



# New Marlborough 5 Village News

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Clayton • Hartsville • Mill River • New Marlborough • Southfield

## WATT'S WHAT?

### *Understanding Your New Energy Options*

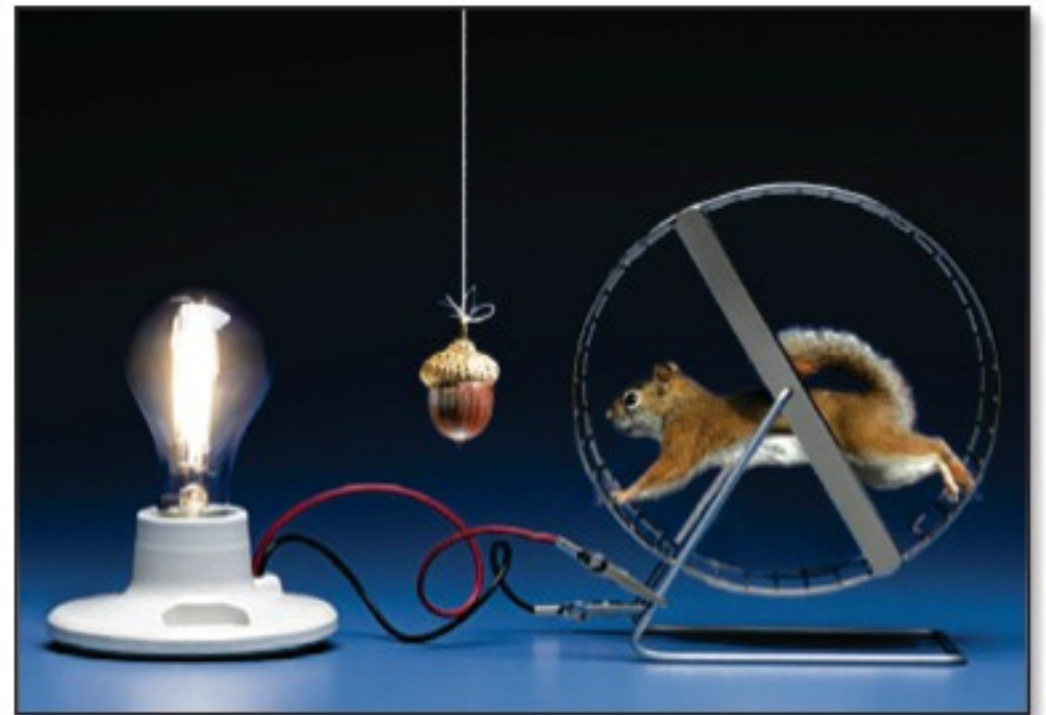
By James Wagstaff

Between articles in the local press, our neighbors' thoughtful posts to Maggie's List, and communications from the Town, there's both a lot of information and a decent amount of confusion about New Marlborough's new electricity supply program. Having grown up in New Marlborough and spent my career in the energy industry, I hope I can shed light on decisions facing the town's residents.

New Marlborough – along with hundreds of municipalities from Nantucket to Boulder, Colorado, to Sonoma, California – has elected to enroll its citizens in a new program that brings community-scale leverage to the negotiation of electricity rates. A consortium\* of ten towns including New Marlborough has hired Colonial Power as its energy broker (its fee is embedded in the electricity rates paid by all residents), and Colonial Power has selected Hampshire Power as the supplier to replace National Grid's supply service. Although energy gets very technical very quickly, it's a simple concept: negotiating for price on behalf of a group of towns yields a better result than when an individual negotiates for himself. Here's how the new program works, a few thoughts for residents to consider, and some context about the bigger energy picture for New Marlborough.

In the energy industry, electric and gas utilities across the country were granted a monopoly in exchange for ensuring that citizens have reliable and affordable access to electricity. From 1882 when Edison constructed the first commercial power plant in the country, the Pearl Street Station in New York City, until the 1970s, the assumption across the United States was that the local utility — in our case National Grid — had the sole right to produce, transmit, and distribute power. National Grid's value chain consists of three elements: first, they buy power from power plants, second, they manage that power across New England's transmission network, and third, they deliver that power to our homes. As a result of evolving economics and policies over the past fifty years, however, some states, including Massachusetts, have broken apart that monopoly into competitive markets. The rationale is that more competition in each of these three markets produces lower costs.

An apt analogy is gas for your car. Let's say the average price for gas in town is \$3.25 a gallon. Imagine that a town representative — in our case Colonial Power — contacted Shell, Cumberland Farms, and Mobil and asked them for better gasoline prices in exchange for a commitment from all New Marlborough citizens to buy their gas exclusively from one of these stations. Market theory suggests that each gasoline supplier would vie for this business and the revenue certainty it delivered. If Shell, for example, offered a rate of \$3 a gallon and was awarded the business, we would all sign up to buy gas exclusively from Shell and save 25 cents per gallon every time we filled up.



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Energy, continued

New Marlborough's consortium has recently taken advantage of the de-monopolized market and has secured a rate that is 25 percent lower than the rate being offered by National Grid. But there is at least one further consideration: the program for the consortium is for twelve months. National Grid buys power all the time, trading futures contracts daily and setting rates every six months. So we only have visibility to compare the consortium's program through next April. Starting in April, National Grid's rate could be cheaper (historically the spring rate has decreased by an average of 12 percent compared to the winter rate), which is the risk that the Town is taking in selecting alternative power providers. In other words, it's possible that we'll save money now at the expense of paying more in the spring.

The average U.S. household uses 903 kilowatt hours (kWh) each month. Assuming this level of usage in New Marlborough, the savings residents would realize from the Hampshire Power rate of 12.19 cents per kWh compared to the National Grid rate of 16.27 cents this winter would be \$36 a month. Only if National Grid cut its rate by more than half in the spring would a homeowner save money by staying with National Grid for the next twelve months.

Keep in mind, though, that each homeowner's monthly usage fluctuates, so the math will change depending on an individual homeowner's monthly demand. For example, if you use much more power in the winter than in the summer – and your savings are greater than \$36 a month this winter, the program could still have a net savings, even if National Grid's rate dips below 8 cents per kWh. Here is a link to an online workbook in which residents can input their historical usage and test scenarios to determine their projected electricity budget: <http://bit.ly/1rm2h2K>.

In New Marlborough's new program, all residents will automatically be enrolled with Hampshire Power in November; they must opt out of the program to remain with National Grid. They may do so by visiting the Colonial Power website ([www.colonialpowergroup.com/](http://www.colonialpowergroup.com/)

[new-marlborough/](http://www.new-marlborough/)) and clicking on the "opt out" button. (Colonial, by the way, allows residents to opt out at any time, which would seem to indicate that homeowners finding significantly lower rates in the spring, could leave the program then.) Those interested in renewable energy sources should note that the new Town program includes no renewable energy supply. Homeowners purchasing renewable energy through National Grid's GreenUp program would be automatically removed from that program if they do not opt of the Town program. These residents may wish to seek another supplier. Many companies provide renewable energy in Massachusetts; a good place to start is a Google search for "Massachusetts renewable energy provider."

The new power supply program presents a great opportunity for the Town to think about not only near-term cost effectiveness for individuals, but also larger New Marlborough-specific goals in the context of local energy. Smart energy planning spans many subjects beyond the monthly utility bill. Among them: building retrofits for energy efficiency, renewable power sources, conservation, local power production, fuel options, and program sustainability. The Town management and the community at large should be proud of this first step, but the conversation shouldn't end here. Instead the program should be the platform to more deeply address the Town's energy needs and goals — one that could produce an energy roadmap that points the way to sustained benefits well beyond this year. □

*James (Jas) Wagstaff, the son of Brad Wagstaff and Leslie Miller, has seven year's experience in regulated and deregulated energy markets and has worked with leading utilities throughout the world as well as many of the country's largest energy buyers, including local, state, and federal governments. He lives and works in San Francisco.*

\*The consortium is comprised of Clarksburg, North Adams, Williamstown, Florida, Dalton, Tyringham, Lenox, West Stockbridge, Sheffield, and New Marlborough.

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## THE TASER DISPUTE

### Graham Frank Responds to Critics of the Weapon

by Joe Poindexter

Maybe it's the TV news footage of victims writhing in pain, or maybe it's the reported deaths caused by this supposed "non-lethal" weapon. But few things have aroused more heated debate than the presence of Tasers in the local police force. As reported last month in the *5 Village News*, the Town has earmarked \$3,476 for the purchase of Tasers for the New Marlborough Police Department.

The outcry began early in October with a Maggie's List post noting that Tasers were far from non-lethal, citing studies asserting that hundreds of people had been killed by Tasers or other electronic control devices since their introduction about fifteen years ago. "It is my feeling," wrote Joyce Hackett, who kicked off the discussion, "that the risks of this equipment are being dismissed with very little thought and are seriously underestimated. I'm disturbed that no public input has been solicited..." A dozen other posters concurred.

A few residents defended the decision to add Tasers to the Police Department arsenal. "If you all believe [the department] should not have Tasers, you should go on police call," wrote Bobby Litchfield. "I'd much rather know that a Taser was used, rather than a gun relied upon because an alternative was not available," said Cheryl Luft.

"You have to look at it from all sides — the officers, the suspect, other citizens," says Acting Police Chief Graham Frank. Mr. Frank (the "Acting" modifier was to have been removed from his title as this issue of the *5 Village News* went to press) asserts that guns, batons, even pepper spray can produce more damaging effects than a Taser, the results of which last only for the period in which electro-shock is applied. "You go into a scene where there is a fight," says Mr. Frank, "and a baton could break an arm. The after-effects of a pepper spray can persist for days. But if you show the suspect the device — 'I have a Taser; comply with me or I will have to deploy' — sometimes that will be enough."

As it turned out, the department's requisition was sufficient for the purchase of just one Taser. The device, a Taser X2, costs \$1,000, but related equipment, for example a camera mounted on the device that records the incident as soon as it is fired, triples the price. And the Department will not be able to use its Taser until its officers are certified. In Massachusetts, this is a lengthy process. The first step is a Taser policy statement that must first be approved by the Board of Selectmen and then by the state's Executive Office of Public Safety and Security (EOPSS). Then each



The Taser X2

officer authorized to carry the weapon must complete eight hours of training, which includes, by the way, being tased.

Here is how the Taser works: A cartridge holding a charge — or in the latest models, two charges — expels two darts up to a maximum distance of twenty-five feet. The darts, tipped with barbed needles and capable of piercing light clothing, remain connected to the Taser by filaments of copper wire, which deliver a five-second burst of electricity to the suspect. This, in Taser argot, results in "neuromuscular incapacitation." The darts can be removed by a trained officer, but the preferred venue is a hospital, where the victim can be cleared medically.

Mr. Frank acknowledges that a Taser can be deadly, if, for example, the suspect is hit in the head. EOPSS warns against using the device on a "susceptible population." This includes: anyone under eighteen or over seventy, pregnant women, people of small stature, people with mental illness or in ill health, or people implanted with artificial pacemakers.

Residents wondered whether crime in New Marlborough had spiked so dramatically as to warrant the addition of this weapon. Mr. Frank cites cases of domestic disturbance in which rage and/or alcohol made the suspect uncooperative to an officer's attempt to defuse the situation. "Not everyday, but this stuff does happen," he says. "It is my hope that we will never have to deploy a Taser," he adds. "However, if a situation arises, it is in my best interest that officers have alternative forms of force available to subdue a person without jeopardizing third-party safety. Or consider a situation where there is a motor-vehicle stop, in which there is an outstanding warrant for arrest, the driver refuses to comply, and backup is forty minutes away. This is a very dangerous situation where the more use-of-force options available to the officer the better."

To the complaint that residents were not consulted on the purchase of a Taser, Mr. Frank points to the impracticality of running a department subject to voter approval. "They didn't vote on whether we should carry guns or pepper spray," he says. He notes that many nearby communities (the Sheffield police department has just completed its training) are now adopting electronic control devices. "The technology has improved," he says.

At this writing, the Police Department's Taser policy had yet to be approved by the Board of Selectmen and sent on to EOPSS. Both approvals are needed before training can begin. Authorization to use the Department's new Taser is still a month or two away. □

## Town Business Is Your Business

### BOARD OF SELECTMEN



**September 22:** With all three selectmen present the Board met with Highway Superintendent Chuck Loring for a second time to discuss his contract. The only issue on the table was his ongoing request to receive overtime pay, as his two immediate predecessors did. But in turning him down the last time, the Board suggested that instead of overtime he come up with a salary figure he'd be comfortable with and in that way give the Board something to negotiate, which he agreed to do. However, at tonight's meeting Mr. Loring said "he didn't want to come across as greedy" and that he "recognizes the Town only has so much money, so whatever the salary is, it is," and he said he wouldn't pursue it any further. For his "graciousness" — Selectman Nat Yohalem's word — the Board voted to add an additional \$1,000 to his compensation, bringing his yearly salary to \$63,500. The Board also reiterated its plan to get him up to \$70,000 in the next three years.

Next on the agenda was Nicolas Reitzel from Stantec Consulting, who said he had "fairly good news" for the Board regarding the Clayton Mill River Road bridge repair, which, as previously reported, is being delayed until next year because of additional permitting requirements imposed by the state. Stantec is the engineering consultant on the project. **Mr. Reitzel said that while the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) had "rejected the idea that it was a minor repair" because of the amount of work involved, which includes widening the road that crosses the bridge, the DEP still views the engineering design of the bridge as "doable," and that extensive, and potentially costly, modifications to the design will not be necessary.** There is, however, \$12,000 more in engineering fees related to the filing of the paperwork for the new permitting requirements. Fortunately, that amount is more than covered by money left over in the highway department budget, plus contingency funding built into the project plan.

In the wake of the firing of the tax collector (see page 7), the Board appointed Town Clerk Kathy Chretien assistant tax collector, a position she has held previously, and increased her salary by \$2,000 a year, prorated over the time she will be doing the job, which will be until a new tax collector is hired. "She's done the job in the past, and knows what's involved," Chairman Tara White said.

In reporting on his quarterly meeting with Town department heads, Selectman Yohalem said he learned that the fire and police departments are spending an inordinate amount of time responding to false alarms from home security systems. Although the contracts governing the installation of these systems call for fines of either \$25 or \$50, depending on the number of occurrences, the fines have never been collected. **So the Board voted that going forward the false alarm data collected by the fire and police departments will be turned over to the town clerk, and fines will be billed out on a quarterly basis.**

Mr. Yohalem also reported on his most recent meeting with neighboring towns to discuss shared services. The participants included David Smith, chairman of the Sheffield Board of Selectmen, Sheffield Town Administrator Rhonda LaBombard, and the highway superintendents from Sheffield, Monterey, and Egremont. Because of the presence of the highway superintendents,

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he said the meeting focused largely on sharing road maintenance equipment. Those in attendance also discussed the possibility of sharing a secretary among the four highway departments, since, as it turns out, processing paperwork occupies one full day of each highway superintendent's work week. The group also agreed that at least one selectman from each of the four towns be invited to future meetings in order to get tentative buy-in on the items being discussed.

And finally, according to Mr. Yohalem, Acting Police Chief Graham Frank, who believes the town could use a second police cruiser, has learned that Sheffield gets rid of one of its cruisers every two years. The town strips the cruiser and then sells it for around \$1,000. However, in view of what the towns are trying to accomplish with the shared service program, Sheffield Police Chief Eric Munson told Acting Chief Frank, according to Mr. Yohalem, that the next time Sheffield gets rid of one of its cruisers, he will recommend to the town's board of selectmen that it be given to New Marlborough instead.

**September 29:** With all three selectmen present, the Board met with Acting Police Chief Graham Frank to discuss the terms of his contract, slated to go into effect when he officially becomes chief November 1. Mr. Frank is asking for \$55,000 a year, educational incentives, fifteen days of paid sick leave, and a termination clause that does not include being terminated without cause. The Board said it would get back to him at a later date.

Chairman White said the Board is seeking volunteers to help it update the Town's personnel policies. The last update was completed in 2011. **Ms. White announced that Board Administrative Assistant Mike Skorput will be retiring January 3, 2015, due in part to "health issues he's been dealing with that make it difficult to complete some of his work."** She said the Board would like to bring his successor on board well before Mr. Skorput leaves so they can begin working together on the annual budget process, which kicks off in December.

Animal Inspector Prudence Spaulding asked the Board to send a letter to the Board of Health asking it to issue

a notice "of abatement of nuisance" to Tom Brazie of South Sandisfield Road, for allowing his cows to wander onto public roads. According to Mrs. Spaulding, who is also the Town's fence viewer, Mr. Brazie's cows have been out on Route 57 three times in a two-week period. She is concerned about the possibility of serious auto accidents, "particularly in the dark of night." She said that once the notice of abatement has been served, Mr. Brazie will be liable for fining, which she said "might encourage him to confine his animals to the pastures and thus protect the Town's motorists."

On an upbeat note, Chairman White reported the Town successfully auctioned off a lakefront property that had gone into tax title (for nonpayment of property taxes) and been turned over to the Town by the state Land Court. She said the .58-acre parcel located off Downs Road on Lake Buel, was acquired by an abutter for \$340,000. Back taxes on the property were \$50,000. So in effect the Town netted nearly \$290,000 on the sale, and the property will be going back on the tax rolls. "It's a nice piece of change for the Town," she noted, adding, "there are several more [properties] in tax title that are in Land Court right now. So there may be a few more pieces coming forward."

Selectman Michele Shalaby said the Town received a request from movie production company Burgdorff Movie Projects LLC for a permit to film at Umpachene Falls. She said the filming would take place the week of October 6 for six to eight days, and involve a crew of about fifteen and five to six vehicles, according to the film makers. She said they also indicated they have \$1 million in insurance coverage. The Board voted to grant the permit subject to receiving the certificate of insurance.

The remainder of the meeting was taken up with a discussion of the termination of Tax Collector Caren Adams (see page 7).

**October 6:** Chairman White and Selectman Shalaby were present; Mr. Yohalem was away. After approving the minutes from the September 15 and September

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22 meetings, the Board met with Acting Police Chief Graham Frank to go over the Police Department's use of force and Taser policies. But rather than reviewing them at the meeting, Mr. Frank distributed drafts of the policies to the Board, which Ms. White said would be reviewed by the selectmen individually and that the Board would get back to him with questions and comments at a later date.

Referring to the mailing received by residents regarding the Community Choice Power Supply Program, Chairman White explained that ten Berkshire County towns had formed a consortium to secure a reduced electrical rate through a bulk purchasing agreement with Hampshire Power. **Under the agreement, New Marlborough residents who are currently customers of National Grid will automatically receive the new reduced rate, unless they choose to return the opt-out card included with the mailing.** That rate, which is locked in for a year starting November 1, is 12 cents per kilowatt hour (kWh) versus a 16-cent per kWh rate from National Grid, and, as she pointed out, the National Grid rate is good for only six months, after which "they're free to raise it again." (See story, page 1.) She also mentioned an editorial that appeared in today's *Berkshire Eagle* that praised the program, noting that "it will partially ease the anticipated dramatic increase in electricity costs this winter," and calling it "an endorsement of the wisdom of Berkshire communities working together whenever possible."

The Board voted to hire Ann Marie (Mari) Enoch as interim tax collector to work with Town Clerk Kathy Chretien, who has been handling the tax collection duties on a day-to-day basis. Ms. Enoch already serves as tax collector in Monterey, an elected position, and according to Selectman Shalaby, "is a proven, certified tax collector with a high ninety percent collection rate." She said Ms. Enoch will not be leaving her current position, and in fact isn't even sure that she wants to take on additional work long-term, but for the time being she'll oversee the operations of the tax office in New Marlborough "to make sure everything gets done

properly and runs smoothly while Kathy acts as the day-to-day interface with the citizens."

The Board received a letter from Tom Brazie in response to the complaint brought to the Board's attention last week by Animal Inspector Prudence Spaulding about the hazard posed to motorists by his cows getting out onto the public roadway. In his letter, Mr. Brazie notes that he is a farmer, doing farming in New Marlborough under the right-to-farm bylaw, and that he pastures his cows all over town, mostly using a portable electric fence. He says the cows are well cared for, have plenty to eat, but **when they're spooked, say, by the howling of a coyote or coy dog, nothing can contain them, not an electric fence, barbed wire or even a four-foot-high welded wire fence.** "When they're scared, they run. They set into motion like a bulldozer and stop for nothing," he writes.

While he acknowledges that he's responsible when they get onto Town's roads, he states that drivers going 55-miles-per-hour in a 35-mph zone would also be responsible should there be an accident, which was one of Mrs. Spaulding's major concerns. But he goes on to say he does want to conform to the requirements, and he invites Mrs. Spaulding, who's also the Town's fence viewer, to come and see that he's doing his absolute best to keep his cows contained, and that fining him won't fix the problem. "It's a very nice letter," commented Chairman White, adding, "We like our farmers and we all know that animals do get out." She urged Mrs. Spaulding to inspect his fences and to take Animal Control Officer John Springstube with her as a second set of eyes. "Maybe there's something there that can be improved."

Following a tax classification hearing with Board of Assessors Chair Marsha Pshenishny, **the Board voted once again for a single tax classification covering both residential and commercial property.** As Ms. Pshenishny noted, "We don't have enough commercial [property] to have a split tax rate." □

Peter Schuyten



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## FIRING THE TAX COLLECTOR — REVISITED

A group of three former selectmen, Courtney Turner, Dan Litchfield, and Barbara Marchione, confronted the Board at its September 29 meeting over its decision to fire Tax Collector Caren Adams, urging it to reconsider and to seek mediation instead. As previously reported, the dispute goes back to early August when Ms. Adams informed the Board she was reducing her work hours from thirty to twenty-two and would no longer work Wednesdays. She justified the move saying that when she was hired in 2009 it was for a 20-to-24-hour workweek, and that she had voluntarily been working a 30-hour week because it suited her schedule at the time.

Later, as the dispute heated up, she offered to work a 27 ½-hour week but only if the Board agreed to compensate her for the additional time. This the Board refused to do, saying any increase in salary would have to be approved by the voters at the Annual Town Meeting next May. And that's where things stood, until September 22 when the Board finally fired her for "your refusal to perform your job requirements and your disobedience in carrying out reasonable directions by the Board of Selectmen, i.e., your consistent refusal to work 27.5 hours per week."

Mr. Turner characterized the dispute as "a labor relations problem" and said "you don't summarily fire people without at least making a genuine effort to solve the problem." Echoing his comments, Mr. Litchfield said, "There was certainly a better way this could've been handled. I strongly urge you to consider the mediation option." Barbara Marchione commented that Ms. Adams was very proud of the fact she had a 97-98 percent collection rate. "She told me she felt like she turned that office around." Former Fire Chief Peter Scala, who was also in attendance, recalled that his wife, Joyce, had been up for the job: "You hired Caren instead, but when my wife was interviewed, the Board of Selectmen told her the job took 20-22 hours."

Reaching back into history, the former selectmen recalled how the tax collector position was created in the first place, saying it was split off from the treasurer's position in 2003 after the Town found itself in a deep financial hole with \$660,000 in uncollected taxes. As Mr. Turner explained, it was structured as a part-time, salaried position with 20 to 25 hours of work a week,

"but whether those numbers were correct we didn't really know." Added Mr. Litchfield, "it was basically an experiment, but as far as I know, that board and subsequent boards have never attached a specific number of hours to the job."

There was also a suggestion that while the change in her hours was the issue that sparked the dispute, personalities may have also played a role in her firing. "Having served in your position for nine years," Mr. Turner told the current Board, "it's very easy for personalities to become part of the process. And that's a shame, but that's life and we're all human."

In response, Board Chairman Tara White said, "We're going to make one statement, one blanket statement. We've heard everything you've said, and there is another side to the story. Unfortunately, because Caren has made it clear she is seeking legal advice we can't comment, nor can we go forward and explain our side of what happened." And then she added, "We gave Caren every opportunity to come forward and meet us in the middle."

But the Board's position all along has been that Ms. Adams has worked an 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. day, five days a week, for most of the five years she's been in the position, and that those are the hours that have been posted on the official Town website, published in the Town Annual Report, and included in the tax bills that she herself sends out. Further, as Mr. Yohalem noted in a subsequent interview, "You can't have Town employees setting their days and hours without the Board's approval. It usurps the selectmen's authority."

As for mediating the dispute, Mr. Yohalem says there are two problems in going that route. One is cost, with fees ranging upwards of \$1,000 a day or more, but more importantly, in terms of precedent, it would open the door to every employee demanding mediation for similar disputes.

As it was going to press, *The 5 Village News* learned that Great Barrington attorney Courtney S. Lane had sent a letter to Town Counsel Jeremia Pollard, stating that she represented Ms. Adams and asking for a copy of her personnel file. Mr. Pollard declined to comment, pending a review of the letter by the Board of Selectmen. □

*Peter Schuyten*

### SNOWBIRD ALERT!

Going south for the winter? Want to continue reading the NM5VN?

- You have two options: 1) Let us know your winter-time address (the Post Office will not forward the paper) or 2) read the 5VN online at NM5VN.org.

## CONSERVATION COMMISSION

**September 20:** The meeting was called to order by Commission members Ned Wilson and John Schreiber. Shannon Boomsma from White Engineering presented a Request For Determination (RDA) for Mr. and Mrs. Dirks-Bakhle of Cagney Hill Road. Ms. Boomsma explained that the septic system for their residence had failed and that both a new septic tank and new leach fields were required. The Commission reviewed the location for the new system and agreed that the proposed site was driven by the existing topography. Ms. Boomsma explained that the newly engineered system would be mounded roughly four feet off the grade at the site. The Commission agreed that the project be given a negative determination (meaning that it did not require a Notice of Intent) because, although the project falls under the jurisdiction of the Wetlands Protection Act, the work would not fill, alter, or dredge the wetland resources.

Representing Marc Gourevitch and his wife, Sabrina Cherry, both of whom were present, Ms. Boomsma next addressed the Commission regarding the enforcement order issued to the owners for the installation of a newly drilled well at their home at 98 Lumbert Cross Road. Ned Wilson had received complaints from neighbors, who noticed that roughly a half mile of the Umpachene River was suddenly murky with a fine silt. Mr. Wilson visited the site and witnessed a large volume of silted water

running continually from outside the casing of the newly drilled well into the adjacent wetlands and eventually into the river. In consultation with Mark Stinton from the Department of Environmental Protection, he issued an enforcement order requiring the owners to appear before the Commission with a plan to stop the overflow of silty water. Mr. Gourevitch explained that he, too, was distressed with the silting caused by their new well, and Ms. Boomsma said that within the week, efforts would be made to control the volume of silty water. In response to extensive questioning by the commissioners, Ms. Boomsma offered several approaches to stanching the outflow. The Commission gave the owners permission to move as quickly as possible to control the volume of water and explained that, after a remedy was in place, a Notice of Intent would need to be filed to explain the details for mitigation.

Finally the mail was reviewed. Chris Tryon of Berkshire Geo-Technologies submitted a request for an Emergency Permit to replace an existing failed septic system within the riverfront area at 207 Konkapot Road. The Commission questioned whether an emergency permit was in order or whether the owner should submit a Notice of Intent for next month's review. The Commission agreed to visit the site and clarify what was needed. □

*Martha Bryan*

## CAPITAL PLANNING TAKES SHAPE

The Capital Planning Committee met frequently through September and October to develop a framework that New Marlborough can use to forecast Town finances and capital needs with some degree of reliability over the next fifteen to twenty years. The goal is to create a tool that can be used and refined through the coming years to manage Town income, operating expenses, and capital needs more smoothly and effectively.

This has not been easy. The first challenge was to assemble data on past Town income and expenses. This came from departmental records, Town records, and Massachusetts Department of Revenue data, which often did not agree. That pointed to a related need to establish a unified structure of computer hardware and software across all Town departments.

The next task was to establish rates of growth of income and expenses based on past data, which could be used to project future needs. Added to this grid were anticipated capital needs in the categories of roads

and bridges, vehicles, buildings, parks and cemeteries, and technology. The committee recognized that those anticipated expenditures will be fairly accurate over the coming three to five years, but become more speculative as the timeline extends further. The Committee wants to develop a framework for analyzing future revenue needs that can be used to continually refine and update the information as circumstances change, new needs arise, or completely unpredictable events occur, such as an extreme storm. The concept is basically the same as individual household finances: analyze the level of income and regular expenses to determine whether, when, and how to purchase that new refrigerator.

The committee expects to present this framework to the Board of Selectmen at its November 3 meeting. In addition to future discussions of possible modifications to this planning tool, the Board will need to determine how and by whom it should be used for maximum benefit to the Town. □

*Barbara Lowman*

Correction: Connie Rugg Booth points out that her father bought the Southfield Store in the 1930s from Dudley Turner, not Fred Turner, as was incorrectly stated in the October article about the New Marlborough Central reunion.



# A BALD EAGLE AND MARSHMALLOWS

On October 11, the New Marlborough Land Trust sponsored a fall foliage walk into Cookson State Forest, with historian David Hosford along to explain the significance of cellar holes and a mill ruin in the middle of the forest.

Then on October 18, the Land Trust hosted a picnic at the 1000 Acre Swamp to celebrate and thank its members for their support. Hot cider and a chicken stew warmed the guests, and all enjoyed the perfectly moody fall weather, a short spit of rain, and then some sun. For some the highlight was sighting a bald eagle over the water; for others it was retrieving the long-forgotten skill of roasting marshmallows over a campfire. It was a chance to appreciate a special place in New Marlborough, available, through the efforts of the Land Trust, for all to enjoy. □



photos by Larry Burke



photo by Barry Shapiro



photo by Martha Bryan

## ONE SIZE FITS ALL

### Single-stream Recycling Is Here

By Barry R. Shapiro

“Whatever you do, don’t call it a dump,” implored Solid Waste Coordinator Roger Levine. “It’s a transfer station! And it’s now got a single-stream recyclables compactor, which is great for the town and the environment.”

Yes, single-stream recycling has arrived at our transfer station. Mr. Levine is excited and thinks we should be, too. So, what exactly is it, and why is it good?

Single-stream recycling is a system in which all paper, plastics, metals, and other recyclables are disposed of together, instead of being sorted into separate compactors. All materials are then separated at a materials recovery facility (the industry calls these facilities MRF’s, pronounced “Murfs,” which rhymes with Smurfs, if you remember your Saturday morning cartoons). These processing facilities use a series of screeners, magnets, and electronic charges to separate recyclable materials according to size, composition, or material properties and maximize the recovery of recyclable materials and the production of refuse-derived fuels.

California communities, in the 1990s, were first to use this system. By 2005, about a fifth of all U.S. communities with recycling programs had adopted it. Five years later, that number was more like two-thirds.

According to Mr. Levine, there are many advantages to the new system. “We hope that people will recycle more now that sorting is no longer required. The new rules are

quite simple and this will increase the amount recycled. Just take all of your recyclables and keep it all together. No need to sort it any more. Then just bring it to the new compactor. Single-stream system recycling is cheaper to operate since we need only one compactor, and trucking costs are reduced as well.”

Alvin Stalker, manager of the station, is enthusiastic, too. “People are very happy with it and it’s a good move. Be certain to pick up the sheet that explains what can go into the new compactor and what can’t.”

Critics of single-stream recycling argue that the process of sorting recyclables at the MRF is more expensive and that the recycling facilities can’t separate recyclables as efficiently as a system that never mixes them together to begin with. Glass, they argue, is a particular problem, because shards and bits of broken glass sometimes contaminate other recyclables like bales of paper. The rates of “residuals” — would-be recyclables that end up in landfills — are also higher for single-stream recycling systems.

Mr. Levine acknowledges these issues but asserts that the new system is in the Town’s, and the environment’s, best interests. “There are really very few disadvantages to the new system,” he noted. “The initial cost of the new compactor was \$34,000, but we expect to get that back over the next three to four years.” The new compactor, built by Marathon Enterprises in Alabama (“made in the USA,” Mr. Levine noted), arrived on October 7, and is now ready for use. □



Once the single-stream compactor was lowered onto a new concrete slab, transfer station managers Alvin Stalker, left, and Bobby Litchfield took a proprietary interest. photos by Peter Schuyten



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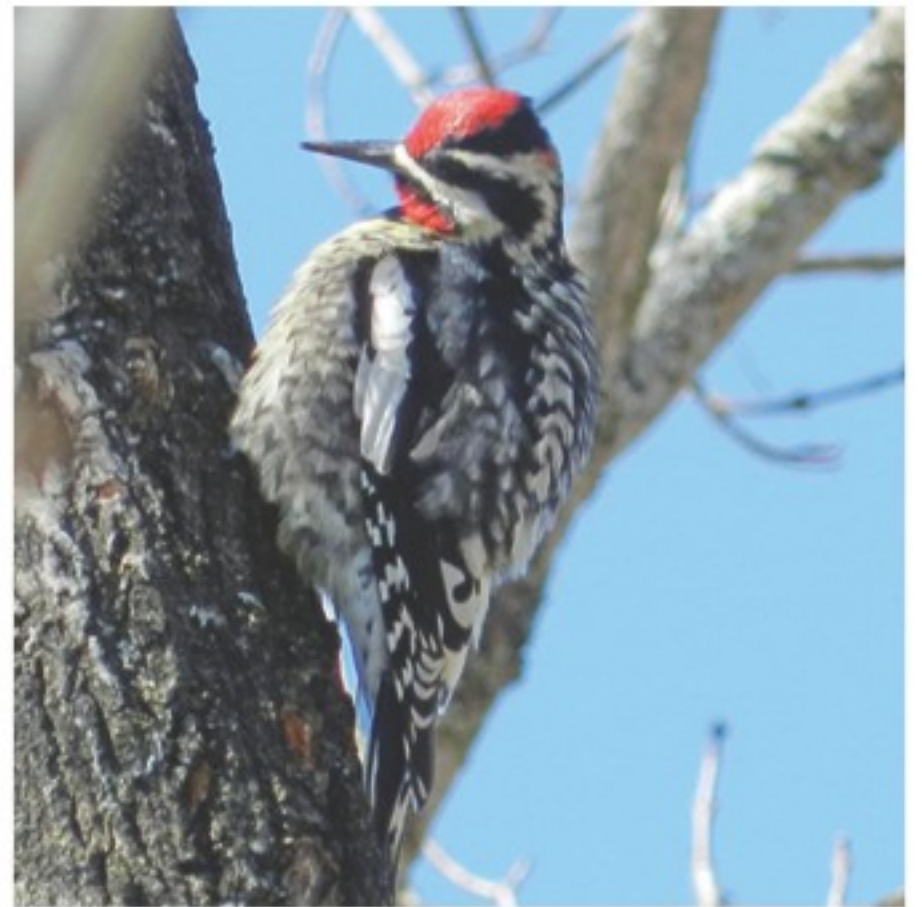
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SHEFFIELD MA

## NATURE'S PATTERNS

My camera goes everywhere with me, and often what I get is pure luck. I look for the unusual, pieces of the whole: Mshapes made by ice crystals and spider webs. Plus wildlife: a heron, a flight of Canada geese in the fall sky, a sapsucker, a hummer. — *Don Beauchamp*



## BANNED BOOKS

*Tom Sawyer, Anne Frank, and the Dictionary All Fought Censure*

by Jodi Rothe

Patrons entering the New Marlborough Library in late September were greeted by yellow, crime-scene caution tape wrapped around a pillar and draped over the front desk. “What happened?” “Are you All right?” “Is the pillar in danger of falling?” were just a few of the questions fielded by New Marlborough Town Librarian Deb O’Brien. But this was no ordinary crime scene and the victims were proudly displayed, spines straight. This was the beginning of Banned Books Week, September 21-27, celebrating the freedom to read – an exhibit sponsored by the American Library Association (ALA) on books that have shaped America and have had a profound effect on American life.

With her usual flair, Deb created a wonderful exhibit featuring books by such authors as Mark Twain, Ernest Hemingway, F. Scott Fitzgerald, John Updike, Ray Bradbury, Toni Morrison, J.D. Salinger, Harper Lee, Truman Capote, and Margaret Mitchell, among others. They ranged from fiction to non-fiction to science fiction, all with one thing in common: they had either been banned or challenged for “objectionable” content beginning in the 1800s and continuing into the present. (Note: a challenge is an attempt to remove or restrict materials from the curriculum or a library, based upon the objections of a person or group.)

Some of the books in the line-up included the Pulitzer Prize winner, *To Kill A Mockingbird* by Harper Lee, the story of a Southern family that confronts racism in their town. It was banned by a school in Minnesota for inappropriate language and by a school in Texas because it “conflicted with the values of the community.” Also proudly displayed was *The Great Gatsby* by F. Scott Fitzgerald (banned or challenged in some schools because of sexual references and language — notably “hell” and “damn.”) Because of its foul language, *For Whom the Bell Tolls* by Ernest Hemingway was declared “unmailable” by the United States Post Office shortly after publication.

*The Catcher in the Rye* by J.D. Salinger is frequently



removed from classrooms and school libraries because some folks think it’s “negative,” “obscene,” or “blasphemous.” *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee: An Indian history of the American West* by Dee Brown was banned by a school district in Wisconsin with the reasoning, “If there’s a possibility that something might be controversial, then why not eliminate it?” John Steinbeck’s *The Grapes of Wrath* was banned soon after its release in various areas for “indecent content.” It was also banned in Kern County, California, one of the areas depicted in the novel, for libelous content, when one county board member found the portraits of some (fictional) Kern County residents in Steinbeck’s book to be “none too flattering.”

Mark Twain’s iconic *The Adventure of Tom Sawyer* was banned in Concord, Massachusetts, in 1885 as “trash and suitable only for the slums.” Today it is frequently challenged for being racially insensitive. The same goes for Margaret Mitchell’s *Gone With the Wind*.

By far the biggest surprise was the inclusion of *The Diary of Anne Frank*, the account of a Jewish teenager,

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written while she was in hiding from the Nazis, that has given generations of people an insight into the life of an innocent teenager who kept the flame of hope alive during the nightmare regime of Nazi Germany. Deb explained that challenges to this book were for certain “anatomical references” mentioned in a revised publication of the book, which included Anne’s writings about the changes taking place in her teenage body. “It’s hard to imagine the thinking behind those challenges, Deb said. “If this is all they got out of this book...” and her voice trailed off.

The irony was perhaps missed by those who banned Ray Bradbury’s *Fahrenheit 451* — too many “damns” and “hells.” One of the novel’s main themes is the burning and banning of books.

*The Wizard of Oz* is also suspect for some folks. According to *The Christian Science Monitor*, Frank L. Baum’s classic story about a girl and her friends traveling through the mystical land of Oz came under fire in Detroit, where it was banned from the libraries for supporting “negativism” and having “no value” for children.

Wizards often get a bad rap. Deb O’Brien says that the Harry Potter books are the most banned in America. According to *The Huffington Post*, September 7, 2012, “Some see J.K. Rowling’s Harry Potter books as wonderful stories that teach that love is the most powerful magic of

all and that it’s always right to stand up for your friends. Others, however, see a series marred by depictions of sorcery and witchcraft that are inappropriate for Christian readers.”

Martin Hanford’s children’s book series, which invites readers to hunt for Waldo, the man in a red-and-white-striped shirt, wherever he may go, met with controversy in schools in Michigan and New York when readers objected to some of the characters depicted in crowds, including a topless woman on a beach. Asked if the library carries *Where’s Waldo*, Deb O’Brien says it doesn’t, “but only because no one seems that interested in finding Waldo anymore.”

Even the Dictionary hasn’t escaped scrutiny. As reported by *The Christian Science Monitor*, “*The Merriam-Webster dictionary* has been banned in California from libraries because of its sexual definitions.”

Banned Books Week, held every year during the last week of September, celebrates our First Amendment right to free speech. Says the Library Bill of Rights: “Books and other library resources should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all people of the community the library serves.” At least in New Marlborough, the bell isn’t tolling for our books, and thanks to Deb O’Brien, we’ve got that first amendment protected. □

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# Neighbors



On Saturday, September 27, under a brilliant blue sky and in the presence of nearly 200 friends and family, **Kate Feuer and Joseph Burke** were joined in marriage. The ceremony took place on the crest of the hill above the home of Joseph's parents, **Jane and Larry Burke**, on South Sandisfield Road. The bride was given away by her parents, **Bob and Mary Feuer**, of Stockbridge. Among the guests who attended the wedding, which was followed by dinner and dancing that went into the wee hours, was a contingent of Feuer relatives from Homer, Alaska, as well as Larry's brother, who, along with his wife, came all the way from Quito, Ecuador.

Also in attendance, and much the center of attention, was the happy couple's **five-month-old daughter Aoife**, quite the standout in a dress made for the occasion by her Grandma Jane.



photo by Larry Burke

The Burke family

**Alex Holman**, of Mill River, shares a vivid memory: "Between 1929 and 1940, I attended Camp Scatico in Elizaville, New York. Each year a group of campers and counsellors made a one-day trip away from camp. Seventy-seven years ago that trip was to the magical opening night, the very first performance, at The Shed, at Tanglewood. In those days there were in-ground spotlights shining on many of the trees in the huge lawn surrounding The Shed. Ladies wore evening dresses, and many of the men were in white dinner jackets. Serge Koussevitsky conducted the Boston Symphony Orchestra in Beethoven's Ninth Symphony."

Recently, **Chris Hobbie** of Mill River journeyed for ten days with **Barbara Winters**, formerly of Mill River, in Poland, where Barbara grew up during World War II. One of the high points was finding the house of her grandparents in Krakow, where she and her family stayed during the war. The family was confined to two rooms, while the rest of the large house was occupied by German soldiers. The elegant home has since been restored and is now the Ukrainian consulate.

Another memorable moment was when Chris and Barbara retraced the steps she took walking home from her school. Barbara noted that the area had changed so much that had she not remembered the city so clearly, she wouldn't have located her grandparents' home. She does have some distant relatives still in the area, and they gave her a very enthusiastic, warm welcome.



photo by David Lowman

Alex and Adele Holman



Barbara Winters, right, with Chris Hobbie, center, visits a relative.

photos by Don Beauchamp



The Tinker Family



**Don Beauchamp**, of Clayton, reports that the second annual Tinker Family Reunion was held on October 12 at the Tinker farm in Clayton. Thirty-seven offspring of Joseph and Teddy Tinker were in attendance on a beautiful fall day, including the eldest family member **Jeannie Overstreet**, age ninety-six, shown here with her nephew, **Pete Dworak**. The family history in Clayton began in 1905 when **Joseph Tinker**, with his wife Harriet, arrived to run the clay pit operation.

**Levi Edelman**, eighteen, the son of Southfield resident **Dave Edelman**, is starting Quinnipiac University in Hamden, Connecticut, this fall and plans to major in engineering. He was in the top eight percent of 17,000 applicants to the entering class, reports a proud dad. □

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



## OUR WILDLIFE NEIGHBORS

photo by Don Beauchamp



On September 29, **Don Beauchamp**, of Clayton, writes: Two days ago, on a bike trip, I saw two **sand-hill cranes** in a cornfield. Very shy birds. Above the cornfield, this **red-tailed hawk** was sailing. Yesterday, I got close enough to take a shot of a **female wood duck**.

On October 4, Don adds: Yesterday I was out in the swamp. Nothing was moving, when suddenly a **wood duck** flew out of a tree and landed in the water. Yes, wood duck do roost in trees.

On October 8, **Charlie Parton**, of New Marlborough village, writes: About two weeks ago a **pair of wood ducks** were down in the pond at the foot of Red Fox Road. A couple of days later there was another pair, and in the past three days the rick – to use a highland Scottish term for a large number – contained ten or more, converging for their fall rendezvous and second-annual Selection of Mates Party. They line up on the large branch of a fallen tree that crosses the upper part of the pond, and look for all the world like bumps on a log.

On October 10, **Scottie Mills**, of New Marlborough village, writes: a **little golden crowned kinglet** (three inches) sat on my doorstep yesterday. Perhaps she was stunned by hitting the window, but she appeared unhurt and just watched me quizzically for several minutes. I was only a foot away so I could see her beautiful markings and coloration. **Milo** — my five-year-old grandson — was able to touch her gently and was very impressed by the softness of her feathers, before she flew up to a nearby branch in a very able-bodied way.

On October 13, **Janice Boults**, of Cross to Canaan Valley Road, writes: We have had **bobcat and kitten** sightings! I have a blurry picture of a big one in my front yard. A few days after I took the photo, **Arlyn Hoberman** came upon the momma and kitten right in the road in front of our house, but not quick enough to get a picture.

There was also, purportedly, a **mountain-lion** sighting at Haystack Mountain, and the person actually got pictures, but I am not convinced it is a mountain lion, as I can see stripes where the tail is, and lions do not have those stripes... but maybe. Other than that, we have had the usual small wildlife, and two big **turkey vultures** that hang around our yard. I have some adorable **chipmunk** friends, too.

On October 13, **Scottie Mills**, of New Marlborough village, writes: Coming home late at night, under the bright light of the full moon, I saw something move across the path on my stone steps. It was a large, roughly seven-inch **spotted salamander**, black with yellow spots, moving along at a jaunty pace. I have never seen one this time of year. Don't know where he was coming from or where he was going. If I weren't so delighted to have seen him I might have thought it a bad omen, a slightly creepy thing, having something black cross your path by moonlight?

Also, **my grandson Jack** and I saw a very healthy-looking, small, fluffy, tan **coyote** with a black-tipped tail nonchalantly walking across Adsit Crosby Road right in front of our car. It stood in the woods beside the road looking at us without the slightest bit of trepidation. Might this be the same one several other people have seen around town?

On October 14, **Elizabeth Goodman**, who lives in Mill River, writes: At about 10:30 in the morning on September 23, my husband, Don, and I were driving the truck on Clayton Mill River Road, delivering a few pumpkins to the Mill River Store when a **crow-sized hawk** flew right into the windshield. We pulled over immediately and ran to the hawk, who was lying feet up to the sky on its back in the middle of the road. Not sure if he was dying or merely stunned, I wrapped him up in my over-shirt, covering his head, and brought him back to the truck. We continued on our errand, all the while trying to decide what our next move should be with the hawk.

After we dropped off the pumpkins, we decided to bring the hawk back to approximately the same place where we had found him and see if he had recovered. We walked a little way into the trees towards the river and placed him on the ground. As soon as I had uncovered his head, the hawk stood up and spread his wings very dramatically. He turned all around, eying his surroundings and puffing himself up with wings spread for a few moments, when suddenly he flew off and up into a nearby tree. We observed him for a moment or two to make sure he seemed okay and then drove on our way. I think he may have been a **broad-winged hawk**.

On October 19, **Richard Migot** of Great Barrington writes: Yesterday, I saw this **bald eagle** in Hartsville on the Hartsville Mill River Road. □

Compiled by Jon Swan, joncswan@gmail.com



photos by Don Beauchamp

photo by Janice Boults



photo by Richard Migot

## CREATIVE SPACES

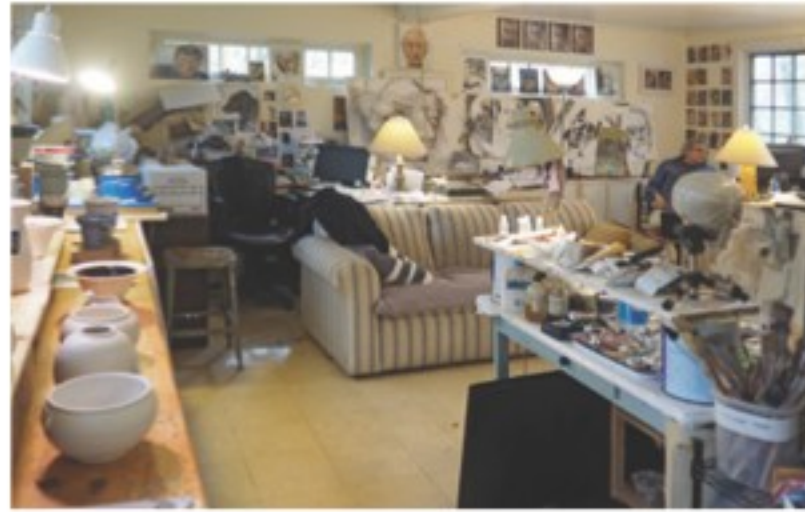
### *A Tour of New Marlborough Studios Turns Brilliant*

By Barry R. Shapiro

The autumn foliage was muted by gray light and mist at midday on October 11, when Marjorie and I set off on the New Marlborough Open Studios tour, sponsored by the New Marlborough Cultural Council. Come along with us and see just how this overcast Saturday became transformed into one of artistic brilliance.

Following the map provided by the Council, we drove into Hartsville to the shared studio of husband and wife, Jim Singelis and Linda Skipper. The studio is located in a charming outbuilding next to their residence, right along the Konkapot. We were welcomed by Linda and Jim into a studio as warm as they were. Jim's paintings, most of haunting and somewhat enigmatic faces, adorned the walls, and Linda's simple, peaceful, and beautifully proportioned pottery was displayed on tables. Linda, who was the head scenic artist on the long-running television show *Law and Order*, cheerfully explained to Marjorie how she uses her potter's wheel, while I discussed Jim's art. Jim, a retired scenic designer, has no formal training and began drawing and painting when he retired about five years ago. "I've got a face fetish," he said, "and sometimes I don't know when I first start painting whether the face will be male or female."

Impressed by Jim and Linda's work and now feeling a bit less chilled, we drove to Ann Getsinger's studio in New Marlborough village. Parking in a field, we were greeted by the smell of ripe apples from her trees and, very briefly, a sunbeam piercing the clouds to the west. Stepping into Ann's studio, we were instantly immersed in the beautiful colors and clean composition of her



From top, the studios of: Jim Singelis and Linda Skipper, Ann Getsinger, Jennifer Ellwood, and Andrew Zdziarski.  
Photos by Barry R. Shapiro

works, which combine realism, playfulness, and bits of surrealism. We said hello to Charles Jones who was sitting, very warm and contented, next to a space heater while his wife, Patricia Hardyman, and Martha Bryan perused Ann's works. "I've been painting my entire life and I've always been into making things," said Ann. "My art is a very exciting process that keeps evolving."

Downing a delicious slice of lemon cake and declining Ann's kind offer of apple cider, we pressed on, driving down New Marlborough Hill Road to the home of Jennifer Ellwood, a relative newcomer (about two years) to our town. As the sun peeked out briefly once again, Marjorie and I were enthusiastically greeted by Jennifer, a former electrical engineer who at one time worked for Polaroid. Jennifer is now a painter and psychotherapist, weekending in New Marlborough from Boston. "I find the intensity of my psychotherapy and my painting a great counterbalance," she said. She studied at the School of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, the University of Fine Arts in Hanoi, Vietnam, and privately. Her large abstractions had an affinity with the dramatic living room views in the house she shares with her husband, Richard.

Now it was off to Southfield where our first stop was the home and studio of Andrew Zdziarski. Andrew's work was dramatically different from the work we had seen thus far. He kindly showed us around his basement studio and described his paintings as psychological in nature, exploring

dreams, memories, and anxieties. "I studied art history, but I'm largely a self-taught painter," he said. He invited us upstairs, where we viewed larger works hanging



throughout his home, meeting his wife and two young sons, who, both Marjorie and I noted, had the neatest boys' room we had seen in quite some time.

Passing up a cappuccino at the Southfield Store, we arrived at the Whip Shop, where we said a quick hello to David and Maureen Hosford and Ned Odegaard. We then visited the stunning creations at Peter Murkett's New England Modern. Peter, who says he has been working in wood "forever," crafts furniture, lamps, cutting boards, beds, tables, and chairs, all from domestic hardwood and pine. The pieces on display and his expansive workroom reflect his commitment to high quality and creativity. "I'm working on a remodeling of the barroom at the Old Inn on the Green, including new bar stools," he said, adding, "You can't get much more local than that!"

Shawn Fields's studio was just upstairs from Peter's, in another of the Whip Shop's generous spaces. Shawn, who studied at the School of Visual Arts and received a graduate degree from the New York Academy of Art, showed us the engaging representational art on display in his studio, telling us that he now makes his work available in less costly giclee prints. His works often feature members of his family. In response to Marjorie's question about selling works of art depicting his children, Shawn smiled and said, "I don't get too attached to them, even if they contain my children. I'm just happy to sell them!" We then walked across the courtyard and looked at Shawn's paintings in an outbuilding where we were shown around by Shawn and Kenzie Fields's ten-year-old son, Odie.

The end of the studio-tour day was approaching, so we raced over to Flying Cloud Institute on the South Sandisfield Road to see Jane Burke and the Institute's fine ceramics exhibit. Jane's husband, Larry, along with the Burkes' two dogs, Dora and the new puppy, Lionel, greeted us, with Lionel already knowing not



From top, the studios of: Peter Murkett, Shawn Fields, Jane Burke, and Jonathan Prince.

Photos by Barry R. Shapiro

to jump on guests. We joined a group including Lee Backer, Joan Elmer, and Rick and Catherine Silverblatt to hear Jane explain her method of teaching science and math to children using art, such as ceramics. "Larry came up with the acronym, SMArt, which stands for science meets art, and it really captures what we do!" Our next and final stop was at the 7,000-square-foot fabrication facility and gallery room of Jonathan Prince near the southern end of the Clayton Mill River Road. The size of his work and his enormous studio dwarfed everything we had seen before. Jonathan took us outside to view a thirteen-and-a-half-foot tall sculpture, part of his torn steel series, which was formerly on display in the sculpture garden of the IBM building in New York City. We toured his facility, located in his converted barn with twenty-seven-foot ceilings, where he discussed how his pieces move from conception to completion. Jonathan explained that he had always sculpted but started his career in medicine before moving on to work in movies and then an internet-based business before turning full time to sculpture ten years ago. "Our work pushes the limit as to what can be done by the human hand," he noted, "and explores the tension between the whole and the broken, the perfect and the organic." By this time the day had transformed itself. The sun was out, the air had warmed, the sky was virtually cloudless and the leaves had recaptured their vibrancy. As we pulled into our driveway, Marjorie and I reflected on the talent and creativity on display in our neighbors' studios and their kindness and openness in making their studios available to all of us. Mixed with the brilliance of our local landscape, our day had indeed morphed from its overcast, chilly beginning to one of profound appreciation and warmth for New Marlborough and the people who inhabit it. □

# THE LOG

## POLICE DEPARTMENT (SELECTED ENTRIES)

- |          |            |   |          |            |   |
|----------|------------|---|----------|------------|---|
| Sept. 1  | 5:39 p.m.  | Caller complains of alcohol and beverage bottles left at Umpachene Falls Park       | Sept 14  | 12:40 p.m. | Lake Buel resident requests radar to catch "Connecticut vehicles" speeding past Arroyo Way  |
| Sept. 5  | 6:50 p.m.  | Assisted in Sheffield domestic disturbance  | Sept. 15 | 5:43 p.m.  | Norfolk Road resident reports items missing from her house the week after Labor Day   |
| Sept. 6  | 7:20 p.m.  | Cows, loose on Route 57, herded back onto pasture, electric fence fixed temporarily | Sept. 16 | 9:15 a.m.  | Conducted radar near Arroyo Way. No violations  |
| Sept. 8  | 7:09 a.m.  | Cows loose on Route 57  | Sept. 18 | 3:49 p.m.  | Father of twelve-year-old reports his son, on his way home from his school-bus stop, was invited to get into a vehicle. BOLO (be on the lookout) issued for vehicle |
|          | 10:23 a.m. | Report that propane tank had been unilaterally disconnected by dealer               | Sept 20  | 7:31 a.m.  | Cows loose on Route 57  |
| Sept. 9  | 3:30 p.m.  | Caller reports two signs stolen from driveways on Route 57                          |          | 11:26      | A dozen pigs loose at the intersection of Routes 23 and 57  |
| Sept. 10 | 6:33 p.m.  | Horse loose on Shunpike Turnpike  | Sept. 27 | 7:32 p.m.  | Caller reports leather purse depicting Betty Boop on a motorcycle lost on Knight Road   |
| Sept. 11 | 8:21 a.m.  | Hay bale fallen onto Hatchery Road  | Sept. 29 | 10:08 a.m. | False burglar alarm on Canaan Southfield Road; set off by workers   |
|          | 3:29 p.m.  | Telephone wires down on Canaan Southfield Road                                      |          | 3:30 p.m.  | Mill River Southfield Road resident reports theft of a full tank of gas from his pickup truck and possibly his grandson's Xbox from his house                       |
| Sept 12  | 1:20 p.m.  | Telephone wires down on County Road   |          |            |   |
|          | 3:25 p.m.  | Tree leaning on power line on Knight Road   |          |            |   |
| Sept 13  | 6:16 p.m.  | Stray cat shows up at a residence on Lake Road. Caller leaves his number            |          |            |   |
|          | 6:27 p.m.  | Assisted in freeing car caught in the mud on New Marlborough Branch Road            |          |            |   |

## FIRE AND RESCUE

- |          |            |  |
|----------|------------|--|
| Sept. 3  | 5:18 a.m.  | Hadsell Street fire alarm  |
| Sept. 9  | 11:59 a.m. | Hartsville resident taken to Fairview Hospital after experiencing medication-induced hallucinations            |
| Sept 10  | 1:42 a.m.  | Assist in restoring power to oxygen tank apparatus on Norfolk Road   |
| Sept. 16 | 5:21 p.m.  | Transported Rhoades and Bailey Road patient with breathing problems and flu-like symptoms to Fairview Hospital |
| Sept. 19 | 7:50 a.m.  | Transport Canaan Southfield Road cancer patient to Fairview Hospital   |
| Sept. 22 |            | Assist in clearing motor vehicle accident at corner of Alum Hill and Shunpike Roads                            |
| Sept. 23 | 4:25 p.m.  | Extinguished vehicle fire caused by welding on Hartsville New Marlborough Road                                 |

\*\*\*\*\*  
**POGO SAYS:**  
**IF YOU CAN'T VOTE MY WAY**



**VOTE  
 ANYWAY!  
 BUT VOTE!**

\*\*\*\*\*  
**NOVEMBER 4TH**

## FAREWELL, BOB ...

“The day has finally come. I am retiring September 30th. It has been my pleasure to serve you. Sincerely, Bob”

To the end, as this terse message appearing in postal boxes on September 26 attests, the postmaster of the Southfield Post Office remained a man of few words. After twenty-three years of service with the United States Postal Service and nine in Southfield, Bob Winterbottom, sixty-seven, has indeed retired.

A native of New Marlborough, Bob was raised by his mother, Dolly, and his late father, Bob Sr., in the Clayton section of town. After graduating from Mount Everett High School, he enlisted in the United States Army and served in Vietnam during that prolonged conflict as the crew chief of a gunship (an armed helicopter). He was awarded the Purple Heart and returned to Berkshire County after leaving the army in 1969.

For the next twenty years, Bob worked as a carpenter and general contractor until the injuries he suffered in Vietnam forced him to pursue a less physically taxing occupation. He then joined the Postal Service.

## ... AND HELLO ??

As Bob Winterbottom retires, the Postal Service has more or less concurrently reduced the service hours of the Southfield Post Office. On November 1, new hours of service will be 9:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. and 1:30 to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday, and 9:00 a.m. to noon on Saturday. Bob’s permanent replacement is not yet known, but Pam Gillette will at least be the temporary replacement. Whoever gets the permanent job will not be titled “Postmaster” but will have a lesser title and lesser remuneration and benefits.

A USPS letter addressed to Postal Customer,



photo by David Lowman

Bob’s wife of forty-two years, Mimi, recently retired from her position at Berkshire Bank, thus inspiring Bob to seriously consider retirement. Now he’ll be able to more actively pursue his love of ocean fishing and deer hunting. Although he and Mimi have no plans to move away from their home in Great Barrington, Bob allows as how a Florida winter vacation of six or seven weeks might be in the offing for the two of them. □

Southfield, MA 01259, and dated September 29, assures all that “current Saturday window service hours will not be reduced and access to delivery receptacles will not change as a result of the POST Plan realignment of weekday window service hours. Customers will have access to their mail receptacles 24 hours a day...” This last is curious since most of the “receptacles,” i.e. mailboxes, are inside the post office, which is currently locked at night. □

David Lowman

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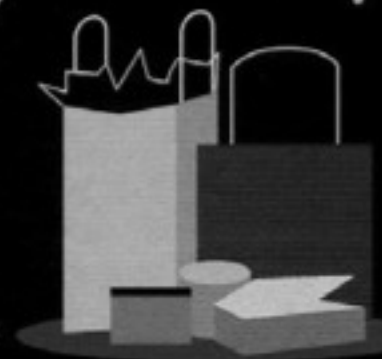
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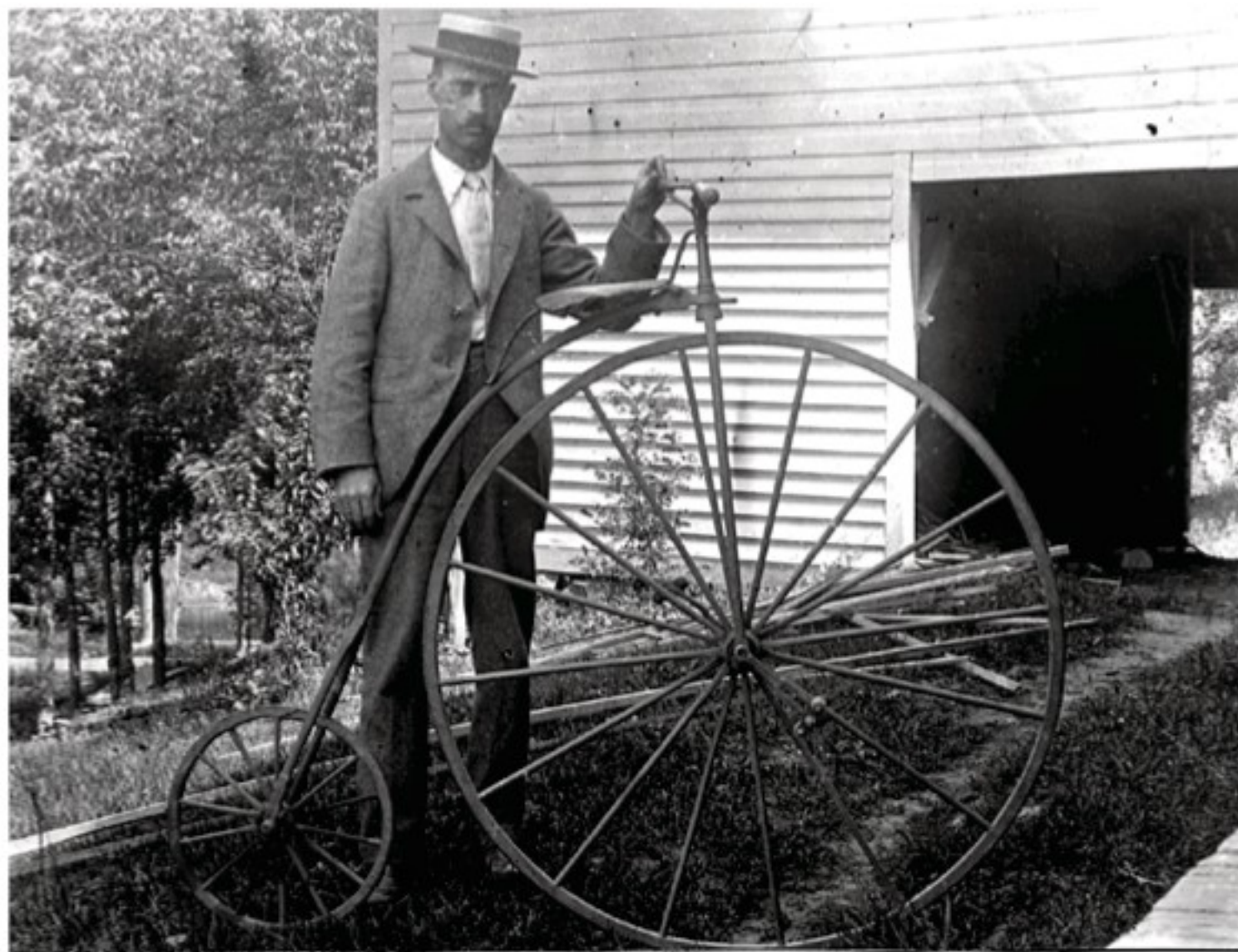
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## OUT OF THE PAST

Harry Sisson, grandfather of John Sisson, was mayor of Pittsfield in 1903-04 and a representative to the statehouse from 1929 to 1938. According to John, he never campaigned, saying, "If they want me, they'll vote for me." Legend has it he built the bicycle pictured here. It doesn't tell us if he was fool enough to have ridden it. □



## NEEDED: A NEW ROOF FOR THE HIGH SCHOOL

While the Capital Planning Committee assesses the Town's own big-ticket items, the Town, as a member of the Southern Berkshire Regional School District, also is facing major repairs at the District's Sheffield campus.

The District has applied to the commonwealth's School Building Authority's (SBA) Accelerated Repair Program to replace the boilers and roof at Mt. Everett High School. The current roof, which has outlived its warranty, is about twenty-two years old. Additionally, it no longer meets current building codes, particularly concerning insulation. The school's three oil-burning boilers are all up for replacement. The District has received approval for a so-called SAPPHIRE grant from the Mass DOE of \$350,000, which would pay for new boilers that use renewable energy. An energy-efficiency study DOE conducted and paid for determined that geothermal heating was too costly and recommended biomass (pellet) boilers. The current plan is for the district to purchase one large and one small pellet boiler and a new fossil fuel boiler as back-up.

A new roof could cost close to \$6 million. Designs were discussed with representatives from all five of the District's boards of selectmen and finance committees on October 15, with some voicing interest in a roof that was even more energy efficient than the one the District proposed — thicker insulation in the roof and a PVC membrane that would be strong enough should

the school ever wish to install solar panels.

A final cost estimate will be put forward by December 3, with the request that each of the District's five towns hold a Special Town Meeting early next year to approve financing for it. Based on a total cost of \$6 million, with the state paying \$350,000 for the boilers and 39.4 percent of the cost of a new roof, the district would need to come up with \$3,423,900, of which New Marlborough's share would be \$684,780. If the financing is approved, the renovation would start next summer. □

*Joe Poindexter*

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## NEW ACQUISITIONS AT THE LIBRARY

### Adult Fiction

*Unexpectedly Milo*, by Matthew Dicks

*Burn*, by James Patterson

*Gutenberg's Apprentice*, by Alix Christie

*The Lost Key*, by Catherine Coulter

*The Wonder of All Things*, by Jason Mott

*The Perfect Witness*, by Iris Johansen

### Adult Nonfiction

*Killing Patton: The Strange Death of World War II's Most Audacious General*, by Bill O'Reilly

### Children's Fiction

*This Book Just Ate My Dog*, by Richard Byrne

*Bear Sees Color*, by Karma Wilson

*Two*, by Kathryn Otoshi

*Sebastian and the Balloon*, by Philip C. Stead

*The Blood of Olympus*, by Rick Riordan

### Children's Nonfiction

*Sequoia*, by Tony Johnston

*LEGO Ninjago, the Visual Dictionary (Masters of Spinjitzu)*, by Hannah Dolan



### WINTER HOURS BEGIN NOVEMBER 1ST

Mon., Wed., Sat.: 10 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.

Tues. & Thurs.: 1:30 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.

Fri. 1:30 – 7:30 p.m.

The library will be closed  
November 27 and 28.

The New Marlborough  
Friends of the Library will hold their  
annual Pre-Thanksgiving

### Pie Sale

November 22 at 9:00 a.m.

(413) 229-2544

Free Estimates



### ► Book Discussion Group

Please join us at 10:00 a.m. on November 8 at the New Marlborough Library for coffee, bagels, and a lively discussion of the book, *The Night Circus*, by Erin Morgenstern.

## 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;  
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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 December, 2014.

All copy must be submitted no later than November 15.

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

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