River Southfield Road opposite the Highway Department garage. The selectmen agreed to research the matter by inquiring of solar field PILOTs in nearby towns and review of the PILOT currently in effect with CVE North America. (CVE, a larger installation than Altus, makes an annual payment of \$45,750.)

Addressing the final agenda item, the Board clarified the terms of service for members of two com-





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mittees. On the Capital Panning Committee, John Halbreich will serve until June 30, 2024; Mark Walker and whoever fills an empty seat, June 30, 2025; and Sheila Baird and Richard Butt, June 20, 2026. On the Commission on Disabilities, John Hotaling will serve until June 30, 2025; Sharon Fleck and Marsha Pshenishny, June 30, 2026.

In updates, the Board was presented with a letter from Mill River resident Daniel Mintz complaining of speeding on Hayes Hill Road and asking if speed-limit signs could be posted. After noting that the state, not the Town, establishes speed limits, the Board elected to have Highway Superintendent Chuck Loring and Police Chief Graham Frank review signage on all town roads.

A request from resident Brian Tranter that the Board consider lowering Transfer Station fees for seniors led to a discussion of whether a discount should be based on age or income. Recognizing that no adjustments could be made before FY25, the Board decided to refer the matter to the Transfer Station Working Group.

Tara White noted that, following a determination that the Town Hall roof needed to be replaced, the Board needed to hire an architect or engineer to draw up specifications so that the job could be put out for bid. Finally, Ms. White informed her fellow selectmen that the 8 Town Regional School District Planning Board wanted to communicate its recommendation for consolidation of Southern Berkshire and Berkshire Hills to the eight member towns. This could be done at individual meetings or, Ms. White's preference, at a joint meeting of the boards of all eight towns.

August 7: The meeting opened with a report from Prue Spaulding, director of the Council on Aging. In FY23, said Mrs. Spaulding, **seniors worked a total of**

388 hours, recording votes at the Town election, helping run the annual meeting, helping at the Transfer Station, and stuffing property tax bills into envelopes. Based on the state minimum wage, the tax abatement awarded rose to \$15 (from \$14.25) at the beginning of the year. With the increase, however, came a bit of extra paperwork, since the abatement is now considered income, and those who pay no tax would need to apply for a refund of the amount of the abatement withheld. "Nevertheless," said Mrs. Spaulding, "our seniors are proud to be working for our town."

Next, the Board set out to remove a glitch in the agreement with Great Barrington Transportation Services, which provides New Marlborough residents low-cost rides to Great Barrington. It turns out that a portion of this service is provided by the Berkshire Regional Transit Authority (BRTA). The Board approved joining BRTA, a requirement for those who use its vehicles. Though the Town must share in the cost of its services, there is no cost for BRTA membership.

The selectmen approved a one-day alcoholic beverage license to the Fire Company to enable the sale of beer at the Burritt Day Pig Roast, August 19. They postponed a discussion of the Police Department's use of office space in the old fire house until Police Chief Graham Frank and Fire Chief Chuck Loring could be present. They then approved a grant application to the U.S. Department of Agriculture for \$28,300 toward the purchase of a Police Department pickup truck (the balance of \$52,000 will be paid by the Town). Regarding the long-running Hartsville erosion project, an agreement with the owner of land abutting the Konkapot River where riverbank remediation is to take place has hit a "bump in the road," as Ms. White put it, which needs to be smoothed out to allow the project to proceed.

Some eight to ten white pines, whose falling branches could damage headstones, remain in the New Marlborough Cemetery,



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With Construct Housing Director June Wolfe present in person and Executive Director Jane Ralph via Zoom, the Board once again took up the matter of a Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT) for Cassilis Farm, which Construct is converting to affordable housing. In prior discussions, the two sides had reached an agreement that, based on the value of the land, Construct would pay \$2,422 annually, but only after one of the three plots on the property had been sold to a private landowner. The question as to what payment would be due before the sale was executed was resolved when the two sides agreed to split the difference of the PILOT value of the third plot. The resulting arithmetic yielded a first-year payment of \$2,992, to be followed by payments of \$2,422 in years two and three, after which a new PILOT would be negotiated.

Next up: **Town Hall roof replacement. As discussed at an earlier meeting, the roof has begun to leak. Its aged slate is chipping and needs to be removed in favor of asphalt shingles.** To put the project out for bid, the Board needs an analysis of the scope of the job — for example, whether new under-roofing, gutters, or fascia are needed. It has received not entirely comparable estimates, but elected to ask David Allard, who analyzed the cost of a complete Town Hall renovation, to price

CVE, owner of the solar field off Knight Road, would denote \$17,300 to Greenagers, from a fund it has established to help non-profits.

the drawing up of roof replacement specifications.

Correcting an earlier action, the Board determined that the present term of service of Capital Planning Committee member Sheila Baird would end June 30, 2024.

In updates, Town Administrator Mari Enoch revealed that CVE, owner of the solar field off Knight Road, would denote \$17,300 to Greenagers, from a fund it has established to help non-profits. The selectmen then scheduled August 11 or 15, depending on the availability of Town Counsel Jeremia Pollard, to address CVE’s request to convert a dissolution escrow account to a surety bond and to arrive at a figure for a PILOT from Altus, owner of the solar field opposite the Highway Department garage.

Finally, Ms. White once again expressed her desire for a group meeting of the select boards of all eight towns involved in a possible school district consolidation with the 8 Town Regional School District Planning Board. The Board agreed to seek out a suitable date in mid-August. □

Joe Poindexter

PLANNING BOARD

The Planning Board, which has been meeting on the fourth Wednesday of the month this summer, will meet twice monthly starting in September – the second and fourth Wednesday — at which time the pace of business will begin to accelerate.


According to Chair Bob Hartt, the Board will focus on three issues. The first, flagged by Building Inspector Matt Kollmer but unresolved during several recent meetings, will be a clarification of certain sections of the Town’s Protective Bylaw dealing with accessory dwelling units.

The second is short-term rentals. Having determined that some regulation is in the Town’s best interests, the Board plans to research the matter, in particular examining what other towns across the commonwealth have enacted. Mr. Hartt expects that these will be in shape to be voted upon at the Annual Town Meeting next May.

The third focus of attention, other than normal oversight of land subdivision, will be to review and update the Town’s Open Space Plan, which is due to

expire in April 2024. Mr. Hartt points out that it is important to keep the plan current, as its existence is required on various grant applications that the Town may be writing. He expects that the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission will be assisting with revision and renewal. □

Larry Burke



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CONSERVATION COMMISSION

August 17: With Commission members Freddy Friedman, Doug Hyde, John Schreiber, and Nanci Worthington present, the meeting began by reopening the hearing and review of a Notice of Intent (NOI) for the New Marlborough Highway Department. The Department had submitted a “blanket” NOI that would allow highway crews to act swiftly to keep the town’s culverts clean without having to permit each individual situation. A letter has been sent to the Natural Heritage Endangered Species Program stating the Department’s commitment to notifying and working with the program before starting any work in a jurisdictional area. The NOI was approved.

Shannon Boomsma of White Engineering then reopened the hearing for an NOI for Brittany Bailey, owner of the Hartsville Grange. Addressing concerns expressed at a prior meeting by abutters to the property, Ms. Boomsma said that the location of a drainage pipe under a new parking area had been established and that a steel plate would be installed over it. According to extensive research to clarify the status of the stream on the property, Ms. Boomsma asserted that the stream is intermittent, not perennial. She also reviewed the capacity of the rain garden as compensatory storage for runoff. The NOI was approved.

Matt Puntin of SK Design addressed the Commission for his clients Bob and Robbi Hartt of 829 Mill River Southfield Road. Mr. Puntin explained the scope of work to include the demolition and removal of an existing barn and the construction of a new barn of equal size at the same location. The discussion led to Ms. Hartt’s explaining that invasive species removal is her priority. In response to comments from the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Preservation (DEP), she said she understands that the methodology for removal requires annual maintenance and informed technique — both of which she is wholly committed to. The Commission noted that the net result of the construction and the invasive species

work would be an improvement to the current condition of that area of the Konkapot River. An NOI was approved with two conditions: that the native species planted where invasive plants are removed be native to Berkshire County and listed on the Massachusetts vascular plant list and that the Commission be allowed to monitor the progress annually.

Rubin Kier of 839 Stratford Road on Lake Windemere was on hand to address the Commission’s letter of violation regarding the establishment of a beach on the lake without permitting. Mr. Kier confirmed his compliance with remedying the situation and stated that he will return at next month’s meeting with proper engineering plans and a proposal for remediation.

Dr. Schreiber then explained that additional violations have been observed by both the DEP and the Commission at 187 and 201 Stratford Road. Violation letters will be sent to property owners at those addresses, encouraging them to come to the next Commission meeting and within sixty days to file NOI permits with appropriate plans.

Moving on to new business, the Commission agreed to send a letter of violation as well to a property owner on Canaan Southfield Road, where it appears that an intermittent stream has been buried and a wetland removed without permitting.

Finally, Ms. Boomsma asked for input from the Commission on the enforcement order issued to Richard Stebbins of 83 North Road regarding a jurisdictional area disturbed without a permit when a tennis court was installed. She wanted to gain any input from the Commission to replicate the wetlands rather than replace the disturbed area. The Commission commented that the option is reasonable and encouraged her to submit plans for review when the hearing is formally reopened.

The next meeting is scheduled for September 21 at 5:00 p.m. □

Martha Bryan

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by Shawn Fields

BURRITT BLOOMS AGAIN

The skies had taken on a worrisome cast of gray, but by the sheer force of will, the crowd that thronged to the New Marlborough Village Green on August 19 brought both good weather and good cheer. The 2023 edition of Elihu Burritt Day seemed to thrive with extra spirit. The Cultural Council, sponsor of the event, packed the green with what may have been a record number of vendors, with hardly more than inches separating the tables and tents that ringed the big lawn.

In addition to the annual Elihu Burritt Award (to Tom Brazie), the antique car show, the Pet Parade, musicians, and a juggler, the vendors included: Inquisitive Feline Fibers, gummies and other candies from Two Sisters, Merry Abolafia's exquisite jams, offerings from The Farm New Marlborough, Colombian sweets from Berkshire Bendito Capricho, paintings and jew-

elry from Windwhistle Design, Burritt tee-shirts next to the ever-popular White Elephant Sale, a Food Bank for Pets, baseball cards and other collectibles from Eric Cleary, sewn good and repurposed dishes from Willow Run Revivals, the jewelry designs of Joanne Conti, knives of every description from H. L. Dallas, Prue Spaulding's preserves and crochet creations, more crocheted goods plus hand-made soap from Richard Long and Tom Stalker, lemonade and snacks from the Flour Barn; Crooked Stick Pops' popsicles, walking sticks from Lucile Siegel and woodcraft from Bill Haines, the Snow Farm's vegetables and yarns, Leslie Wheeler's mystery novels (set in the spooky wilderness of the New Marlborough Land Trust), Liesl Carlson's handmade jewelry, handcrafts by Jill Lipsky (proceeds going to needy organizations in Ghana), more handcrafts and collectibles from Lucinda Shmulsky, jewelry and "soft toys" from Sarah Formel and Vivian Kie, artworks by Margaret Buchte, and Paul Ramunni, who not only plays a mean accordion but has 400 of them on display in his North Canaan accordion museum.

Exhausted fairgoers regained their equilibrium at the Fire Company's splendid Pig Roast in Southfield. □

Joe Poindexter





Photos by Joe Poindexter

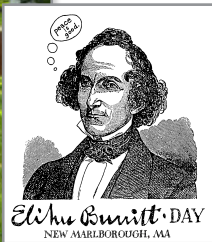


Photo by Sherri Gorelick

If you missed out on one of those fantastic Elihu Burritt tee-shirts, they're still available in men's, women's, and kids' sizes at \$20 each from Sherri Gorelick, sherrigorelick@gmail.com. Your purchase benefits the New Marlborough Cultural Council.



A CHANGE AT THE TOP

The New President of the Meeting House Lays Out His Goals

By Robbi Hartt

“I feel highly flattered and honored to be asked to continue the momentum that my predecessor, Ben Harms, has built,” Barry Shapiro states of his recent election as president of New Marlborough Meeting House. “My wife Marjorie and I started living in the Berkshires part-time in 1990 and have attended countless Meeting House events over the years. We consider it a focal point for cultural and civic life in the community,” he says.

No stranger to leadership positions, Barry has chaired and served on numerous nonprofit boards near his home on Long Island, New York, over the years, promoting education, the environment, public television, and the arts. Since moving to the Berkshires full-time in 2010, he has become increasingly involved in local organizations, serving on the boards of Shakespeare & Company and Mahaiwe Performing Arts Center, as well as the New Marlborough Village Association.

Many residents may know him best as New Marlborough’s town moderator (re-elected annually since 2015). As locals can attest, he handles both the protocols and details of the annual meetings with equal aplomb, a tribute, no doubt, to his career chairing the Corporate Practice Group at the law firm of Meyer, Suozzi, English and Klein, P.C.

While the historical importance of the New Marlborough Meeting House is known to many, others may be surprised to learn that it is where the people of New Marlborough Township assembled on July 11, 1774, to record their opposition to certain “unconstitutional



Barry Shapiro, left, recognizing the accomplishments of his predecessor, Ben Harms

Photo by Larry Burke

and oppressive” acts of the British Parliament — namely, the infamous tax on tea.

The original Meeting House (built in the early 1740s) and a subsequent “barn church” (built fifty years later) both deteriorated beyond repair. Their replacement, designed in the 1830s by architect Henry Sykes, has endured as “a prime example of American Greek revival architecture in the form of a New England meeting house.” Almost two hundred years later, it is preserved and celebrated as a “sacred space, vibrant with performances, speakers, community

events, and a sense of place.”

These are the words of the New Marlborough Meeting House (previously, the New Marlborough Village Association), a nonprofit organization that has preserved it for the past half century. The organization offers performances, gallery space, and speaking engagements, without which, says Barry, “the Meeting House could be dark and dilapidated.” Having served as treasurer prior to becoming president, he is well attuned to the financial details involved in restoring, maintaining, and enhancing the structure.

“For decades the cultural events were almost exclusively chamber music events, but in recent years we’ve undergone a metamorphosis,” he explains, “expanding our offerings while staying true to our ongoing mission.” That mission includes preserving the public space; fostering appreciation for New Marlborough’s beauty, traditions, and heritage; and encouraging activ-

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ities and events that enhance the artistic, cultural, and civic life of the community.

“In order to keep ticket prices low [\$25 for members, \$30 for nonmembers], we have been actively fundraising in other ways, including applying for grants, increasing the donor base and donations, and publishing a program book,” in which, he notes, “we sold thousands of dollars in ads and sponsorships!” Barry believes there is more the Meeting House can do. He imagines “holiday celebrations, cabaret nights in the winter, monthly potlucks, and other events to create a sense of ownership from the entire community.”

An increase in Meeting House activities, says Barry, could involve an expansion of the board, presently at ten members — in addition to Barry, Ben Harms, Judith Friedlander (vice president), Paula Hatch, Anna Houston, Joseph Poindexter (clerk), Will Regan (treasurer), Richard Stebbins, Abbe Stein-

glass, and Ellen Sweet — to spread the workload.

In doing so, he also hopes to attract more diverse voices and generate more ideas, as well as create more committees to allow greater delegation of responsibilities. While Tara White handles tickets and Diane Barth handles graphic designs for posters and programs, a lot of the last-minute duties, says Barry, still get left to a few members.

As he moves into the leadership of the Meeting House, Barry envisions a slate of ambitious goals: ensuring sound fiscal policies, expanding the board, upholding a strong programming philosophy to ensure well-attended performances, and expanding services to engage a broader swath of the community. “I want,” he says, “to see the building lit, alive, and regarded as a valuable resource shared by everyone.” □



Barry Shapiro interviews Karen Allen at a Meeting House program in August.



NEW MARLBOROUGH MEETING HOUSE

Meeting House events can sell out! Buy tickets ONLINE at: nmmeetinghouse.org

Sept
2
4:30 pm



Simone Dinnerstein

Returning by popular demand, performing works by Franz Schubert, Robert Schumann, Philip Glass, and Jean-Phillip Rameau. Her 2021 performance at the Meeting House was sold out.

Sept
23
4:30 pm



Trio Calore

Carol Wincenc, flute
Kurt Nikkanen, violin
Maria Asteriadou, piano

The trio of renowned recitalists will perform works by Franz Doppler, Bohuslav Martinu, J.S. Bach, and Melanie Bonis.

Sept
9
4:30 pm



Melissa Clark and Madhur Jaffrey

Tasting the World: Two of today's great cookbook writers come to New Marlborough to discuss food, cooking, and their careers crafting delicious recipes.

Oct
7
4:30 pm



Simon Winchester with Chandra Prasad, Francine Prose, and André Bernard

A Writer and a Robot Walk Into a Bar: Writing in the Age of Artificial Intelligence.

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Meeting House
GALLERY

Sept **1**
thru
Oct **8**

The 25th Annual New Marlborough Artist's Show

JOIN US FOR THE OPENING RECEPTION September 1, 5-7 p.m.

The annual showcasing of New Marlborough's finest fine art!

NEW MARLBOROUGH MEETING HOUSE PRESENTS

Cooks, Music-makers, and Humans Versus Robots

By Barry R. Shapiro

Four exciting programs in September and early October will bring the Meeting House Presents series to a close.

Pianist Simone Dinnerstein has performed with many of the world's finest orchestras and in such venues as Carnegie Hall, Philharmonie Berlin, Vienna Konzerthaus, and the Kennedy Center. On September 2, she returns to the Meeting House. Described by *The New Yorker* as an artist of "lean, knowing, and unpretentious elegance" and praised by the *Washington Post* for her "strikingly original ideas and irrefutable integrity," she will present works by Franz Schubert, Robert Schumann, and others.

On September 9, legendary cookbook authors, Melissa Clark and Madhur Jaffrey, will appear in a program called, "Tasting the World." The two, who have authored more than eighty cookbooks between them, will discuss all things food related, share some tips on what they are cooking now, where they are headed next and take questions from the audience. This event has proven to be one of the hottest tickets of the season and those interested in sharpening their culinary skills are advised to book their tickets promptly.

Then, two weeks later on September 23, the Trio Ca-



Trio Calore will perform on September 23

lore, consisting of renowned flutist Carol Wincenc (Ms. Wincenc has appeared at the Meeting House numerous times over the past thirty years), violinist Kurt Nikkanen (concertmaster of the New York City Ballet Orchestra), and pianist Maria Asteriadou (praised by the *New York Times* as "an artist with intense personality, virtuosic flair, [and] unusual poise,") will present works by Ibert, Doppler, Martinu, Bach, and others.

Finally, the season comes to an end on October 7, with acclaimed writer Simon Winchester leading a highly topical panel discussion entitled, "A Writer and a Robot Walk into a Bar: Writing in the Age of Artificial Intelligence." Joining Mr. Winchester will be Chandra Prasad (whose forthcoming novel deals with the intersection of AI, identity and environmental ethics), Francine Prose (author of twenty novels, including *Blue Angel*, which was a finalist for the National Book Award), and André Bernard (longtime publisher and vice president of Harcourt Trade Publications and now vice president of the Simon Gugenheim Foundation).

Tickets can be purchased by visiting www.nmmeetinghouse.org, or by calling (413) 229-5045. □



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TOWN HALL UPDATE

On August 6, the Town Hall Planning Committee hosted information meetings at the current Town Hall and at Robin Hall, an administrative building of the former Kolburne School. Both, along with an entirely new building on an open lot, are being considered for a future town hall that contains updated work and meeting spaces and is compliant with the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Estimated costs of the three options: \$3.2 million for a renovation of the current Town Hall; \$3.1 million for a new building; and \$2 million for a retrofitting of Robin Hall.

Most residents are familiar with Town Hall but not Robin Hall, and the open house there drew a lively response, with as many as seventy townspeople examining the building and learning of various configurations that would fill the needs of town government, as well as those, possibly, of a social center. As explained by Marc Trachtenberg, an enthusiastic advocate of Robin Hall, one plan calls for the repurposing of the building's upper floor for town offices and meeting rooms, with the rooms on the lower level being developed as income-producing rental spaces, or made available for



Robin Hall, formerly a Kolburne School administrative building photos by Larry Burke



Selectman Tara White outlines options for a new town hall, and below, land outside Robin Hall could host community events.

expanded Town facilities. A swimming pool on the upper floor could become a year-round community facility, either as a functioning pool or as a gathering space with benches, tables, and plantings.

As this issue was going to press, the Town Hall Planning Committee issued a second Request for Proposals in hopes of expanding its options. Selectman Tara White, who was also present at Robin Hall to answer questions on all three town hall options, explained that the ultimate decision will be made by the voters — at a town meeting. A vote to proceed would then require a ballot vote for a budget override.

□



A FALL FORAGE

Coming up on the fungi calendar are “chicken of the woods” mushrooms, also called “bracken mushrooms.” They are fun for the beginning mycologist because, even while driving past them, they signal their presence through green undergrowth and fallen logs with their un-



mistakable color — somewhere between saffron and egg yolk. Diane Borsato, in her book, *Mushrooming: The Joy of the Quiet Hunt – An Illustrated Guide to the Fascinating, the Delicious, the Deadly and the Strange*, calls them “leaking sunshine.” □

Kenzie Fields

Chicken of the woods

25th Annual New Marlborough Artists Show

Meeting House
GALLERY

JOIN US!

September 1 - October 8

Opening Reception Friday, September 1, 5-7 p.m.

NOTE NEW HOURS for this show: Saturday, Sunday 11 am - 4 pm

YOUR TURN

NM5VN has established a place for our readers' stories. We encourage you to share your experiences, incidents, or thoughts through this space. Points of view are welcome but civility is mandatory; editors reserve the right to accept, reject, and edit. Send your story to Joe Poindexter at boydpoindexter@gmail.com.

100 Years Loved — and Counting

Coordinated by Molly Crine



My grandmother Vera Edelman, of Southfield, celebrated her 100th birthday on August 17 at her home, alongside family and friends. In honor of this milestone, my family and I wanted to share with the readers of the *New Marlborough 5 Village News* a bit of my grandmother's life story.

It might seem as if these stories are too good to be true or have been taken from a children's movie. If I didn't know her, I might not believe them either. She has led and continues to lead her life with kindness, compassion, love, humor, and grace in absolutely everything she does. We love you, Gram. Happy 100th birthday (and many more!)

Here is what other family members have to say about Vera.

Molly Crine

A son: Vera was born in 1923 in Springfield, Massachusetts, one of five girls. Her father was a draftsman and died of a ruptured appendix when she was ten years old, leaving a wife and five little girls during the worst part of the Great Depression. Vera's mom, Grandma Julie, went to work as a domestic, and also worked in hotels; they somehow survived. Fast forward about ten years, and Vera married Waldo Edelman, a doctor who had a medical practice in nearby Cummington, Massachusetts. This was in the midst of World War II. Together they had eight children, six boys and two girls. After the war they went to Japan and France, where Waldo set up public health services in both countries. Over the years, Waldo's work took the family to live on a Navajo reservation in New Mexico, and a Potawatomi reservation in Oklahoma. They also lived in the Washington, D.C. area a few times, but kept a home in Southfield, which was always the home base.

Vera had a very special gift with people, very young, very old, and all in between. Many times, when people who knew her had troubles, they wound up at her kitchen table, drinking coffee and unfailingly receiving much-needed special handling. Vera would give away whatever she had that might be helpful to another person. She was always that way, and always put others first. Always. A more compassionate and hard-working person you cannot find.

A nephew: A year after my mom died, I was sent to Berkshire Community College to represent our credit union at a Health Fair for Massachusetts state workers. Before returning to Boston, I thought I should pay Vera a visit. Being home alone at the time, she was surprised to see me but glad to have company and invited me in. I stayed a couple of hours over a sandwich and a cup of tea, just the two of us at the kitchen table. For me, it was quality time.

We were still mourning our loss of Helen, my mom and Vera's sister. As we reminisced about her, Vera surprised me with a high school photo I had never seen of her and my mom taken back in the 1940s. Our time together was therapy for me. I came for lunch and was served a sandwich and the Balm of Gilead. With my mom's passing, Vera became the precious, last surviving sibling of five daughters and "matriarch" of our extended families. I feel a closer kinship to Vera today than ever before, and blessed that she is still with us.

A nephew: I recall a long time ago my mom telling me about when a farmer's cow got loose. Vera was able to coax it back to its pasture by humming an old Russian lullaby that Grandma Julie used to sing to her all the time around the house, which at that moment played back like a phonograph record in her head. The cow stepped dutifully forward behind her in steady rhythm to the lilting melody.

A daughter: Between her dedication to the Ladies Aid group and raising a large family by herself, since Waldo worked out of town a lot, Vera was known as the Mom of the Neighborhood! All the kids in Southfield knew that if they showed up at meal time, they would be given a seat at the table and fed very well. She also helped deliver Maureen Litchfield (now Krejci) in Beverly Litchfield's time of need at home back in the 1960s.

I really feel that we had the coolest mom and I have admired her all my life for her larger-than-life accomplishments. It was a huge undertaking to go around the world with a passel of kids and fit right in with the local communities, whether she was in France, Japan, or the many places she lived in the United States. And she did it in style!

A son: Mom endured countless events during her century run – some wonderful, but others less so. She stuck with all the moves, given Waldo's military career in those days, together with eight children. She was the glue that held us together, and still is. Not crazy glue, but rather, loving epoxy! She taught us, in her own manner, how to navigate through life and respect people along the way. Many know and love her, but none as much as my siblings and I. I love you Mom and always will. Thank you for everything. Happy birthday! May your run continue!

A granddaughter: A lot of my memories are of Gram's kitchen and picnic table. A very comfortable place, it's the kind of kitchen you can spend hours in without realizing it. Also, her spaghetti was always my favorite.

A granddaughter: When I think of Gram, the first adjective that comes to mind is "soft." Her soul, her tone, her spirit, her heart – even her skin, is soft. As a child I knew that she would always greet me warmly, with a smile and sing-song tone to her voice. I felt that just my presence made her happier. The years have moved on, but the feeling as I walk through the front door has remained the same. As my daughter grows and has built her own special relationship with her great-grandmother, it is also rooted in softness. This is a special connection that many are not able to experience, and we are blessed to have Gram as our "soft spot" to always bring us warmth and love.

A granddaughter: Will never forget all of the delicious eats she made for us, especially her liver and onions with mashed potatoes and gravy, and the best chocolate cake ever made! I have many of her recipes.

A granddaughter: About four or five years ago at another one of her birthday parties, my grandma looked at me, leaned over, and said, "You know, I feel just the same as I did when I was twenty. Just the same on the inside." At the time I didn't think about it too much, but looking back, she has taught me through example, that although we get older, sometimes we never really grow up. We never lose that sense of wonder, joy, curiosity, playfulness, and unconditional love that is most commonly attributed to children.

From playing with me as a child with dolls, and both of us giggling when we accidentally left them in the oven to dry after bath time for just a minute too long, to welcoming numerous friends into her home as if they were hers, to crying in front of the television at a Hallmark movie or figure skating, holidays and regular days in her home were warm and filled with laughter and light. She would say her house was a terrible mess (it wasn't), and called everyone by the wrong name – this she did life-long, though she

clearly knew who each one of us was, and sometimes better than anyone else.

Holidays are a bit quieter now. For the last couple of years, she spends most of her time seated, the spaghetti pot is empty, the rolling pin has been put down, and the apron hung up. She always said her pies were terrible, too (they weren't). But dessert is still her favorite, and as a big smile lights up her face when she is handed a piece of her cake. I recognize the same girl she's always been.

A granddaughter: Vera has always been the quintessential grandma. Whether having fresh pies and stew at the ready at the end of a long journey from Canada, or an extra place setting at any dinner table for anyone who might happen to stop by, she always makes her grandchildren feel welcome and loved. A visit to Granny's house is the adventure of a lifetime for her great-grandchildren as her home remains to this day a truly happy one. Vera really is the perfect grandmother and great-grandmother.

A daughter: Our mother raised eight children without ever raising her voice. Imagine eight children returning home from school each day with books and sports gear. We all piled our belongings on the most convenient flat surface available, the dining room table. Mom prided herself on her delicious meals which she prepared homemade, and with several courses each night. We enjoyed them at a beautifully set table with her special red goblets and lighted candles whether we were eating spaghetti, a pot roast dinner, or steak. She always enjoyed her meals at a beautiful table.

One day, as we got older, Mom asked us to please find another place to put our books and gear, but we continued to plop them on the dining room table. After a few days of Mom continuing kindly to ask us to find another spot, we entered the house, and as we approached the dining room, we noticed something missing. We all looked at each other but no one said a word. The dining room table was gone! Mom had it taken out of the house that morning after we left for school. The table didn't reappear for quite some time. As you can imagine, we all found new homes for our things. No harsh words, no arguing, no punishment. This is how our mother handled everything: with patience, compassion, creativity, grace, and love. She has always been and continues to be an amazing person. We are blessed to have her as our mother. □

DRAMA IN THE NIGHT SKY

In mid-August, residents were treated to a celestial spectacle in the over-night skies over New Marlborough. On the early morning of August 12, the Perseid meteor shower was visible as streaks of light in the eastern sky from 12:00 to 4:00 a.m. Though nighttime clouds obscured the view on the next night, the shower continued to increase, hitting a peak of perhaps sixty to eighty meteors an hour in the early morning of the 13th.

The ten meteors shown here appear as streaks in this composite of eight photos, captured in thirty-second exposures with a 20mm lens on a Canon 6D camera at f2.8, ISO 6400, between 1:00 and 3:00 a.m. August 12. The center of the image shows the Milky Way; a small fuzzy oval, far right, is the Andromeda galaxy. Most of the meteors appear to be coming from the constellation Perseus in the lower center of the image, and thus the meteor shower is called the Perseids. Meteors are the result of bits of rock and iron



Ruben Kier's composite photo shows the Perseid Meteor Shower strutting its stuff.

(meteoroids) that break away from a comet as it passes near the sun, revealing themselves as streaks of light as they pass through the earth's atmosphere some fifty miles above the surface of the planet and burn up. □

Ruben Kier

NEW MARLBOROUGH ARTISTS SHOW

The Meeting House Gallery Marks Its Twenty-fifth Year

By Larry Burke

Starting on Friday, September 1 and running through Sunday, October 8, the twenty-fifth rendition of the annual New Marlborough Artists Show at the Meeting House Gallery will feature the works of Ron Brecher, Ann Getsinger, Nikki Hayes, Peter Murkett, Katheryn Freeman, Nanci Worthington, and Joan Griswold, and a collaboration by Kenzie Fields and Sarah Reynolds North.

Of this bunch of creative New Marlborough people, there is one, Peter Murkett, who technically is not from New Marlborough, living, as he does, just over the border in Monterey. Peter sees himself as being very much of New Marlborough though, since his workshop over the past twelve years has been in The Whip Shop in Southfield, not to mention that he and his wife Michele Miller lived in what has since become the Inn on the Green, way back in the mid-1970's, a period when he served as one of our town's volunteer firefighters.

Peter may also not answer to being an artist per se, but he is an extraordinary artisan. His medium is wood, and he prefers his raw material "straight from the log." One of his most sought-after products over many years has been his interpretation of the classic Windsor chair, which involves sculpting the seat from a solid slab of wood with hand tools and turning the spindles and legs on a lathe or shaping them with drawknives and spokeshaves. Much of Peter's work has been influenced



Peter Murkett, holding one of his latest efforts, a dipping cup modeled on a Shaker design

Photos by Larry Burke



In his Southfield Workshop, Peter assembles one of the pieces for the Meeting House Gallery show

by his admiration for Shaker furniture – the spare designs that marry form and function, and the high order of craftsmanship achieved by the makers. Hancock Shaker Village is a continuing source of inspiration for Peter, a place with a "spiritual aspect" that speaks to him. Just this past spring, his eye was drawn to a carved and turned dipping cup in the museum, a rounded vessel with a handle designed to hang off the lip of a bucket. He obtained permission to attempt to recreate the dipper, and two of the resulting pieces will be in the Meeting House show.

Peter, at age 76, regards his participation in the gallery show as an opportunity to, as he says, "go into retrospective mode." To that end the

pieces he is choosing to show include the afore-mentioned dipper, a brand-new clock mounted in a triangular frame, and, from earlier times in his career, a desk and secretary in the Shaker style, a towering sculptural piece fashioned from a single red maple log, several Windsor chairs, and two walking canes he made for his father, one sporting a handle in the form of a man's head that he carved in his early teens – an early intimation of the deeply rewarding direction his life would take.

The opening for the show is from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. on Friday, September 1. Gallery hours through the month and into October will be on Saturdays and Sundays from 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. □

Thank You to Our Contributors:

Jill Jakes, in memory of Jon Swan; Frederick Schoonmaker; Karla & Peter Alfano;
Leonard & Hannah Golub; Anita Fleury; Ellie & Ned MacDowell; Meta Levi; Natalie Powell

THE REAL — AND SURREAL — ANN GETSINGER

At a Major Berkshire Botanical Garden Exhibit

By Robbi Hartt

Standing in her New Marlborough studio, the northern light filtering in from the trio of windows that reach the seventeen-foot ceiling, Ann Getsinger is surrounded by her oil paintings — gourds, shells, cabbage, bones, an explosion of milkweed, set against the familiar tones and textures of her beloved Berkshire landscape. “Subtle surrealism,” she calls it, with the reverence of a christening.

Some thirty of Ann’s works are on display at the Berkshire Botanical Garden from September 1 to November 19.

From a young age, Ann Getsinger was at home in nature. Playing with dirt, twigs, and bark, and using them to create roads, fences, and bridges was “a joyful thing I discovered and loved, organically, not realizing that it would set the tone for my creative process even now,” she says. Her family home in Wadertown, Connecticut, on land that had been a dairy farm since the late 1700s, nurtured that creativity. Her parents did, too. “My mother loved nature; she had gardens and bee hives,” she says, “while my father was very engaged in art.” A sculptor and musician, among other pursuits, he was both a founding member of the Funky Butt Jazz Band and a frequent exhibitor at the nearby Washington Art Association. Ann was the youngest of five children, each of whom developed a calling and talent for art.

“There was never a question about what I was going to do in my life,” says Ann. After receiving art awards in both junior high and high school, she attended Pader School of Art in New Haven. While that training gave her solid technical skills, moving to the Berkshires in the ’70s and visiting the family cabin on the coast of Maine provided environments and landscapes that



Ann Getsinger in her studio

Photo by Robbi Hartt

inspired creativity. Farnsworth Art Museum in Rockland, Maine, with works by N.C., Andrew, and Jamie Wyeth, influenced her greatly, and the integration of animals in the paintings of Walton Ford, at one time a resident of Southfield, stretched her imagination in new directions.

A grant to study at the San Francisco Art Institute in 1979 allowed Ann to explore different art forms, including conceptual art, earthworks (with Alice Aycock), and abstraction (with Hassel Smith). “I had an amazing experience in California, but missing rural New England, with its seasons and people, eventually brought me back to the Berkshires,” she says.

Shortly after her return, during one of her shifts as a short-order cook at 20 Railroad Street in Great Barrington, Ann recalls the artist Sheldon (Shelly) Fink

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telling her, “I’d like to draw you.”

“I’d like to draw you, too!” she responded, changing the trajectory of her life and art for the next decade. They moved in together and became business partners in Shelly’s Framing and Art Supply in Great Barrington and painted every moment they spare moment they could. “He introduced me to traditional realism,” Ann notes, adding “I learned more from him in one week than I did in school.” Shelly painted many portraits during their years together, including one of Supreme Court Justice William Brennan, and has works in New York City’s Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Like her father, who worked for Connecticut Light and Power while creating sculptures and performing as a musician, Ann comes from a tradition of doing regular jobs while creating. For her that “regular work” was framing, and it gave her the financial freedom to create the kind of art that felt authentic, on her terms, rather than worrying about what might be salable.

Since closing the framing business in 2016, Ann has focused her energies on visual art and pursuit of new opportunities, such as her upcoming show “The Garden of Curiosity” at the Berkshire Botanical Gardens (BBG).

“This has been a remarkable year,” she observes, a sharp contrast with “pandemic cave” she experienced when nothing was online and people couldn’t come to her studio — a situation darkened by her mother’s death in 2020 and the subsequent sale of the family’s eighteenth-century homestead.

“In January 2023, I thought ‘something has to happen,’” she says, “so I decided to sign up for a class a class in [New York City’s] Art Students League.” Around the same time, she received a fellowship from The Virginia Center for the Creative Arts in the scenic Blue Ridge mountains, one of the nation’s largest year-round residency programs, serving more than 6,000 writers, visual artists, and composers since 1971.

Ann recalls the three weeks spent in an unfamiliar Southern landscape, dotted with antebellum mansions and slave cemeteries devoid of headstones, as a “sur-

real” time in which she began a deeper exploration of the context involved in every question, the ephemera of a thing in motion, the mystery of nature. Returning to her studio after dinner one evening, she saw the sunset’s “weird green glow” on the horizon and then a glowing pyramid containing a floating white globe emerging on the ground. “I didn’t want to know what it was but rather to explore it and see what happened,” she says.

In January, she had put out a query to the Berkshire Botanical Gardens, where a scheduled showing of her work in 2022 had been canceled by the pandemic. Matt Larkin, chair of the BBG Trustees, and Mike Beck, BBG executive director, came to her studio and told her they had an opening later in the year. “I practically giggled with glee,” she admits, reflecting on how attuned her art is to botanical matter and natural history.

In announcing the BBG exhibit, Felix Carroll, director of marketing communications, writes: “Maybe it’s not surprising that the title of her exhibition pays hom-

age to a famous work of art that has most inspired her: the mystical, sensual, ecological, and poetic triptych oil painting ‘The Garden of Earthly Delights,’ painted on oak panel 500-plus years ago by Hieronymus Bosch.” Mr. Carroll describes her work as “intricate, meditative, venturesome, challenging, forceful, often odd and always stunning.” The white globe in the woods, he observes about one of her paintings, changes the surrounding scenery, “challenging familiar perceptions and inviting new discoveries.”

“I direct you to the first thing and then invite you to discover — that’s my job,” says Ann.

Mostly new works, the oil paintings, mixed media drawings, and sculptures on display in “The Garden of Curiosity” offer viewers both binoculars and microscope, drawing them in to the smallest details and connecting them to the surrounding landscape — “a spiritual integration of everything,” says Ann. “The chance to learn, grow, and stand beside my work in this remarkable and welcoming exhibit space,” she adds, “is incredibly rewarding.” □



Blue Ridge Cabbage. Oil on linen, 2023



Bees Balanced. Oil on linen, 2017



MAILBOX

To the Editor,

This fall, along with the voters of the other seven Southern Berkshire Towns, we will be voting for what I think is the most important decision we will make for a generation – whether or not to merge our Southern Berkshire Regional School District with Berkshire Hills Regional School District.

I will be casting my vote for the merger, and I am writing to ask that New Marlborough voters join with me by voting yes.

I believe that the role of public schools is to educate each student according to their ability, to prepare them for employment or further education, and to take their places as productive members of their community. I believe this requires that our schools meet students' educational, social, and emotional needs. To achieve these goals requires a broad range of programs.

However, declining enrollment leads to more challenges in providing comprehensive academic programs, services, support, and enrichment opportunities. The merger would result in a sufficient number of students to participate in more courses, more programs, more electives, and more enrichment experiences. It would offer expanded programming for high school students in a new state-of-the-art facility that would include programs in career, vocational, technical education. It would offer greater variety and support for sports and other extracurricular activities. It would allow the pooling of resources to support the growing number of students with social-emotional, special education, and English language needs. And, it would offer a larger, more diverse student body with more opportunities for kids to forge new social connections.

The August 5 *Village News* covered the anticipated costs for New Marlborough in detail. The proposed plan, current and future school projected population figures, the projected budget and additional information are available on the 8 Town Regional School District Planning Board website www.8towns.org.

Please join me and vote “yes” for the school merger. Our children deserve nothing less.

Louise Yohalem
Former Director, School Based Youth
Services Program, Plainfield, NJ BOE;
Chair, Southern Berkshire Regional
School District Elementary Task Force



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MAILBOX



To the Editor,

I was a teacher for twenty years and worked in both the Southern Berkshire and Berkshire Hills Regional School Districts. I am writing to express my concerns about the proposed merger of the districts. There are several valuable things that will be lost with a merger.

There would be a loss of small community education with the merger. The culture of a large school versus the culture of a small school are vastly different. Some students cannot thrive in a large school setting. That is the beauty of school choice — that someone would have the option to choose into a smaller community where they can thrive. With the merger, that choice is no longer available. Having been in the educational system in both districts, I have seen that one size does not fit all. I know of several students who choiced into Southern Berkshire, and it saved their lives. That option would not be available with a merger. Many parents in our area decide to send their children to one district or another, based on which school is better suited for their individual child's needs. Often this takes place within the same family, as it did with my own children. Do we want to make a decision that would limit that choice?

A point has been made that with the merger there would be more opportunities for all students. There are unique classes or extra curricular opportunities in both districts. It is not necessary to merge in order for those opportunities to be available to students. If a certain class or extracurricular activity is not available in one district, further collaboration could be explored between the two districts, similar to the collaboration that is already happening with sports.

The 8 Town Regional School District Planning Board has said that they will not merge the elementary schools initially. It does raise the question: what will happen a few years down the road to these elementary schools? Small community schools are invaluable places for young children to learn and grow. With the focus on social emotional learning, a smaller community can provide support for those needs. I am concerned that eventually these elementary community schools will be closed, to the detriment of our young students.

I recommend that people vote against the merger. There are many reasons why it will not benefit our communities, families or especially our students.

Respectfully,
Jennifer Miller
Mill River

SUSAN M. SMITH
Attorney At Law

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NEIGHBORS



Barbara Winters, a former resident of New Marlborough, passed away on August 4 in Rock Hill, South Carolina, at the age of ninety-four. She was born in Poland, ten years before the outbreak of World War II, when Germany invaded Poland. Her father was an air force pilot and flight instructor who escaped to Sweden, and then was smuggled by fishermen across the North Sea to Britain, where he fought and trained pilots for the Royal Air Force. After the Soviet invasion of northeastern Poland, Barbara and her mother escaped to her grandmother’s home in Krakow, where they endured six years of Nazi, and then Soviet, occupation. As the war was ending,



Barbara Winters as a young woman . . .

Barbara’s father was able to make contact with them. After several attempts they were able to join him in England.

Barbara graduated from the Nottingham (England) College of Art and received a masters degree in design from London’s Royal College of Art. She began her career designing clothes for Marks and Spencer in Britain and later moved to New York, where she continued her career designing lingerie and sleepwear for Dior. She married her husband, Martin Winters, in 1970; In 2022 they celebrated their fifty-second anniversary.

In addition to her creative professional life, Barbara became an accomplished photographer. She traveled frequently for work in Europe and Asia, seeking new fabrics and styles, and her camera was a constant companion. After retirement, she mastered digital photography. She and Marty moved to New Marlborough in the mid-1980s, and Barbara turned her attention to a landscape she loved, in all its seasons.



Photos courtesy of the Winters family

Barbara also contributed in the early 2000s to the first years of *The New Marlborough 5 Village News*. She occasionally did the layout for the monthly issues, and regularly contributed photographs for articles. Longtime readers may remember a convincingly Photoshopped image of oil-drilling rigs in a field along Lumbert Cross Road – for the 2004 April Fools issue. Barbara also made a lasting contribution to *The Pictorial History of New Marlborough*, published by the New Marlborough Historical Society in 2005. She digitized and restored hundreds of old photographs for that publication.

. . . and with husband, Marty

Two longtime friends pay tribute to her.

Gloria Levitas, a close friend for sixty-five years: I first met Barbara in October, 1958. She had flown into Boston with a friend of mine; he was eager to show her off to us as he planned to marry her. I remember how impressed I was with her beauty, her warmth, and intelligence. We made an instant connection and remained

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close friends until her recent death.

From 1963 to 2000 we lived in an apartment that Barbara had found for us. We returned the favor many years later when we located a house for Barbara and her second husband, Marty, in Mill River. They had been spending much of their time in the Catskills, but despite the physical beauty of their surroundings, they missed the kind of social and cultural life that they observed in the Berkshires. The house and its accompanying barn required a complete renovation, designed by Barbara and Marty, and accomplished by a group of Polish workmen Barbara overheard on a nearby building site.

Barbara was always put together — in sharp contrast to most of us who wandered around in jeans and baggy shirts. A woman of great passion and intellect, she had been shaped by World War II and by the harsh controlling environment of the Russians who took over Poland right after the war. She hated the communists and loved America, throwing herself almost immediately into local and national politics.

Many here knew her as an extraordinary photographer, a skill she developed after she left New York, and honed to perfection in New Marlborough. In New York, she designed lingerie for Dior and often went abroad to purchase fabrics and find inspirations for new styles. I was particularly impressed by the wedding dress she made for her daughter Laura: It required some fifty to a hundred tiny satin buttons and loops, which she made and sewed by hand.


Her musical laugh and elegance will stay with me forever.

Judy Friedlander has a special tie to Barbara and Marty: There is no way I can separate my love of living in Mill River from Barbara and Marty Winters. They accompany me every day, from the moment I wake up in the morning to when I turn in at night. For, as some readers of *The 5 Village News* know, I live in the nineteenth-century barn they renovated nearly forty years ago. Even while attending to the most mundane of chores, I can't help but marvel at their aesthetic sense and imagination, at the wood and beams of the old barn that they used to decorate the interior, at the chandelier Marty made out of a yoke for oxen, and at the magnificent photos hanging on the walls that Barbara had taken over the years, of this and other barns, photos that often appeared in the Meeting House Gallery as well.

When my husband Erwin and I purchased our home in 1996, Barbara and Marty still lived in the white farm house next door. Having rented the barn from them in the summer of 1994, we already knew that our neighbors would become our friends. And good friends they remained, through thick and thin. Barbara and I used to talk for hours, about almost everything, but especially about the traumas of World War II, which she experienced first-hand as a child in Poland, and about the never-ending obligations she felt Americans had to protect our democratic way of life. Barbara was a beautiful, talented, dignified and generous person. May her memory live on in New Marlborough, as it will in me. □

Compiled by Barbara Lowman: deeuell@yahoo.com

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OUR WILDLIFE NEIGHBORS

On August 11, **Don Cook**, who lives in Clayton, wrote. “A **mosquito** story for you. Here’s how it went: I was reading in the den when Liz called me to the patio door to see what was going on outside. It was six o’clock. I looked up to see fifty or so barn swallows, fifty to sixty feet in the air, circling the patio and feeding frenetically on mosquitos. So entertaining to watch.

“Simultaneously, underneath the swooping swallows, about eight to ten feet in the air, a swarm of **dragonflies** were in a similar feeding frenzy, darting around, sometimes at me, dipping and diving. Liz and I were able to stand amid the playful fury for a while. The whole thing was thrilling, frankly, a real joy, an aeronautic wonder. They were having a time of it!”

As Don’s message makes clear, this seemingly tandem hunting party of swallows and dragonflies is fueled by each species wanting its share of the same food source – mosquitos – resulting in a much-appreciated benefit for us. And while the two sets of hunters tend to operate separately and apart at different altitudes, some people have observed similar occasions where a swallow will supplement its main course of mosquito with a side of dragonfly.

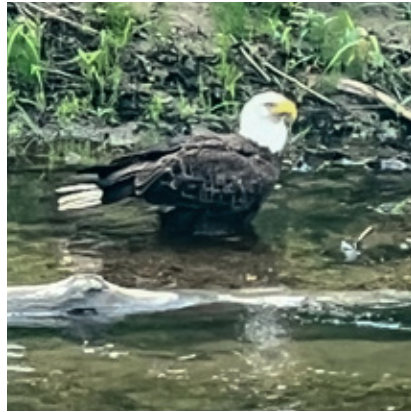


photo by Michelle Dawson

A bald eagle cooling its heels in the Konkapot

rule rather than the exception in New Marlborough. One bear — okay, who knows if it’s just one bear — has been snacking regularly on the few apples that survived the May frost at the **Burke** home on Woodruff Mountain. A trail camera shot from late on the evening of July 27 finds the thief up on its hind legs, sniffing for an apple. Further inspection determined that the bear stands about six-foot-three in his or her stocking feet. Another day, in broad daylight the hefty creature ambled along from tree to tree, eyes up in search of the next treat, with apple juice running from its jaws. Having seen the bear ransack their chicken coop earlier in the year, and more recently make short work of the garden fence in search of corn, **Jane** and **Larry** will be happy if their not-so-welcome visitor sticks to apples from here on. □



photos by Larry Burke

Some naturalists estimate that a swallow may eat as many as 850 mosquitos in a day, and a dragonfly between thirty and 100, making each of them very welcome neighbors.

Earlier in the summer, during the hot spell we had in July, **Michelle Dawson**, who lives beside the Konkapot River in Clayton, took a series of photos of a mature **bald eagle** wading in the water nearby. Asked whether she could tell if the eagle was doing a bit of fishing, Michelle said it appeared to be more interested in cooling off.

On August 3, **Gary Mattie**, down at Haymeadow Pond Farm on Norfolk Road near the Connecticut border, captured the climactic moment in a sort of chain reaction. Freddy Friedman’s dog spotted a **bear** cub on the embankment of the dam below his house, took off after it, causing the cub to scoot up along the top of the dam, which in turn startled a **great blue heron** into flight. A naturally occurring Rube Goldberg machine!



photo by Gary Mattie

A twofer sighting – a bear cub AND a great blue heron

Compiled by Larry Burke;
send your wildlife sightings to him at larryjburke@gmail.com

A midnight Rambler perusing the apple orchard...
and still on the hunt for more apples in the daytime



NEW MARLBOROUGH LAND TRUST

It is hard to believe that the summer is coming to a close and that Labor Day is just a few weeks away. This is a time of year to let the hustle and bustle of the summer go and to become centered and focused on a simpler way of life. It is an opportunity to enjoy the fall colors, sunny days and



The suspension bridge at 1,000 acre

cool evenings.

The New Marlborough Land Trust is planning a few fall projects that will include improvements on two bridges on properties we steward; the suspension bridge at 1000 Acre and the bridge on the pathway between the Mill River Cemetery and the Lower Carrol Mill.

In addition, we have two upcoming events for the fall. The Annual Fall Roadside Clean-up will take place Saturday, September 30, from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. to be followed by a lunch hosted by the Old Inn on the Green. Participants should plan to meet at the Goodnow Preserve at 9:30 a.m. to gather supplies and pick your routes.

Then on Saturday, October 21, we'll meet at the Goodnow Preserve at 2:00 p.m. for a program of Reading the Land, hosted by Land Trust Board member Tes Reed (www.tesreed.com). Together we will learn to read the landscape for past, present and future chapters. Ages fifteen and up.

To find out more about the New Marlborough Land Trust and to support our mission please visit www.nmlandtrust.org. To register for upcoming events email nmlandtrust@gmail.com. □

Silvia Eggenberger, Executive Director

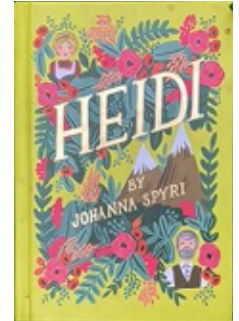
WHAT ARE YOU READING?

A column inspired by NM5VN founder Jon Swan, who started every long distance phone conversation to family members with this question.... In his honor, here is a representation of the variety of genres read by our town.

Honey Fields, age 17, Clayton Mill River Road.

“Heidi,” by Johanna Spyri

Honey’s description: “A story about an orphan girl sent to live in the Swiss Alps.” Honey recommends the book for children and adults, because the characters are accessible and lovable. “Although idyllic, there are moments of the book that are memorable; Heidi has a friend who has a physical disability, her grandfather is disgruntled and disillusioned, and therefore misunderstood, Heidi loves food and there are interesting and visceral descriptions of food I felt were relatable.”



The descriptions of Switzerland drew Honey in, and has made it a place she hopes to visit, giving her a sense of nostalgia for a country and culture learned through a childhood reading experience. □

Kenzie Fields

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THE LOG

Police Department (selected entries)

- | | | | | | |
|---------|------------|--|---------|------------|--|
| July 1 | 7:11 p.m. | A resident alerts the Department to an "aggressive" dog loose on Brewer Hill Road. | July 13 | 12:37 p.m. | An officer returns a dog that had escaped a fenced-in yard to its Lake Buel area owner, using information gathered by a Bilmar veterinarian from a chip embedded in the dog. |
| | 8:28 p.m. | A caller complains of a motorbiker speeding past his Lake Buel area residence. | July 14 | 7:44 a.m. | A caller alerts the Department to a low-hanging branch impeding traffic on Alum Hill Road. |
| | 11:07 p.m. | A caller complains of a rash of ATVs speeding past his Southfield residence on weekends since the completion of the Norfolk Bridge renovation. | July 15 | 12:37 a.m. | A caller asks for assistance in dealing with a bear that has broken into his Mill River residence living room. |
| July 2 | 11:29 p.m. | A motorist on Hartsville New Marlborough Road, whose cell phone has lost its GPS signal, ask for directions to the Mass Pike. | July 16 | 5:48 p.m. | An officer assists a motorist in changing a tire on Adsit Crosby Road. |
| July 3 | 11:34 p.m. | A caller alerts the Department to a tree blocking the intersection of Hartsville Mill River and Hartsville New Marlborough Roads. | July 17 | 12:07 p.m. | A tree takes down wires on Sisson Hill Road, the result of inadvertent cutting by a tree service. |
| July 4 | 2:44 p.m. | A caller reports a dog loose in the area of his Hartsville residence. | | 12:11 p.m. | An officer assists in ridding a skunk from a Southfield property. |
| July 5 | 7:14 a.m. | Officers, alerted by the activation of burglar alarms on two floors of a New Marlborough village residence, use a K9 patrol to follow fresh tracks leading into the surrounding woods. | | 6:06 p.m. | Following a complaint from a motorist, an officer instructs the Highway Department to fill a deep trench between new and old pavement on Hartsville New Marlborough Road. |
| | 7:56 p.m. | An officer helps locate a dog that has chewed through his leash and gone missing from a Mill River residence. | July 18 | 1:32 p.m. | Following a call from a concerned resident, the animal control officer determines that a juvenile bald eagle that had been perched near Lake Buel for days was in good health. |
| July 6 | 12:08 p.m. | A Southfield resident reports dizziness after having been stung by two hornets. | July 20 | 7:14 p.m. | A Mill River resident reports her concern over a sedan speeding back and forth on Mill River Great Barrington Road while being filmed. |
| | 4:22 p.m. | Tree on wires on the entry to York Lake on South Sandisfield Road. | July 21 | 12:15 p.m. | An officer assists a driver who has locked herself out of her car in New Marlborough village. |
| July 7 | 10:10 a.m. | The Department is alerted to three dogs running loose in New Marlborough Village. | July 24 | 1:34 p.m. | The Massachusetts Department of Fish and Game is contacted after a Mill River resident reports that his dog had been bitten by a large coyote. |
| July 9 | 3:54 p.m. | A caller alerts the Department to a downed tree impeding traffic on Clayton Mill River Road. | July 27 | 3:21 p.m. | National Grid and the Highway Department are contacted after a caller alerts the Department to a tree on wires on Clayton Mill River Road. |
| July 10 | 9:50 a.m. | National Grid is notified of a tree on wires on Keyes Hill Road. | | 3:33 p.m. | National Grid is notified of a tree on wires on Canaan Southfield Road. |
| | 10:17 a.m. | National Grid is notified of a tree on wires on Clayton Mill River Road. | | 4:16 p.m. | A caller alerts the Department to a tree on wires on Norfolk Road. |
| July 11 | 12:41 a.m. | State Police are called to assist with a two-car accident on Cross Road to Canaan Valley Road. | July 31 | 9:00 a.m. | The Highway Department is alerted to a dead deer on Brewer Branch Road. |
| | 2:02 p.m. | A tow is ordered for an unregistered vehicle stopped on Mill River Great Barrington Road, operated by an unlicensed driver. | | 5:42 p.m. | Following a call from a resident, an officer removes a downed tree blocking Canaan Southfield Road. |
| | 5:25 p.m. | An officer assists a New Marlborough Village resident in locating her lost dog. | | | |

FIRE AND RESCUE

July 3	3:30 a.m.	Rhoades and Bailey Road Medical Call	July 15	3:23 p.m.	Stone Manor Drive Medical Call
July 3	4:09 p.m.	Mutual Aid to Sandisfield Medical Call	July 15	6:18 p.m.	Lumbert Cross Road Fire Alarm
July 3	9:39 p.m.	Brewer Branch Road Fire Alarm	July 17	5:31 p.m.	Hartsville New Marlborough Road CO Alarm
July 4	11:36 a.m.	Norfolk Road Fire Alarm	July 18	4:54 p.m.	Canaan Southfield Road Medical Call
July 4	7:29 p.m.	East Hill Road Medical Call	July 19	6:05 p.m.	Canaan Southfield Road CO Alarm
July 5	7:53 p.m.	Mutual Aid to Tolland Medical Call	July 24	12:17 p.m.	Rhoades and Bailey Road Medical Call
July 6	12:11 p.m.	Rhoades and Bailey Road Medical Call	July 25	9:52 p.m.	Lakeside Road Medical Call
July 6	7:36 p.m.	Brewer Hill Road Medical Call	July 26	11:17 a.m.	Rhoades and Bailey Road Medical Call
July 6	9:52 p.m.	Norfolk Road CO Alarm	July 28	4:34 p.m.	Peter Menaker Road Fire Alarm
July 6	10:08 p.m.	Brewer Hill Road Fire Alarm	July 29	5:04 p.m.	Mutual Aid to Great Barrington Medical Call
July 7	3:49 a.m.	Mutual Aid to Sandisfield Medical Call	July 30	4:05 a.m.	Clayton Mill River Road Medical Call
July 10	7:05 a.m.	Clayton Mill River Road Medical Call	July 30	8:58 a.m.	Norfolk Road Fire Alarm
July 12	1:51 p.m.	Mutual Aid to Great Barrington Medical Call			
July 14	11:38 a.m.	Canaan Southfield Road Medical			

Fire Company President David Smith

RABIES CLINIC — THANK YOU!

The New Marlborough Fire Company's July 15 Rabies Clinic, the first post-COVID Rabies clinic, was a success, as we vaccinated a lot of the area dogs. We thank the veterinarians and clinicians from Bilmar Veterinary Services in Great Barrington — Dr. Amanda Nee, Windyann Merrill, Andrea King, and Nataly Lake-Ginouves — who expertly administered all the shots, and New Marlborough's Town Clerk Kathy Chretien, who issued dog licenses for pet owners whose dogs were vaccinated and needed licenses.

All proceeds from our rabies clinic support the Thomas Crawford New Marlborough Emergency Services Scholarship.

Massachusetts law requires all dogs and cats to be vaccinated against rabies, which, if contracted, is 100 percent fatal. This is why rabies clinics are an important public service. So please have your dogs vaccinated and licensed.

Be on the lookout for the clinic's return in the spring of 2024.

THE 30TH ANNUAL PIG ROAST

Thank you to everyone who supported us on Saturday — great food, great neighbors, and great weather! Thank you to everyone who pitched in to help and to make the evening a success. Thank you as well to our suppliers:

- Tom Brazie and The Farm New Marlborough, for the pigs;
- Jan Johnson and Peter Chapin of Mill River Farm and the Mill River General Store, for the greens, selling raffle and dinner tickets, and helping out with last-minute details like ice;
- Boardman's Farm Stand and Rick Boardman for the corn;
- Great Barrington Price Chopper for produce and baked goods;
- DJ Mark Santella for the music;
- Facepainter Tracey Hanselman, of the Painter's Palette;
- Our Southfield Neighbors — for attending the event and supporting three days of preparations, the festivities, and cleanup;
- And, to the spouses, partners, children, family members, and friends of our members — for help with setup, serving, cleanup, and various tasks throughout the event. □

Fire Company President David Smith

SCHOOL NEWS

THE QUEST FOR INNOVATION

SBRSD is Chosen To Help Chart Fundamental Change

By Jane Burke

“We aren’t going to solve tomorrow’s problems with our school and district design of yesterday,” says Education Secretary Miguel Cardona — a sentiment clearly understood at Southern Berkshire Regional School District (SBRSD). This summer, SBRSD received a significant boost to its effort to fashion an education that is relevant to today’s changing world when it was one of ten districts nationwide to be chosen for a Rural School Design initiative by Transcend.

Transcend is a national non-profit organization dedicated to helping reinvent education — not just to make adjustments to existing structures such as curricula, assessments, or class sizes, but to be a catalyst for a fundamental rethinking of how, when, where, and for what purpose young people engage in learning. Its current focus is helping small rural schools meet the needs of their students and communities.

SBRSD’s participation in this program, financed by an \$11,000 stipend from Transcend, starts in September and will proceed through three phases. The launch phase is underway. The design phase begins in October, and implementation begins in February, followed by an evaluation in May.

There will be a combination of collaborative learning with the nine other school districts and the activities of three local working teams. The core team of five administrators and teachers will oversee the process, travel to meet with the other nine districts to explore strategies and innovative practices, and get guidance in how school culture can evolve. A design team will have sixteen members, including residents of the community, education experts, administrators, teachers, and students. They are charged with reviewing current school and district design and connecting

with the greater community through interviews, focus groups, observations, and surveys with students, parents, other staff and key stakeholders. This will guide their work on a long term design and selection of the pilot project for this year.


A third team, the community team, will be formed to broaden the number of community members who understand the design process and will help implement the pilot program. The project is designed to go on for ten months, but the collaboration with Transcend is not time-limited and could extend further.

“We are thrilled to partner with Transcend and participate in their second Rural Schools Design Cohort,” said SBRSD Superintendent Beth Regulbuto. “The timing of this opportunity is perfect, as our District leadership team was already in the process of planning and developing strategies to gather more community input on the vision for the future of education at SBRSD. This is a research-based process where we can take walls down and try new practices to inspire and prepare our students for future success.”

Lindy Marcel, who is overseeing aspects of Mount Everett’s early college collaboration with Bard College at Simon’s Rock, said, “This grant increases our capacity to get ideas from our community members, share the opportunities that are already at SBRSD, and to look at other educational models across the country.”

Community members interested in participating on the community team are encouraged to contact Dr. Regulbuto at bregulbuto@sbrsd.org or by calling 413-229-8778 x304.

Changes at New Marlborough Central School: This summer, we bid farewell to two cherished teachers,



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Lynn Webster (Kindergarten) and Liz Trapani (second grade), who are embarking on new journeys. Yet, with these farewells comes the arrival of enthusiastic educators, enriching our team. We thank our departing teachers for their unwavering commitment and contributions to our school and community, and we welcome our new talents.

We're thrilled to introduce Anne Dunn, who brings fifteen years of elementary teaching experience from Morris Elementary in Lenox to her new role as second grade teacher. Ms. Dunn's academic background includes an MA in English Literature from Yale University and prior work at a major publisher, editing children's picture books and Young Adult novels. We also welcome Sue Krom, transitioning from Educational Support, to be the head of the pre-Kindergarten program. Ms. Krom, an adept early childhood educator, is excited to be making this move. Furthermore, our seasoned teachers have embraced new roles, highlighting their expertise and creating vibrant learning opportunities. Liz O'Donnell will be leading our Kindergarten, and Jaimi-Lyn Schieb will now lead first grade.

Our mission remains steadfast — to nurture an enriching learning environment fostering academic and

social growth, while infusing joy, inquiry, and the arts into this wonderful little school building and in our thriving school district. We're fortunate to have our community's unwavering support, and we're looking forward to a year of growth, discovery, achievement, and occasional mischievousness. The first day of school is August 30, with the pre-Kindergarten beginning on September 5.

Charles Miller, Elementary Schools Principal

Flying Cloud Farm announces three STEAM workshops for children ages seven to eleven to be offered during the fall months at the farm on the South Sandisfield Road in New Marlborough. Ceramicist and science educator Jane Burke will lead activities that connect science, engineering, art, and math. Thanks to the generous support of the Cultural Councils in Monterey, New Marlborough, and Sandisfield, the workshops will be free. They will meet at 1:30 p.m. on September 23, October 21, and November 18. Pre-registration is required. Contact Jane Burke at janesburke@gmail.com or text 413-429-6103. □



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STILL ENROLLING FOR THE 23-24 SCHOOL YEAR



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Ravensong, by TJ Klune
The Whalebone Theater, by Joanna Quinn
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Adult Nonfiction

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Walking with Sam: a Father, a Son, and Five Hundred Miles Across Spain, by Andrew McCarthy
Fieldwork: a Forager's Memoir, by Iliana Regan
The Heat Will Kill You First: Life on a Scorched Planet, by Jeff Goodell
The Art Thief, by Michael Finkel

Children's Fiction

The Hidden World of Gnomes, by Lauren Soloy
Trees Are Not Just for Birds, by Bonnie Grubman
Under the Blanket Sky, by Tim Fischer
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Is Look Up, by Eoin Colfer
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Who Was a Daring Pioneer of the Sky? Amelia Earhart,
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UPCOMING EVENTS

“Love Affair with the Sea,” paintings by Jaye Alison Moscariello. Opening Reception: Sunday, September 3, from 2:00 to 3:30 pm.; on view for the month of September.

Storytime with Jessica Maloney. Storytime, a South Berkshire Kids program, will resume Wednesday, September 6, from 10:00 to 11:00 a.m. Join Jess, at the library, each Wednesday morning for songs, stories, and crafts. This is a free program and everyone is welcome!

Baking with Sarah Reynolds North of Found Bread. Join us, September 13 at 6:00 p.m. to learn how to make apple galettes and then take home ingredients to bake! This is a free program sponsored by the New Marlborough Friends of the Library, but space is limited to eight participants. To reserve your spot contact the library at 413-229-6668 or at newmarlborough@gmail.com

New Marlborough Library's Cookbook Club. The cookbook club meets every third Wednesday of the month, next on September 20, at 6:00 p.m. Please RSVP to newmarlborough@gmail.com.

New Marlborough Library's Book Discussion Group. Join us September 23 at 10:00 a.m. for coffee, bagels, and a lively discussion of the book, *The Weight of Ink*, by Rachel Kadish. Books are available at the library.

Friends of the Library Annual Book and Bake Sale. The annual book and bake sale takes place — this year at the library — September 30 at 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. We will be collecting books on September 29 from 11:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. at the library only. Please, no magazines, VHS, encyclopedias, or books in bad condition. If you wouldn't buy them, no one else will either! All proceeds benefit library programming.

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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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: May - August, 2nd Wednesday at 6:00 p.m.

September - April, 2nd and 4th Wednesdays

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

Conservation Commission: Third Thursday of the month at 5:00 p.m. or Zoom

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: By appointment only; call 413-229-0277

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

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

Post Office: Mill River (413) 229-8582

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

Saturday 9:00 - 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 and Tuesday, 8:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

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

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

Animal Control Officer: Graham Frank, (413) 229-8161

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

Town Hall: 229-8116

Police: Business office: 229-8161

Transfer Station Hours:

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

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

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

PERMITS ARE DUE JULY 1

and can be purchased for \$225

by mail or online at

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. Call Barbara Lowman: 229-2369

NM5VN Editorial Team

Joe Poindexter, issue editor; Diane Barth, designer;
Maria Black, Martha Bryan, Jane Burke, Larry Burke,
Kenzie Fields, Shawn Fields, Robbi Hartt, Ruben Kier,
Zoë Kogan, Barbara Lowman, Peter Schuyten, Barry Shapiro,
Marjorie Shapiro, Rachel Perera Weingeist

NM5VN Board of Directors

Roy Blount, Jr., Larry Burke, Barbara Lowman,
Joe Poindexter, Peter Schuyten, Barry Shapiro,
Nan O'Shaughnessy Smith, Tara White

New Marlborough 5 Village News

appears monthly,

also online at

www.nm5vn.org

The next issue will be dated October 2023.

All copy must be submitted no later than September 17.

For advertising, contact Barbara Lowman,
tel: 229-2369 PO Box 243, Southfield, MA 01259

5villagenews@gmail.com

New Marlborough 5 Village News
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CHANGE SERVICE
REQUESTED

Upcoming: *Events Calendar for September and October*

September 1: New Marlborough Artists, opening reception of the annual show of local talent, 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. at the Meeting House Gallery; on display Saturdays and Sundays, 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., until October 8.

September 2: Pianist Simone Dinnerstein, performing works by Schubert, Schumann, and others, 4:30 p.m. at the Meeting House, \$30, \$25 for Meeting House members

September 9: Headstone repair and cleaning, at the Old Mill River Cemetery, opposite New Marlborough Central School, a resumption of the New Marlborough Historical Society cemetery repair day, 10:00 a.m. to noon, followed by a light lunch on site

September 9: Melissa Clark and Madhur Jaffrey, cookbook authors, discuss changes in food culture — and what they are cooking right now; 4:30 p.m. at the Meeting House, \$30, \$25 for Meeting House members

September 23: The Trio Calore, Carol Wincenc, flute, Kurt Nikkanen, violin, and Maria Asteriadou, piano, in works by Melanie Bonis, Franz Doppler, Bohuslav Martinu, J.S. Bach, and Nino Rota, 4:30 p.m. at the Meeting House, \$30, \$25 for Meeting House members

October 6: Fluxus at Cassilis, a Historical Society program on a brief flurry of artistic innovation in the late 1970s based at Cassilis Farm; 7:00 p.m. in the Meeting House Gallery

October 7: Writing in the Age of Artificial Intelligence, a discussion, led by Simon Winchester, with novelists Chandra Prasad and Francine Prose and former publisher Andre Bernard; 4:30 p.m. at the Meeting House