



# New Marlborough 5 Village News

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## THIS TRAIN IS BOUND FOR GLORY — OR IS IT?

By Barry R. Shapiro

Ask anyone about the proposed re-introduction of passenger train service to Berkshire County, and you'll likely get one of two responses:

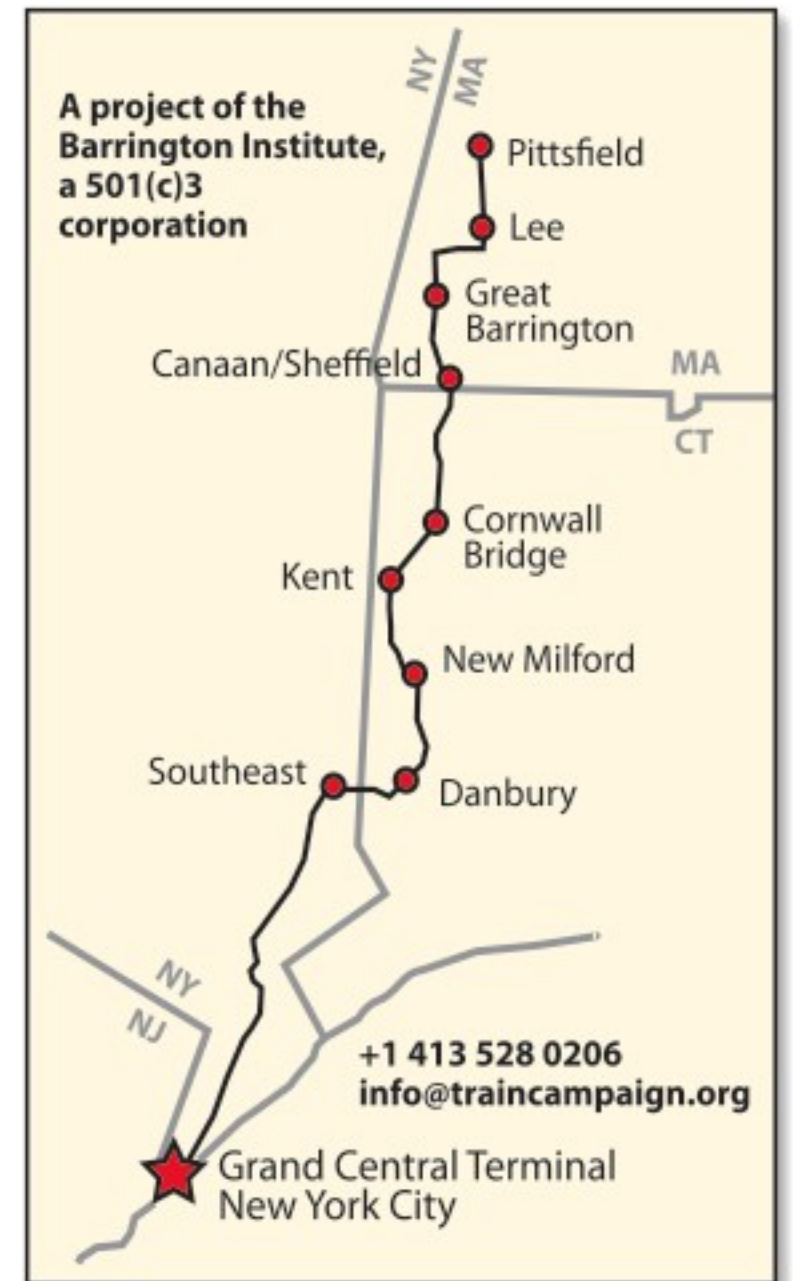
"This is a wonderful idea! It's a great use of the state's money, is environmentally sound, will boost property values, make the Berkshires accessible to everyone, shorten my travel time, and be a great improvement! The trains will be so well used, I'll be lucky to get a seat!"

Or . . .

"This is a terrible idea and a waste of money best spent elsewhere. Metro North and Amtrak are just a short ride away, there's regular bus service, and I love my car, all of which get me to New York in comfort as fast if not faster than this new service. The trains will be empty, will ruin the rural character of the Berkshires, and carry no one but derelicts and drug dealers up here!"

At least one group, a not-for-profit called The Berkshire Train Campaign, disagrees with the nay-sayers and thinks the new train would be a rousing success. "This is so much the future," says Great Barrington's Karen Christensen, founder of the organization. "Imagine being able to buy a ticket in Grand Central Station direct to Great Barrington. This will provide twenty-first century connectivity, add a richer texture to our community, and encourage all sorts of growth in our area".

State Senator Ben Downing agrees. "I believe re-establishing passenger rail service from the Berkshires to New York City makes sense for any number of different reasons. Governor Patrick's recent investment in the



purchase of the lines and commitment to upgrade the infrastructure are critical steps to making this happen. However, we still have a good deal of work to do. I am committed to working on this project in the years ahead to expand access to rail transportation as a means of improving our economy and protecting the environment we all care so deeply about".

Make no mistake about it, however: No one, friend or foe of the proposal, will hear the sound of passenger trains whizzing through Berkshire County unless very formidable obstacles are first overcome. Although some funds have been allocated to this project (estimated to cost in excess of \$200 million in the aggregate), significant amounts of funding have yet to be raised, most of it from the state or federal government, and coordination agreements with Metro North need to be put into place. Stations have to be constructed, and improvements will likely be needed at the Southeast connection station. Housatonic Railroad, the proposed operator of the line, needs to acquire its rolling stock and the infrastructure to operate it, the existing track, and road bed need to be upgraded, and Connecticut needs to build or

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*Train, continued*

upgrade the necessary tracks in that state. All of this faces competing demands for money in both Massachusetts and Connecticut and the reality that alternative train service through Metro North and Amtrak is currently available. And, even if all of these hurdles are cleared, it remains to be seen whether the new line can operate at a profit so that it can continue service.

Let's assume for the moment that, as in Brigadoon, the trains were to magically appear. What would the service look like? With the help of Ms. Christensen and Colin Pease, vice president of special projects for the Housatonic Railroad, as well as information found on the campaign's website, [www.berkshiretraincampaign.org](http://www.berkshiretraincampaign.org), and in publicly available studies and reports, we rounded up some answers.

### **Why not just stick with Metro North or Amtrak?**

The thought is that people will use stations that are closest to them. If there were a station in Sheffield, people who now drive to Wassaucott or Hudson would instead make the relatively short drive to the local station, leave their car, and hop on the train. Price is also an issue, with the new service expected to be priced lower than Amtrak and comparable to Metro North.

### **Who is likely to utilize this new service?**

According to Ms. Christensen, "everyone." It will encourage tourists to visit the area, since they will be able to reach the county easily. Residents interested in a day or two in the city will find it attractive. Business people will relocate here since they will easily connect to the city directly from the county. A 2010 independent study, paid for by the Housatonic Railroad, estimated that the trains would carry between 1.59 million and 2.41 million single-fare rides annually, although a later refinement by the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission (BRPC) lowered that figure to just over one million fares annually within five years.

### **How long will the trip take?**

The Housatonic Railroad has estimated that the

Great Barrington to Grand Central Station trip will take slightly over three hours (longer, of course, from Pittsfield), essentially what the trip took when trains ran up here in the 1950s. This estimate assumes track upgrades and the construction of raised platforms, which permit quicker boarding and unloading than the use of steps from the train down to ground level. It also assumes fewer stations than in the past (spaced at least ten miles apart) to speed up the journey.

### **Where will the Berkshire County stations be located?**

According to a draft study by the BRPC, stations would be in downtown Pittsfield, downtown Lee, at the old train station on Castle Street in Great Barrington, and south of Sheffield. No stations will be located in either Lenox or Stockbridge given their proximity to Pittsfield and Great Barrington. The Sheffield station could be located on a fourteen-acre site, owned by the Housatonic Railroad, almost on the Connecticut state line, which would have parking space for as many as 500 cars and could accommodate other uses, such as rental cars.

### **What transfers will be necessary?**

Perhaps one or none. The train would start in Pittsfield, run down to Connecticut, and then cross from Danbury to the Metro North station in Southeast. At Southeast, some Housatonic Railroad trains will continue to Grand Central using the Metro North tracks. Others will terminate at Southeast and a transfer to Metro North will be required.

### **Three hours is a long time. How comfortable will the trains be?**

Market research has indicated the importance of passenger coaches, which are more comfortable than those used by commuter lines (this new service would be considered a longer-haul carrier and not a commuter line). Housatonic's Colin Pease stated that the railroad is sensitive to this issue and is exploring providing seating and comfort consistent with longer haul lines,



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as well as free wifi, attractive food service, including a bar car, and clean restrooms. Bike and ski racks are also being explored.

**How often will the trains run?**

The service would need to compete with the frequency of Metro North and Amtrak. The goal, ultimately, is for eight trains per day in each direction, which would make it possible to go down in the morning, work (or play) during the day, and then have a choice of trains in the afternoon and evening. Mr. Pease noted that the line would likely start with slightly smaller service and then “ramp up” as demand dictates.

**Will the cost be competitive?**

The cost is expected to be consistent with Metro North pricing, which is generally in the range of 24 cents per mile. Currently, a ticket from Wassaic to Grand Central Station is \$24 (full-fare peak ticket purchased at the platform). The cost of a ticket from Sheffield will be proportionately more, based on the greater distance. Pricing is likely to be less than Amtrak, which generally prices its services on what the market will bear (a ticket from Hudson to Penn Station ranges from \$35 to \$68 depending on the nature of the ticket and class of service).

**Who is the Housatonic Railroad and what do they know about running a passenger railroad?**

Housatonic Railroad is a freight railroad operating over 161 miles of track. It connects to the national rail system through CSX Transportation at Pittsfield. It does not operate any passenger service. The original Housatonic Railroad goes back to 1836 and ceased operations in 1971. The current company adopted the name in 1983. Mr. Pease stated that the senior personnel of the railroad are experienced railroad executives, and the “concept of running a passenger service and freight service are similar.”

**Can they operate the service without a public operating subsidy?**

Housatonic has been clear that it cannot finance the cost of construction or the rolling stock and is exploring some manner of public/private financing (still being formulated) that would involve an annual state subsidy to service the debt. Operating the line, however, would not require public support. “We are starting from scratch with a cost structure aligned to the private sector,” noted Mr. Pease, and added that if that structure is implemented, “we feel we can operate without a public operating subsidy.”

**When can I expect to take my first ride?**

Not sooner than three years after all of the funding is in place — and there’s no estimate as to when that will happen. It will take at least two years to upgrade the tracks and construct the stations and one year to obtain the rolling stock.

Sound attractive? Sound like a terrible idea? See a boon to our area or a blight? See our county changing for the better or moving in directions which residents will regret? Those questions remain the subject of intense debate and scrutiny with the only certainty being that the figurative train has started to roll and that its destination remains unknown. □

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## Town Business Is Your Business

### BOARD OF SELECTMEN



**August 25:** With all three selectmen present, the Board met with Nicolas Reitzel and Garry McCarthy of Stantec Consulting to discuss the Clayton Mill River bridge project, which may be delayed because of additional permitting requirements imposed by the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). Also present for the discussion was Highway Superintendent Chuck Loring. Work on the bridge, which spans Brewer Brook, was to have begun this fall and take about six weeks to complete, but now, according Superintendent Loring, it looks likely to be delayed until next summer because of time-of-year stream-crossing constraints imposed by the new Category 2 permit requirements. What this means, he explained, is that the work cannot begin on the bridge until next year's low water season, which officially starts July 1. Mr. Reitzel said Stantec needs to find out why the permitting requirements were changed by the DEP and then determine whether "the door is still open" to reversing the decision. Mr. Reitzel took over responsibility for the project from Jeff Collingwood, who recently left Stantec.

Of greater concern to the selectmen is whether the new permitting requirements will require design changes in the bridge and thus increase its cost, since additional funding would have to be approved by the voters at the Annual Town Meeting. "If we can't do this project with those plans," Mr. Loring explained, "then we'll have to revisit the whole thing." However, based on a conversation he had had recently with Mr. Collingwood, he's hopeful the design will stand and that what the state is really looking for are more stringent environmental controls on when and how the work is performed. In any case, Mr. Loring said that if the work is delayed until next summer, he intends to pave the roadway over the bridge to smooth out the potholes. The bridge is currently down to one lane.

**In another bit of disappointing bridge news, Superintendent Loring reported that replacement of the Hadsell Street bridge, which appeared set for next June, has been put off by the state for another year, with construction now slated for 2016.** According to Stantec's Garry McCarthy, the state expects to issue a bidding document to potential contractors late in 2015 or early 2016.

One bit of good news: Last month, the *5 Village News* reported that the federal government had decided to start

scrapping heavy-duty surplus trucks because they no longer meet federal emissions standards.

This was considered a blow to local highway departments across the country, including New Marlborough's, which rely on the trucks to haul bulky loads like large logs and boulders. According to Mr. Loring, however, the government has reversed its decision and will continue to make the trucks available to towns and municipalities at nominal cost.

**Administrative Assistant Mike Skorput said he's recommending to the Board that only the bathrooms be redone — to make them handicapped accessible — in the next phase of the Town Hall renovation project.** Originally, the work was to have included remodeling of the assessor's office, but when the estimate came in from contractor EDM at almost \$80,000, nearly twice what the selectmen were expecting, the decision was made to spread the work over two years or to find a new contractor. But first EDM is being asked to revise its estimate.

**September 8:** With all three selectmen present, the Board met with Herb and Louise Eichstedt about the insurance claim covering the damage to their Sisson Hill property caused by the gravel and other road debris being deposited in their yard by the heavy rains that battered the area in July. As previously reported, the Eichstedts presented the Board with an estimate of \$2,500 for removing the gravel and restoring their lawn (See Board of Selectmen reports for July 28 and July 30 in the September NM5VN), and in turn the Board sent the estimate to the Town's insurance provider, Massachusetts Interlocal Insurance Association (MIIA), which ultimately denied the claim. But the Eichstedts were not satisfied, and after talking with the insurer, were convinced MIIA had not been given all the facts in the case. "There seem to be discrepancies in what actually happened, what was said at the previous meeting here and what actually got into the insurance claim," Ms. Eichstedt said. "It [the claim] says there was only one incident," when in fact "there were three flooding events," and that flooding per se, she added, wasn't the problem; it was the tons of gravel that washed onto their property.

After a lengthy exchange between the Board and the Eichstedts, Selectman Michele Shalaby, suggests, in an attempt to cool things down at bit, that the Town revisit the claim with the insurance company. **To that end, Selectman Nat Yohalem asked Ms. Eichstedt to**



write up her version of events, which would then be reviewed by Highway Superintendent Chuck Loring, since he was on the scene, "and then we'll ask both the Town attorney and the insurance company to reconsider their opinions," Mr. Yohalem said.

Chairman Tara White said the Board is once again looking for a new treasurer to replace Pat Mielke, who is retiring at the end of October. As previously reported, it had hired Marilyn Scaglione at the end of July. Two weeks later, however, she contacted the Board to say she was resigning to accept a full-time job elsewhere, which would not allow her to spend the required one full day a week in the treasurer's office. Then last week Ms. Scaglione, saying there had been a "misunderstanding" at her new job and that she could in fact be in the office one day a week, asked that her resignation be rescinded. But the Board declined. "I'm uncomfortable with the way this has been handled," Selectman Yohalem said. "I would prefer we don't rehire her and instead seek another treasurer." The other selectmen agreed.

The Board revisited its position of two weeks ago prohibiting the placing of all signs on Town property, and came up instead with a new policy that provided for some exceptions, as follows: 1) Local campaign signs can be erected on Town property within three weeks of a Town election and must be removed forty-eight hours after the election is over; 2) Tag/estate sale signs will also be permitted a week prior to the sale date, and they too must be removed within forty-eight hours of the sale being over; 3) **All other signs require the consent of the Board of Selectmen, and any signs erected without the Board's consent will be removed by the Police Department for pick-up at Town Hall.**

Chairman White gave a brief overview of a dispute the Board currently finds itself in with Tax Collector Caren Adams over her work hours, after Ms. Adams informed the Board in a memo dated August 11 that she was cutting back her regular hours from thirty a week to a twenty-two-hour workweek. She also indicated she will not be working Wednesdays. For its part, the Board is insisting she continue to work her thirty-hour week, including

Wednesdays, since that is what is posted on the Town website, published in the *5 Village News* and noted on the tax bills she herself sends out. Ms. Adams's counter that she was hired in 2009 for a twenty-to-twenty-four-hour-week is not substantiated by any written record, but she has notified the Board that there were witnesses present at her job interview who could "validate" what those hours were. She said she has obtained a legal opinion on the matter.

According to the Town's Annual Report, the tax collector earns an annual salary of \$25,686, so it's not a question of an hourly rate that's at stake, but rather of maintaining office hours that accommodate the needs of the Town's taxpayers, which is one of the Board's concerns. In the meantime, as she informed the Board in a follow-up memo dated September 8, she will continue to work her new four-day, twenty-two-hour-a-week schedule until the dispute is resolved. She held the door open to adding Wednesday office hours, which would bring her workweek to 27½ hours, but only if the Board is willing to compensate her for the additional time. The Board responded in a memo of its own dated September 9 that it "has approved her request" to work a 27½-hour week, but at no increase in salary, since "your salary for FY'15 was appropriated at Annual Town Meeting in May, and we cannot exceed that amount." The Board's memo went on to say that Ms. Adams "can make a request for additional monies (sic) when you submit your budget for FY2016." And there the matter lies pending further developments.

The Board's review of the highway superintendent's and police chief's annual employment contracts was postponed until the selectmen could meet with both officials to go over the details.

Finally, Chairman White reported that it was the selectmen's turn to meet with School Superintendent David Hastings regarding the future of the district's community schools and present the case for New Marlborough Central School remaining open. It was the fourth in a series of six planned meetings. Egremont and Alford are next on the schedule. School Building

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Leader Francine Groener, present at the Board meeting, provided details on the school's programs.

**September 15:** With all three selectmen present, the meeting was convened half an hour early to go over Highway Superintendent Chuck Loring's contract. The main point at issue was Mr. Loring's desire to receive overtime pay for the extra hours he works. "I think the salary's a fair one," he said, "but I put in so many extra hours, I just think it's excessive." In a letter to the Board in March, he estimated that he had worked more than 200 hours of overtime during the winter. His salary this year is \$62,500 and the Board has stated publicly its goal is to get him up to \$70,000 over the next three years. But the Board is reluctant to entertain the idea of overtime pay, according to Selectman Yohalem. Instead it offered him extra vacation time, which Mr. Loring declined, saying he's not able to take all the vacation he has now, and he noted, as he has in the past, that his immediate predecessors, Peter Marks and Rob Gilpatrick, both received overtime pay. After further discussion, Selectman Shalaby suggested Mr. Loring come up with a salary figure he'd be comfortable with, saying "that way we'd have something to negotiate." He said he would and agreed to get back to the Board ahead of next week's meeting so they could prepare to discuss it.

Mr. Loring also said he would like the Board to consider authorizing a part-time secretary who could work out of his office in the highway department garage. Such a position had previously been budgeted, but instead, Mr. Loring has been bringing his paperwork to the Town Hall for Board Secretary Sharon Fleck to handle. "Sharon's helped a lot," he said, "but I still think in the long run having a secretary who's learned the job and knows what goes on in the office would benefit the department." Chairman White said Mr. Loring would have to include it in next year's budget. And finally, Mr. Loring mentioned the Town is in line to receive as much as \$66,500 from the state for the damage caused by the rain storms back in July. He said the governor is expected to announce the reimbursement program soon.

Chairman White announced that, effective October 23, 2014, the state's Alcoholic Beverage Control Commission (ABCC) will allow package stores to sell alcoholic beverages beginning at 10:00 a.m. on Sunday, instead of noon. She said license holders, such as Mill River General Store owner Dave Herrick, who was present at the meeting, must fill out a form and submit it to their local licensing authorities, in this case the Board of Selectmen, who will then forward it on to the ABCC.

The Board appears to have reached an impasse with Tax Collector Caren Adams in its dispute over her office hours. According to Chairman White, the Board received another memo from Ms. Adams, who was in attendance at the meeting, this one dated September

9, saying that while she would like to accommodate the Board by working the 27½ hours proposed in her September 8 memo, she is "unable to do so without the proper compensation." The memo goes on to say she believes a salary increase of 15 percent, or \$73.81 per week, is appropriate for the additional three and a half hours-per-week of work, and that until the Board reaches a decision on it she will continue with her current schedule of twenty-two hours a week.

The Board had previously denied her requested salary increase, saying that only the voters can do so at a town meeting. Bill Garrett, Ms. Adams's predecessor as tax collector, who was also in the audience, volunteered that he had worked a four-day, twenty-four-hour week and presumed that his successor would have been hired to do the same. After further discussion, Mr. Yohalem said, "I don't know where else we can go with this," to which Ms. Adams replied "I don't know where else to go with it either." Shortly thereafter she left the meeting, saying, "Okay, I'm finished with this. Figure it out and let me know," adding, "and I need it in writing."

The Board voted to set trick-or-treat hours for the Town's Halloween from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m., Friday, October 31. As it was last year, Town Hall will be open for trick or treaters.

With approval of the September 8 meeting minutes, the meeting adjourned. □

Peter Schuyten

**New Marlborough Flu Clinic**  
**Thursday, October 23 1:00–2:00 p.m.**  
**at the Mill River Town Offices**  
 Clinic is open to adults over age 18  
 No appointment necessary  
 Bring Medicare and Mass Health Cards  
 Fee \$30.00 for non-Medicare/Mass Health  
 Wear short sleeves

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## THE TAX COLLECTOR IS FIRED

**September 22:** At a special 1:00 p.m. session, the Board of Selectmen fired Tax Collector Caren Adams in an ongoing dispute over her office hours. With all three members present the Board opened the meeting to discuss the office hours printed on an insert that's included with the quarterly tax bills, set to go out later this week. But the discussion devolved into an argument between the Board and Ms. Adams over what those hours should be.

As reported above, the dispute goes back to August 11,

when Ms. Adams informed the Board in a memo that she was reducing her office hours from thirty to twenty-two and that she would no longer work on Wednesdays. For its part, the Board has firmly insisted she work a 27½-hour, five-day week. At the September 22 meeting, the selectmen warned her that if she refused she could be terminated. At that point, Ms. Adams said, "I'm not working those hours, so fire me now," and the Board did. It is now looking for a new tax collector. □

Peter Schuyten

# An Autumn Social

(And You Are Invited!)

**New Marlborough Fire and EMS  
is hosting a wine, beer, cider, and spirit tasting  
on SATURDAY, OCTOBER 25.**

This, our first "Autumn Social," will be held at  
**the New Marlborough fire station from 5-7 p.m.**

Proceeds from the event will benefit the  
Thomas G. Crawford College Scholarship Fund.  
This fund was established to assist the children of our  
volunteer firefighters and EMTs in achieving their  
academic aspirations. These young men and women  
will hopefully follow in their parents' footsteps in  
giving service to the New Marlborough community.

*The social will feature food and beverages from*

Domaney's Liquors  
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Gedney Farm  
The Marketplace Kitchen  
528 Café, and more

All attendees will be eligible to win  
special prizes in the evening's raffle.  
Please join us!



## Fixing the Town Ledger

A special meeting of the Board of Selectmen was called September 2 to review the Town's financials with Tom Scanlon Jr. of the accounting firm of Scanlon & Associates of South Deerfield, Massachusetts. Audits such as these are required every two or three years, depending on whether the Town has received \$500,000 or more from state or federal government. The last one was in 2010.

As presented by Mr. Scanlon, the report, which focused on the 2013 fiscal year, raised a number of questions about the Town's internal controls over its financial reporting. It also highlighted a number of deficiencies in the way the Town accounts for its cash and receivables. All of which, according to the report, raises "the possibility that a material misstatement of the Town's financial statements will not be prevented or detected and corrected on a timely basis."

Of note was a \$39,000 discrepancy between the Town's general ledger, which is the record of all the Town's financial transactions, and its bank statements. Fortunately, as Treasurer Pat Mielke was quick to point out, the discrepancy is in the Town's favor, meaning there is \$39,000 more cash in the Town's bank account than is shown on the general ledger. As Mr. Scanlon noted, however, it is evidence the Town is not keeping an accurate cashbook, which records all the money received by the Town. "Cash is your most significant asset," he said, "and you want to make sure it's safeguarded."

To Selectman's Yohalem's question as to whether there's "a hint that someone is taking money," Mr. Scanlon replied, "The atmosphere is there for it. But do I think something's going on? No. And, as Patty [Mielke] said, the amount of cash in the bank is higher. But you've got to start getting things in order."

Another problem, or deficiency, highlighted by the report, is a \$20,000 imbalance between the general ledger and what the tax collector's records show, resulting in a \$20,000 penalty, or reduction, in the Town's free cash by the state's Department of Revenue. "That's a large amount for a town this size," Mr. Scanlon commented.

The Town's free cash is also likely to suffer a similar hit because of a \$20,000 deficit in its payroll withholding account for its employee's health insurance premiums. As Mr. Scanlon noted, it appears as though the Town has paid an extra month's premium to Berkshire Health Group, although Treasurer Mielke and Town Accountant Tara White say they've reviewed three year's worth of premium payments to Berkshire Health, and "it doesn't show we've overpaid anything," noted Ms. White. Still, the deficit continues to grow, indicating that whatever's causing the problem, whether software or human error, is still active.

And there's more. For example, the audit noted there's no procedure in place for reconciling the results of Town Meeting votes with revenues and expenditures, budget transfers, or tax recap sheets, and that the absence of these can lead to situations in which "appropriations are overdrawn, authorized transfers do not take place, and expenses are paid from incorrect line items."

The report also notes there are delinquent real estate, personal property, and motor vehicle excise taxes going back in some cases to 1992, with Mr. Scanlon recommending the Town research the older tax levies to determine if they should be abated, put into tax title, or targeted for collection. But whatever the case, he said, "you shouldn't have [outstanding] levies that are more than three years old."

Further, the report goes on to say that tax receipt stubs are not consistently stamped with the date they were paid, whether they were paid by cash or check, and who took the payment in. "It's important that a trail exists from the time of collection to bank deposit," the report notes, because of the higher risk associated with cash transactions.

There are some minor matters as well, such as the tax collector's accounts receivable software not being routinely backed up (since rectified); and the audit could find no record of a performance bond for the tax collector (which, according to Ms. White, may simply have been a timing issue, but in any case has also since been rectified). In addition, accounts receivable for ambulance charges are not being recorded on the general ledger. The report also recommends that both the Town's procurement records and the tracking of employee sick leave and vacation time be centralized and that special revenue accounts which have been inactive for several years, such as the FEMA account set up for Hurricane Irene in 2011, be closed out.

Why does any of this matter? Because, as the report notes in its opening comment, Town management must rely on the financial information generated by the Town's key financial personnel (i.e., the treasurer, town accountant, and tax collector) to make decisions that "affect the Town's short-term and long-term financial goals." When asked to compare the efficacy of New Marlborough's financial controls with other towns its size, Mr. Scanlon replied, "It has a long way to go."

*Peter Schuyten*



## CONSERVATION COMMISSION

**July 26:** The meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m. by Commission members John Schreiber and Ned Wilson (present via speaker phone).

First on the agenda was the review of a Request For Determination (RDA) for Prui Simonelli of 164 Hartsville Mill River Road. Ms. Simonelli described the scope of her project, which involved removing soil near an existing structure. After a brief discussion, the application was given a negative determination meaning the work was approved as described.

Next, Mr. Jeffrey Collingwood from Stantec Consulting Services Inc. presented a Notice of Intent (NOI) for the New Marlborough Highway Department. Mr. Collingwood explained the extent of the work needed to repair the bridge on Clayton Mill River Road involving structural renovation to the walls and deck of the bridge. The Commission approved the application with a reminder to follow the recommendations noted from the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP).

Mr. Collingwood, again representing the New Marlborough Highway Department, continued with another NOI for the repair of a culvert. However, because the DEP had not yet issued a file number for this permit, the hearing was continued until next month's meeting.

Mr. Wilson then explained that he had issued an Emergency Permit to resident Laura Endacott of 37 Mill River Great Barrington Road. New Marlborough Building Inspector Tom Carmody advised the homeowner that the foundation to a building was gravely compromised by erosion due to storm water runoff and needed immediate repair.

Finally the mail was reviewed. Several newsletters were received and one Forest Cutting Plan was filed for the Norfolk Road Nominee Trust on Norfolk Road. With no other business on the agenda the Commission adjourned at 9:45 a.m.

**August 30:** Commission members Ned Wilson and

Freddie Friedman were present to address the business for the month.

First, the Commission re-opened the hearing continued from last month for the New Marlborough Highway Department. The NOI for the culvert repair on Brewer Hill Road was briefly reviewed and approved as described.

Next, Lonn Combs of 136 Adsit Crosby Road presented an NOI for work at his residence including relocating an existing bulkhead, installing an underground electrical line, and relocating a gravel driveway and carport. The applicant supplied several visual renderings of the proposed work which greatly aided the Commission's understanding of the project. The NOI was approved after some discussion.

It was then noted that the Emergency Permit issued to resident Laura Endacott for foundation repair at 37 Mill River Great Barrington Road expired before the work was completed. Mark Stinson of the DEP requested that Ms. Endacott submit a plan from an engineer describing how the river bank will be stabilized.

Mr. Wilson explained that an Emergency Permit was issued to Linda Skipper of 39 Hatchery Road to remove a tree that was leaning toward her house because of erosion due to recent heavy rainstorms.

The Commission received notice from Berkshire Natural Resources Council that a pond leveler was needed on Steepletop Road because of beaver activity that had raised the water to a level threatening to flood the road and a nearby residence.

An Emergency Permit was issued to the New Marlborough Highway Department to repair a culvert on Rhoades and Bailey Road which had been washed out due to heavy rainfall.

After Kathy Chretien, Commission secretary, swore in Ned Wilson for his reappointment to the Commission, the meeting adjourned at 10:15 a.m. □

Martha Bryan

**SUSAN M. SMITH**  
Attorney At Law

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## FINANCE COMMITTEE

**June 30:** With Burt Imberman, Mark Carson, John Pshenishny, Prudence Spaulding, and Ira Yohalem present, along with Nat Yohalem and Tara White, representing the Board of Selectmen, the meeting was turned over to David Hastings, superintendent of the Southern Berkshire Regional School District, who had requested an opportunity to address the Board and the Committee. Also present were Bruce Turner, SBRSD treasurer, and Vito Valentini, chairman of the School Committee's Finance Committee.

Mr. Hastings addressed the joint meeting on three sectors of capital expense for Mount Everett High School: air conditioning, boiler replacement, and a new roof. Heat on the second floor of the high school, Mr. Turner explained, can rise above 90 degrees in May and June, making it difficult for students to attend to their studies. As a remedy, the District has installed roof-mounted air-conditioning units for each of the rooms on the second floor. The cost, \$150,000, is being covered by a short-term loan.

Boiler replacement was triggered by the failure of one of the building's three thirty-year-old boilers. Although the administration received a \$68,000 insurance payment, it was deemed unwise to sink the money into an aging boiler. Instead, the District is planning to replace all three boilers — at a cost of about \$150,000 each.

Finally, the District has known that the roof on the main building of the Sheffield campus has needed to be replaced for at least two years — at a cost that will run well into seven figures. It is using the boiler insurance payment to determine design specifications for bringing the roof up to code, which may require giving it a steeper pitch. When the total bill — roof, boilers, and air-conditioning — is determined, the District will apply for a grant from the Massachusetts School Building Authority, which typically pays 40 to 50 percent of such capital expenses. The remainder would be covered by a

long-term bond, which would have to be approved by the District's constituent towns. The presentation by Messrs. Hastings and Turner was the first of a series of meetings to provide information about the need for such financing.

Once the school administrators departed, the Finance Committee and the two selectmen jointly transferred \$29,041 from Group Insurance to Tax Title Treasurer and \$61,366 from Roads and Bridges to Winter Roads.

The Finance Committee then attended to year-end short-falls with transfers from the Reserve Fund to the following accounts:

Worker's Compensation, \$4,277, and Insurance Expense, \$7,500, in the former case to pay premiums submitted late and in the latter to cover premium increases;

Cultural Council, \$1.12 to cover a negative balance; Police Department, \$3,476 to purchase tasers.

The meeting adjourned at 6:55 p.m. □

*Joe Poindexter from minutes provided by  
Finance Committee Secretary Prudence Spaulding*

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# AN INSCRIPTION REVEALED

## New Marlborough Citizens Help Renovate Historic Headstones

They are written in stone, but the inscriptions still are no match for more than two centuries of wind, rain, mold, and lichen, as the messages on the headstones of New Marlborough's oldest cemeteries fade into obscurity. That gives a special urgency to the restoration work being spearheaded by the New Marlborough Historical Society, now in its second year. In the week following Elihu Burritt Day, conservators Jim and Minxie Fannin led a group of volunteers in repairing broken stones in the New Marlborough village cemetery, resetting fallen and tilted ones, and cleaning the grime, mold, and lichen that inevitably covers every stone exposed to decade upon decade of weather.

The Society convened volunteers once again on September 13. As one crew tackled lichen and mold, a second worked on the headstone of Revolutionary War veteran Joseph Hyde, tilted backward for so long that the stone had taken on a slight curve. Now upright, it is no longer in danger of breaking.



photos by Joe Poindexter

Conservator Jim Fannin repairs a broken stone with dowels, glue, and mortar.



The partially cleaned headstone of Rev. Thomas Strong

lettering — can take the better part of a morning. But the rewards are worth it. Exhibit A: the headstone of the Reverend Thomas Strong, New Marlborough's first minister, the inscription on which, obscured for decades, can now be deciphered. It reads (in upper and lower sections):

*Sacred to the Memory of the Rev. Thomas Strong late of New Marlborough deceased, who departed this life Aug. 23, AD 1777, in the 62 year of his age, & 33 of his Ministry*

*the deceased equally removed from levity and Austerity possessed those social virtues, which made him an agreeable friend & companion. In his ministerial office, he made it the business of his life, to instruct the ignorant, to restrain the vicious, to visit the sick and afflicted, to extend the hand of Charity to the needy & distressed. May his surviving relatives, and the people who were once his care, while they reflect on his Memory, follow his precepts, and imitate his examples*

The Society will resume restoration work in late spring. □

Joe Poindexter



Grime-stoppers—from left, Joan Elmer, Lee Backer, and Donna Drew

There are, unfortunately, no shortcuts to cleaning a stone. Repeated sprayings with a biological cleaner and scrubbing with a special detergent — sometimes using a toothbrush or a chopstick on the

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## WHAT'S YOUR EMERGENCY?

By David Lowman

"It works! Tell them the system works!" Thus spake David Herrick, New Marlborough's 911 Coordinator, as we parted company on a recent morning.

The emergency 911 system has evolved. What happens when you pick up the telephone and dial 911 is now a good deal more sophisticated than it was when the system was introduced some twenty years ago. Here is how it works today:

Within two or three rings, a trained 911 dispatcher who works for the Berkshire Country Sheriff's Communication Center located in Lanesboro, answers and says, "This is 911. What's your emergency?" At the same time, he or she views on a computer monitor your address and, if provided and inputted, special needs information such as age and chronic infirmities (e.g., diabetes, asthma, or heart problems). You relate your trouble: "I've got smoke in the kitchen" or "My husband has fallen and can't get up."

The dispatcher is trained to help the caller more clearly define the problem, in order to help determine its severity, and, in the case of multiple calls from the same town at the same time, to try to determine which is more severe. For example, if the dispatcher received two fire calls at about the same time, one a brush fire and one a house fire, he or she would make the house fire the priority and dispatch back-up resources to the brush fire. In the case of a small town like New Marlborough, that might mean dispatching New Marlborough Fire and Rescue to the house fire, and, if necessary sending a neighboring town's service (think, Sheffield, Sandisfield, Monterey, or Norfolk and Canaan, Connecticut) to cover the brush fire.

The 911 dispatcher becomes, in effect, a lifeline between the emergency service responding and the caller and will stay on the line to monitor the situation and perhaps to dispatch additional help if needed. For example, he or she might call in police backup for a medical emergency or dispatch additional fire companies either to help fight a fire or to stand by on alert at the New Marlborough fire house.

The Sheriff's Communication Center's staff fluctuates from two to four or more dispatchers during the twenty-four hour day; more during the day, fewer at night. The 911 system is organized state-wide under the Executive Office of the Massachusetts Department of Public Safety and is partnered with Verizon from its offices in Fall River, Massachusetts. The local system run out of the Sheriff's

organization provides coverage for twenty-five of the thirty-two communities in Berkshire County. (Great Barrington, North Adams, Pittsfield, Lee, and Dalton have their own systems, with Lee and Dalton providing coverage for Tyringham and Hinsdale, respectively.)

Each of the twenty-five towns contributes financial support to the County Sheriff's Communication Center. Last year, New Marlborough paid \$8,306. In addition, every Verizon customer pays a monthly 911 fee of 75 cents, and those with cell phone contracts pay an additional monthly charge of 75 cents to their service provider.

Ed Harvey, New Marlborough's director of emergency management, notes that 911 dispatch, now transmitted over radio and telephone, will soon also be text-based. One advantage of text, according to Mr. Harvey, will be to eliminate ambiguity over street or road names that over the radio or phone might sound the same, thus confusing and possibly causing a delay in responding to an emergency.

Many readers of the *5 Village News* will remember an article last November that discussed the so-called "reverse 911" system. Blackboard Connect, as it is called, enables state, county, and local officials to alert New Marlborough residents to situations that could be dangerous or bothersome, a hazardous material spill, for example, or a road-closing for repair work.

Of course, the most basic piece of this increasingly sophisticated system is the simple 911 address each resident is required by law to display at home or business. Standard 911 signs can be purchased at the Mill River General Store for \$20. For do-it-yourselfers, numerals should be three to four inches in height, preferably reflective, and posted in an easily visible spot from the foot of the driveway. The sign is not an option.

Partly as a result of the September 11 tragedy, radio systems of first responders (fire, police, and medical) that previously were not able to communicate with one another, now can. This capability is called "interoperability," and our emergency people and the highway department all have it.

A parting thought from David Herrick, our 911 Coordinator: "Tell the old people out there not to be bashful about calling 911. That's what it's there for. It works. The system works." □

### Thank You to Our Contributors!

Janet Brown; Jon & Rosemary Masters; Lee Backer & Joan Elmer; Carroll L. Woodward;  
Malcolm & Barbara Crystal; and Margaret Phillips



## THE MIDNIGHT CHORUS

*In Case You Haven't Heard, There Are Coyotes in Town*

by Joe Poindexter

The hills are alive with the sound of — coyotes. At least according to a recent thread on Maggie's List. "Last weekend we had a chorus of coywolves in our north field making wild music before midnight," wrote Terrill Mcdade. "We can hear coy dogs at night," said Sandra Walker. "Did anyone happen to see that big, golden coyote that was padding around New Marlborough village on Wednesday?" asked Jean Pollack in a July 19 post that got the conversation started. "Bold as brass, broad daylight, came to the Meeting House and ate one of the kid's sandwiches that had been left!!"

It turned out many had seen it — or one of its brethren. Jody Soules, Ron Brecher, Amy Lynn, Lucy Bardo, Jim Edelman, Joyce Hackett, Gloria Levitas, and Don Beauchamp all reported sightings. As did Ellen Sweet, who described two coyotes foraging in the meadow behind her house in Southfield shortly after it had been mowed. "They're big animals, varying shades of brown, with pointy noses and ears and long, somewhat bushy tails," she wrote.

Has Wile E discovered New Marlborough? Yes, but this is not news. "The eastern coyote moved into the central and western regions of Massachusetts in the 1950s and now lives in every town in Massachusetts, except for those on Martha's Vineyard and Nantucket," states the website of the Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife. Coyotes, it continues, "are well-adapted to changes in the landscape, and they can now be found within rural, suburban, and urban areas. Therefore, almost all citizens in Massachusetts live in close proximity to coyotes."

What, then, explains all the sightings this summer? Andrew Maddon, western district manager of Fisheries and Wildlife, can only speculate. "Sightings are cyclical,"



Don Beauchamp came across this coyote on Hayes Hill Road in mid-August.

he says. "People in New Marlborough may be dealing with a localized group. Typically," he adds, "sightings increase when a family group becomes established in a territory. But populations shift, and in a year or two, they might move on."

According to the website, coyotes breed in February or March and produce four to eight pups, forming a pack that sometimes includes the pups from the previous year. They are shy and elusive, except, of course, for their howl, which is their warning to other coyote families to stay out of their territory. "Pups practice howling and can be very vocal in late summer as they attempt to mimic

their parents," says the website, which may indicate the presence of young coyotes in town this year.

The site offers a few suggestions for peaceful co-existence:

- If a coyote impinges on your space, threaten it with loud noise, throw a tennis ball at it, or turn the hose on it. "Let the coyote know it is unwelcome in your area."
- Close off crawl spaces that coyotes might use for raising their young.
- Secure your garbage, feed pets indoors, and clean up around your bird feeders (coyotes prey on the critters that are attracted to the spilled seeds).
- Don't feed them. "Coyotes that rely on natural food items remain wild and wary of humans."
- Fence in your chickens.

The basic advice is live and let live. "They are a part of the landscape," says Andrew Maddon. "If they are kept wild, they will remain wild — and just as wary of us as we are of them." □

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# Neighbors



This sweet scene occurred on Elihu Burritt Day, August 16. Rusty, a four-and-a-half-month-old Havanese puppy belonging to Marjorie and Barry Shapiro of Mill River, met up with Pansy, a bunny belonging to Charlotte Smith of New Marlborough. This added a slightly different dimension to the concept of a petting zoo, a regular Burritt Day attraction.



photo by Barry Shapiro

On August 28, Gedney Farm, owned by Brad and Leslie Wagstaff of New Marlborough village, hosted a performance art event that featured the fabric sculptures of Cynthia Atwood, also of New Marlborough village. Conceived by artist Pooja Karina of Housatonic, the event was a series of

vignettes featuring the sculptures with poetry read and performed by several artists and musicians. Approximately twenty-five viewers participated in the event. Cynthia is delighted that her sculptures could contribute to this performance. As this issue of the 5 Village News goes to press, a second performance at Gedney Farm, entitled *Equinox Promenade*, was scheduled for September 23.



photo by Peggy Reeves

From Ann Riou and the American Legion Post 350 came this report:

The American Legion, Department of Massachusetts, sponsors a Student Trooper Program in cooperation with the Massachusetts State Police. Mount Everett seniors Bradley Lupiani, of Mill River, and Michaela White, of Sandisfield, attended the Student Trooper Program held at the Massachusetts State Police Academy this past summer for a week of intensive training. They were sponsored by the Harold D. Rood American Legion Post 350 (New Marlborough).



photo by Anthony Consolini

Michaela and Bradley are congratulated by Courtney Turner (left) and Ken Spencer

Michaela and Bradley then attended Post 350's September 4 meeting to tell of their experiences as student troopers. They were impressed by the willing teamwork to get all fellow students through the tough parts of their training, excited over their hard-won accomplishments, and grateful to all those who made their program participation possible and successful. They also have some neat war stories to tell. □

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

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## OUR WILDLIFE NEIGHBORS

On September 2, **Ari Korpivaara**, of Southfield, writes: Bears! Coyotes! Blue herons! Deer! Turkeys! Everyone has seen them as they proliferate throughout our community. But I write in praise of a small yet ubiquitous creature: the **domesticated field mouse**. For twenty-five years they have squatted in our house. One sat on my chest at night until I awoke and screamed. A mother jumped out of a drawer I had opened, dropping babies as she ran across the floor. Teenaged mice popped out of a sofa as I read.

Recently, a mouse took up residence in our car (too crowded in the house, I suppose) and died inside the blower motor, leaving a ghastly smell. An act of God, the insurance company decided, and paid for most of the damage. I confess to using traps and poison to get rid of the intruders. Mint sachets seem to be working. But I know it will not last. For, in truth, my wife and I are the squatters. The mice are the house's real owners, here long before we arrived, here long after we're gone.

On September 4, **Larry Burke**, who lives on Route 183, writes: I have not got much to report in the way of animal activity around us, beyond the normal sightings of **deer, porcupines, coyotes, foxes, and squirrels**. I did see an **American kestrel** the other day. I also surprised what I think was a **Cooper's hawk** down at the edge of the pond.



photo by Laura Endacott

On September 5, **Laura Endacott**, of Mill River, writes: Early September, this **frog** found refuge from dog paws under a rock along the bank of the Konkapot.

On September 5, **Don Beauchamp**, of Clayton, writes: Last week I saw a **pie-billed grebe** in the little pond across the river. Saw him once and never again and didn't get a photo. Also, there were about thirty **cedar waxwings** catching bugs in mid-air with their young ones (photo above right), and today a **red-bellied woodpecker** was teaching his youngster how to peck an old dead tree (photo left). **Hummingbird** visits are getting scarce. They have started cutting corn, so geese should soon be on the fly.



photo by Don Beauchamp



photo by Don Beauchamp

On September 11, **Jodi Rothe**, who lives on Cagney Hill Road, writes: Funny you should e-mail me today because I saw a **bobcat** cross the Konkapot Road on my way to the Pastures for an exercise class with Bridget Hughes. It had a stubby tail and it was by itself. It was about three times the size of a regular cat — perhaps thirty pounds, I would guess.

On September 11, **Ann Getsinger**, of New Marlborough village, writes: Here's what I've seen recently:



photo by Don Beauchamp

1. A fluffy **red fox**. I forget when or where. Very healthy looking.
2. A **bobcat** nicely silhouetted as it leapt across New Marlborough Hill Road (mid-August.)
3. A small gray **coyote** with big ears in the field below Mepal Manor, about two weeks ago.
4. A big yellowish **coyote** that was earnestly scratching and scratching while lit by my headlights (which might explain the yellowish color?) next to my driveway. This happened the night after I saw the previous coyote.

On September 11, **Don Beauchamp** writes: I found a **woodcock** lying on its side on the road, so I thought I would take it home for the feathers, but when I went to pick it up, it moved. It had been hit and had a serious head wound, but when I left, it was left standing up, and when I came back half an hour later on my bike, it had moved four feet. But next morning it was gone.

On September 11, **Charlie Parton**, of New Marlborough village, writes: Until this past few days I've had nothing unusual, but the night before last a kit **fox** ran up the road — which road? why Red Fox Road, of course — in front of our car. He was much smaller than his dad, who is large and handsome.

Then yesterday on Pixley Road, which runs along the north side of Lake Buell, a small **bobcat** ran across the road followed by another, which was just a blur in the corner of my eye as we were watching the first, who was standing in the dirt driveway just watching us!

On September 13: **Don Beauchamp** writes: I got this photo of six **crows** holding a caucus in a tall tree. □



photo by Don Beauchamp



## A MEETING OF THE (ARTISTIC) MINDS

### *How the Meeting House Gallery Shows Come Together*

By Pam Stebbins

The seventeenth season of extraordinary art shows at the New Marlborough Meeting House Gallery has just ended. The hard-working Gallery Committee can take a break until January — yes, January — when they begin monthly meetings to plan next year's agenda.

Under the able leadership of Elizabeth Lombardi, the Gallery Committee is comprised of eight individuals whose passion is art. The date and number of shows is set at the first meeting and discussion begins to determine categories by titles, topics, and themes. Most recently there have been three shows a summer: an invitational mixed media show, a juried theme show, and the annual New Marlborough Artists show.

In subsequent meetings, the committee reviews lists of artists who have expressed an interest in showing in the Gallery or artists whose work has been recommended by a committee member. All new artists are contacted and samples of their work are requested. Final decisions on artists to be invited to show are made by the entire committee.

Once the creative decisions have been settled, the committee turns its focus to the myriad details involved in putting together the show. Committee



photo by Joe Ponderer

*The Committee, from left, Lee Backer, Maria Gay, Elizabeth Torsay-Wilson, Elizabeth Lombardi, Sheila Baird, Abbe Stahl Steinglass, Holly McNeely, and Cookie Coyne.*

Chair Lombardi has found that the secret to turning this group of strong-minded, creative individuals into a cohesive working collective is to delegate. Tasks are assigned with careful attention to people's lives and busy schedules.

Maria Gay, who carves exquisite replicas of songbirds from wood, is busy as a professional gardener in the summer but is available in the winter for planning and administrative work. On the other hand, painter Abbe Stahl Steinglass has time available in the summer, so she can direct the placement and hanging of each show. Photographer Lee Backer creates all the labels for the art work, which can be done either here or in New York City, where he spends more than half his time. Painter Holly McNeely, also a graphic designer, puts together posters, postcards and other publicity materials for each of the Gallery's shows.

Newest committee member Sheila Baird brings twenty-first century technology to her responsibility for scheduling gallery attendants, using a software program she says is both reliable and artist-friendly. Both ceramicist Cookie Coyne and painter Elizabeth Torsay-Wilson are local residents who assist with any and all aspects of the work of the committee, including selection of the artists, the hanging of each show, Gallery sitting, and hospitality at the Gallery openings.

Asked about serving on the committee, Holly McNeely said she enjoys the drama that unfolds as each exhibit takes shape: The room is empty, submissions are brought in, works are arrayed around the perimeter of the room. Decisions are made about what to hang where. Paintings are hung — and rehung. But it is not until the lights go on and the guests begin to arrive that all the decision-making and planning that has gone into the show comes together. □

## NEW MARLBOROUGH OPEN STUDIOS

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## UPCOMING: *Events Calendar for October*

**October 5: Land Trust hike in Cookson State Forest;** destination: a mill site beyond Thousand Acre Pond — 10:00 a.m. at the boat ramp off Hotchkiss Road. All welcome.

**October 25: Land Trust Fall Road Cleanup,** meet at Town Hall parking lot at 10:00 a.m.

## GRANT PROPOSALS SOUGHT BY NEW MARLBOROUGH CULTURAL COUNCIL

The New Marlborough Cultural Council is pleased to announce that it is offering \$11,000 through its competitive grant process for programs in the arts, humanities, or interpretive sciences. Priority will be given to proposals from New Marlborough residents; projects or programs that directly benefit New Marlborough residents; creative work provided to New Marlborough residents; and events or creative work that will occur in New Marlborough. For the 2015 grant cycle, the Massachusetts Cultural Council is providing \$4,300 and the New Marlborough Cultural Council, \$6,700.

Grant proposals must be submitted on the standard LCC Grant Application available at [www.mass-culture.org](http://www.mass-culture.org). If the application is for a field trip, it must be submitted on the standard application form, and not on the field trip application form. Click on Applicants, and then click on New Marlborough for the local guidelines and forms. Forms may also be obtained at the New Marlborough Town Library. Only paper copies will be accepted. The deadline is Wednesday, October 15, either by postmark to NMCC, P.O. Box 206, Mill River, MA 01244, or by hand delivery to the New Marlborough Town Library during its regular hours. □

*Barbara Lowman*

## A STAR RETURNS

An enchanting Karen Akers, star of Broadway and cabaret, sang her way to a standing ovation in front of a capacity crowd at the Meeting House on September 13. Her program, titled “Time Flies” included some old standards, several narrative pieces, and a terrific rap number. Pictured with her accompanist and arranger Don Rebic, Ms. Akers, who also brought down the (Meeting) House last year, hopes to make her New Marlborough visit an annual event. □



photo by Larry Burke

**No appointment necessary**

## **New Marlborough Flu Clinic**

**Thursday, October 23 1:00–2:00 at the Mill River Town Offices**

Clinic is open to adults over age 18

Bring Medicare and Mass Health Cards

Fee \$30.00 for non-Medicare/Mass Health

Wear short sleeves



## THE LOG

### POLICE DEPARTMENT (SELECTED ENTRIES)

Aug. 3	1:13 p.m.	Possible breaking and entering on Canaan Southfield Road.	Aug. 14	4:46 p.m.	Tree fallen on van on Hartsville New Marlborough Road.
Aug. 5	5:30 p.m.	Investigate report from Mill River Resident of text message harassment.	Aug. 20	5:13 p.m.	Norfolk Road resident reports that his vehicle struck and killed a deer near his home.
	8:35 p.m.	New Marlborough resident reports domestic issue.	Aug. 22	3:30 p.m.	Monterey resident, who had lost a traffic citation issued her in July, requested information so that she could pay fine.
	10:29 p.m.	Utility wires sparking on Hayes Hill Road.	Aug. 25	4:30 p.m.	Mill River resident registers concerns over drivers running stop signs and speeding near her home.
Aug. 7	11:44 a.m.	Canaan Southfield Road resident reports that his mailbox was run over.	Aug. 27	2:41 p.m.	Route 183 resident reports that a red pickup truck travels Route 183 daily morning and afternoon at reckless speeds and passes in no-passing zones.
Aug. 8	12:26 p.m.	Traffic cones placed to guide traffic around water flooding Rhoades and Bailey Road because of a break in a beaver dam.	Aug. 28	11:01 p.m.	Canaan Southfield Road resident complains her neighbor is running his chain saw at 11:00 p.m.
Aug. 9	1:36 p.m.	Southfield resident reports a coyote in her barn.	Aug. 29	7:42 p.m.	Pittsfield driver is arrested on Mill River Great Barrington Road and charged with operating under the influence.
	2:24 p.m.	Hartsville Mill River road resident reports possible break in.	Aug. 31	2:17 p.m.	New Marlborough Southfield Road resident reports his dog is missing.
Aug. 11	4:24 p.m.	Cross to Canaan Valley Road resident reports two pit-bulls in her yard.			
Aug. 13	9:00 a.m.	New Marlborough village resident reports a hit-and-run truck ran over a street sign, and through a stone wall, damaging a fence.			
	8:03 p.m.	Resident complains about bears going into his garage.			
Aug. 14	2:00 p.m.	Vandalism of sign at York Lake reported			

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### FIRE AND RESCUE

Aug. 4	4:59 p.m.	Corashire Road Fire Alarm	Aug. 22	8:55 a.m.	Hartsville New Marlborough Road CO Alarm
Aug. 4	5:06 p.m.	Norfolk Road CO Alarm	Aug. 23	10:40 a.m.	East Hill Road Power Line Down
Aug. 5	4:15 a.m.	Canaan Southfield Road Medical Call	Aug. 23	2:00 p.m.	New Marlborough Sandisfield Road Fire Alarm
Aug. 5	10:29 p.m.	Clayton Mill River Road Power Line Down	Aug. 25	2:55 p.m.	Mill River Great Barrington Road Fire Alarm
Aug. 9	9:38 p.m.	Red Fox Road Medical Call	Aug. 27	6:30 a.m.	Hartsville New Marlborough Road Fire Alarm
Aug. 12	6:12 p.m.	Norfolk Road Medical Call	Aug. 28	2:20 p.m.	Hartsville New Marlborough Road Fire Alarm
Aug. 14	7:22 a.m.	Caulkins Cross Road MVA	Aug. 30	6:01 p.m.	East Hill Road Fire Alarm
Aug. 20	1:25 p.m.	Hartsville Mill River Road Power Line Down	Aug. 30	8:26 p.m.	Mutual Aid to Monterey Medical Call
Aug. 20	10:02 p.m.	Mill River Great Barrington Road CO Alarm	Aug. 31	9:35 a.m.	Norfolk Road Medical Call
Aug. 21	1:17 p.m.	Hartsville Mill River Road Medical Call	Aug. 31	5:40 p.m.	Peter Menaker Road CO Alarm



# WETLANDS AND HAYFIELDS

The marsh (all natural light) was taken on Adsit Crosby Road, as was the meadow and stream. The photo of the bales of hay was taken nearby on Hartsville Mill River Road. I took the grass reflecting in a pond near Route 57. I try to capture the moment when light transforms an ordinary scene, which one might pass everyday without noticing it, into a memorable image. — Richard Migot

To see these and other photos in this newsletter in full color, visit our new website at [NM5VN.org](http://NM5VN.org).



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## NEW MARLBOROUGH CENTRAL REUNION

The tables were set for forty guests at Bogies at noon on Saturday, September 20, for the annual reunion of New Marlborough Central/New Marlborough High School graduates. Hostess Winnie Verreto, one of the so-called "Fabulous Five" from the graduating class of 1955, enthusiastically organized her assembled guests.

The group was clearly delighted to be together to reminisce. Connie Rugg Booth talked about her father, who bought the Southfield Store in the 1930s from Fred Turner and how they'd had it until the '70s. Fred Bunce added that he had worked at the store. When he stops in these days, he remembers the '50s when they sold TVs there. Then Fred mentioned that he was on the student council and class president, but he admitted there were only seven students in his class. Connie laughed about how she thought her class was small, but it actually had twelve kids.

Great friendships have been maintained through this event. Pat Nourse, Helen Love Gilvar, and Winnie Dow Keeney look forward to seeing each other every year. The fourth in their group of girls, Mary Smith Barton, didn't make it this year.

Alice Thompson Davis (Class of 1950) was proud of her schooling in Mill River all the way through high school. The oldest alumna present was Mildred Van Deusen Smith, class of 1938, who had joined the luncheon from Waterbury, Connecticut. She reminisced about being



Photo by Jane Burke

The 2014 New Marlborough Central alumnae gathered at Bogies.

there when the school was first built in 1933: "I had been at Hartsville School from grades 1 through 8. We had no electricity or running water — an outhouse too. When we got to Mill River we thought it was so great with indoor plumbing and every fancy thing."

Sandra MacDary Preston (Mount Everett class of 1958) summed up the sentiments of all when she said, "New Marlborough was the best school we ever went to. Don't ever close it!"

Winnie Veretto hopes that next year even more people will attend (to be put on her mailing list, email her at WinnieVe@gmail.com or call 413-528-1556). "They don't need to have graduated," she says. "Anyone who attended New Marlborough Central is welcome." □

Jane Burke

## OUT OF THE PAST



Before Ford Motor, John Deere, and the internal combustion engine, there was hay-powered transport for preparing New Marlborough fields after harvest.









## NEW ACQUISITIONS AT THE LIBRARY

### Adult Fiction

*The Drop*, by Dennis Lehane

*Personal*, by Lee Child

*The Eye of Heaven*, by Clive Cussler

*Somewhere Safe with Somebody Good*, by Jan Karon

*Madame Picasso*, by Anne Girard

### Adult Nonfiction

*Massachusetts Quilts: Our Commonwealth*, by Lynne Zacek Bassett

### Children's Fiction

*Small Blue and the Deep Dark Night*, by Jon Davis

*Quest*, by Aaron Becker

*Winter Is Coming*, by Tony Johnston

*Twenty-One Elephants and Still Standing: A Story of P.T. Barnum and the Brooklyn Bridge*, by April Jones Prince

### Children's Nonfiction

*Mr. Ferris and His Wheel*, by Kathryn Gibbs Davis

### FALL LIBRARY HOURS

Mon. - Wed. - Sat.: 10 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.

Tues. & Fri.: 1:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.

Thurs. 1:30 - 5:30 p.m.

Winter hours  
begin November 1

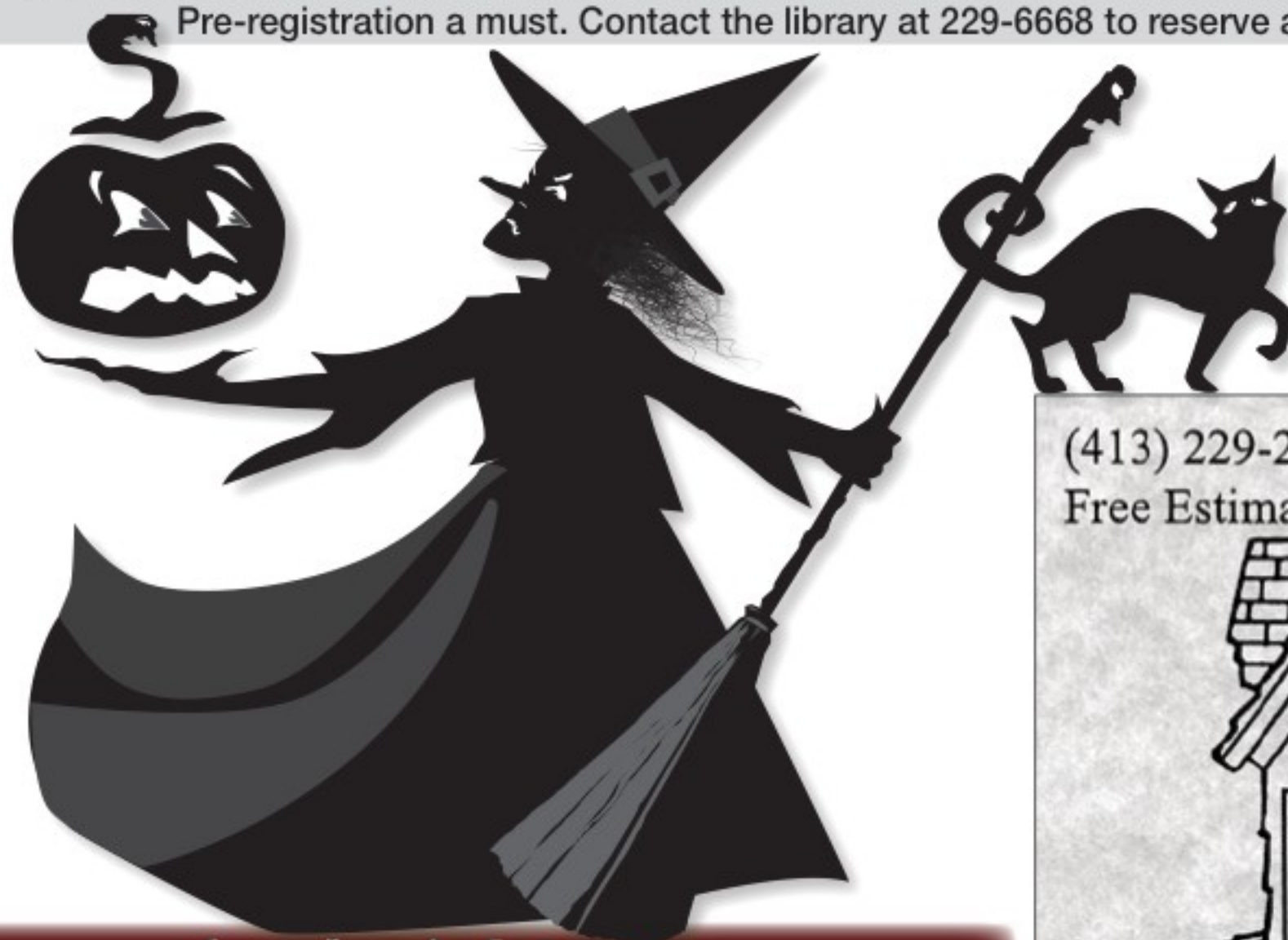
**Halloween is October 31st -  
Trick or Treaters can visit  
the Town Hall from 5 to 7 p.m.**

### Family Fun - Make Your Own Scarecrow

at the New Marlborough Library - **Saturday, October 18th at 1 pm.**

Bring your own old clothes and we will provide the hay. Cider and doughnuts will be served.

Pre-registration a must. Contact the library at 229-6668 to reserve a spot.



### Spooky Celebration

At The Meeting House in New Marlborough Village  
sponsored by the New Marlborough Town Library

Join us for an outdoor glow-in-the-dark egg hunt,  
ghoulish cupcakes, mummy's juice,  
and a movie, *Toy Story of Terror* (Rated G, 22 mins).

Wear your costumes and bring a flashlight.

The tricks and treats start **Friday, October 24th at 6:30 pm.**

(413) 229-2544  
Free Estimates





# Contributions are needed to continue the paper!

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

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

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

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## Town Times

- \* **Board of Selectmen:** Every Monday at 6:00 p.m.
- \* **Planning Board:** Second and fourth Wednesday at 7 p.m.
- \* **Board of Health:** First Tuesday of the month at 7 p.m.
- \* **Conservation Commission:** Last Saturday of the month at 10 a.m.
- \* **Board of Assessors:** Monday through Thursday 9 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.
- \* **Fire Department training:** Every Tuesday at 7 p.m. at the fire station
- \* **Building Inspector:** Monday 5 - 7 p.m. Wednesday 8 - 10 a.m.
- \* **First Responders:** meeting/training: First and third Wednesday at 7 p.m. at the fire station
- \* **Cultural Council:** Second Thursday at 4:15 p.m at the library
- \* **Town Treasurer:** Wednesday 3:30 p.m. - 6 p.m. and Saturday 8 a.m. - 10 a.m.
- \* **Tax Collector:** Monday through Friday 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.
- \* **Selectmen's Administrative Secretary:** Monday - Friday 9 a.m. - 2 p.m.
- \* **Dog and Animal Control Officer:** John Springstube 413-232-7038
- \* **Town Clerk:** 229-8278; 8 a.m. - 4 p.m. weekdays; Saturday by appointment
- \* **Town Hall:** 229-8116
- \* **Police:** Business office: 229-8161

**Emergency calls: Police, Fire, and Medical: 911**

## Transfer Station hours:

Wednesday: 10 a.m.- 2 p.m.

Saturday: 10 a.m.- 4 p.m.

Sunday: 10 a.m.- 2 p.m.

## PERMITS ARE DUE ON JULY 1

They are available at  
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## New Marlborough Highway Department

Located on Mill River-Southfield Rd.  
Hours: Monday - Friday 7 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.  
PO Box 99, Mill River, MA 01244  
(413) 229-8165

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

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

## NM5VN Editorial Team

Joe Poindexter, issue editor; Diane Barth, designer;  
Martha Bryan, Jane Burke, Larry Burke, Kenzie Fields,  
Barbara Lowman, David Lowman, Jodi Rothe,  
Peter Schuyten, Barry Shapiro, Pam Stebbins,  
Jon Swan, Marianne Swan  
Contributing writers: Ann Getsinger,  
Mary Richie Smith, Tara White. Index: Donna Weaver

## New Marlborough 5 Village News

appears monthly,

also online at our new website! [www.NM5VN.org](http://www.NM5VN.org)

The next issue will be dated November, 2014.

All copy must be submitted no later than October 15.

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

PO Box 243, Southfield, MA 01259

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



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- ♦ **Berkshire Environmental Research Center (BERC):** Thomas Coote. Lake & pond management, wetland delineation, ecological research, rare/invasive species assessment. 413-644-4509. tcoote@simons-rock.edu
- ♦ **Campbell Falls Carpentry:** Licensed and insured contracting at [campbellfallscarpentry@gmail.com](mailto:campbellfallscarpentry@gmail.com) (413)229-6097 and (413)429-7677. Mass Contractors # 7614140, HIC# 170377
- ♦ **Corashire Realty:** Serving New Marlborough for 40 years. Let experience, knowledge, and personal attention work for you. 528-0014
- ♦ **Dellea:** Dellea.biz offers affordable on-site Windows computer repairs, virus removals, and more to homes and small businesses in southern Berkshire County. Browse <http://www.dellea.biz> or call (413)528-1141.
- ♦ **Design+Planning:** Christopher Blair; Since 1986, creative, budget aware design. Achieve your goals for additions, alterations to an existing home or new construction. 413- 528-4960. [christopher.f.blair@verizon.net](mailto:christopher.f.blair@verizon.net).
- ♦ **DesignFirstBerkshires:** Architectural design, space planning and renovation management. 413-528-6169 or [info@designfirstberkshires.com](mailto:info@designfirstberkshires.com).
- ♦ **Eileen Fitzgibbons:** Experienced massage therapist with advanced training and 6 years' experience at Mepal Spa wishes to continue work in New Marlborough. [www.efwellness@gmail.com](http://www.efwellness@gmail.com), 860-309-7775
- ♦ **Fine Jewelry:** Designers and manufacturers; custom orders/commissions welcome; expert repairs. 45 years experience. Sachs Reisman, Inc. 25 Maple Ave., Sheffield 229-0050
- ♦ **One call does it all!:** Vinyl siding cleaning; pressure washing; deck refinishing; floors refinished; window washing; odd landscape jobs; all odd jobs. David Goewey, (413)229-2787
- ♦ **James Edelman:** General Contractor, Real Estate Sales. Best Results. Construction License #090773. Home Improvement Registration #152035. Real Estate Sales License #9086247. 413-528-0006 or [cljvedelman@aol.com](mailto:cljvedelman@aol.com)
- ♦ **Quality Painting Services:** Beautifying homes in the Berkshires. Offering interior/exterior painting, staining, sheetrock repair. Pressure washing decks. Contractor registration #173566. Josh Taber, 413.269.8948
- ♦ **Susan M. Smith:** Attorney At Law; Concentrating in the areas of Estate Planning, Estate Administration, Elder Law, Real Estate and Zoning Matters. [ssmithlaw@hughes.net](mailto:ssmithlaw@hughes.net) or 229-7080
- ♦ **Reiner White:** General Contractor; 413-229-8450
- ♦ **Woodruff Mountain Landscaping:** Excavation and landscape contracting, all forms of stone work and masonry, and outdoor services, including lawn mowing and yard work. 413-229-2919 [woodruffmountain@aol.com](mailto:woodruffmountain@aol.com)

To list your business here, contact Barbara Lowman 229-2369.