



New Marlborough 5 Village News

VOL XXII
NO 7

November 2021

Clayton • Hartsville • Mill River • New Marlborough • Southfield



MOOSE: THE UNGULATE AMONG US

By Barry R. Shapiro

Question: What do Meryl Streep and a moose have in common?

Answer: Both have been spotted in and around New Marlborough (Ms. Streep at Guido's fish counter, the moose dashing along roads in town), and, while seeing the actress is unquestionably a pretty cool thing, there appears to be much more excitement in seeing a moose than watching Ms. Streep order a pound of Faroe Island salmon.

"It looked positively prehistoric in my front yard," said one wide-eyed Cagney Hill Road resident.

"It loomed large over my car," said another.

"We were convinced ... to buy a larger car because we would have been destroyed had we hit the moose," added another resident.

"It was as tall as a bus," marveled one stunned driver on Route 57.

There's a good reason for such wonderment given the size of these ungulates (any hooved animal is an ungulate).

Encounters with moose, while still unusual in the Berkshires, are becoming more common, with some of these sightings occurring in New Marlborough and surrounding towns. Moose were hunted to near extinction in Massachusetts during the colonial era and the 19th century. Their population, however, rebounded in the early 1900s when the state began to regulate hunting. Today, hunting moose in Massachusetts is illegal.

Although many sightings go unreported to officials, there have been reports filed in neighboring towns of a moose hit by a car (West Stockbridge, September 2016), a female and two juveniles seen crossing the road (Sandisfield, September 2017), an injured moose (Tyringham, June 2018), a moose being euthanized following a motor vehicle accident (Becket, April 2018), and one moose spotted in downtown Pittsfield (October 2020). Moose love to move about at night and are sometimes taken by surprise when the sun comes up and they find themselves in an urban area.

According to wildlife biologist David Stainbrook of the Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife, "It was a slow progression from Maine to New Hampshire to Vermont, and then [moose] started to show up in Massachusetts in the 1960s and 1970s. But it wasn't really until the late 1990s and early 2000s that we started having moose year-round." While Massachusetts is at the southern end of the New England moose population, says Mr. Stainbrook, some have even been spotted in Connecticut.

Moose (that's both the singular and plural form) are the largest of all the deer species in North America, with an average adult bull (male) moose weighing 1,000 pounds and standing over six feet tall at its shoulders on spindly three- to four-foot-long legs.

As if their height didn't make them imposing enough, males also sport huge antlers, often a stunning six feet wide. Add to this the elongated, horse-like head, with its distinctive flap of skin that sways under its throat, known as a bell, and a muzzle that



A visitor to Route 57

photo by John Schreiber

INSIDE:

Harvest Festival	3
David Lowman.....	4
Board of Selectmen	6
Another Mill River	8
Land Trust.....	9
Whose Land is Our Land?	10
Erika Eigen	12
Recipe of the Month.....	14
Mushroom Hunting	15
Wildlife Neighbors.....	16
The Log	18
School Report.....	20
Eagle Fund	21
Library News	22

continued

Moose, continued

dangles over its chin, and there's little surprise that this creature towers over and fascinates anyone lucky enough to see one.

They also, no surprise here, eat an awful lot, consuming forty to sixty pounds of browse daily. Because they are so tall, they prefer to browse higher grasses and shrubs — lowering their heads to ground level can be difficult. In winter, they seek out buds, twigs, needle-bearing trees, shrubs, pinecones, and hardwood bark for sustenance. When necessary, they will scrape snow with their hooves to clear areas for browsing on moss and lichen. The hooves also act as snowshoes for support in soft snow and on muddy or marshy ground.

Signs that a moose has been nibbling on your trees include bark being stripped off (moose, like deer, lack upper front teeth). In fact, the word "moose" comes from the Algonquin word "moosu," which means "he strips off," apparently referencing the animal's bark-peeling tendency. Moose mealtime favorites are willow, aspen, maple, oak, fir, and viburnum.

When the ice melts, these ungulates seek out local waterways and wetlands, feeding on sodium rich aquatic plants, both above and below the water, and using the water to escape from mosquitos and flies (their tails are too short to shoo away insects). Moose love the water and, despite their staggering bulk, are good swimmers. They have been seen paddling several miles at a time and will even stay under water for more than half a minute (their nose is equipped with fatty pads and muscles that close the nostrils when exposed to water pressure).

Although they may look gangly and awkward, they can move quickly and nimbly on land, running at speeds of up to thirty-five miles an hour over short distances, and trotting steadily at twenty miles an hour. In other words, don't think that you can outrun one.

In September and October, the moose mating season, bull moose bellow loudly to attract mates. The usually solitary bulls may come together at this time to battle with their antlers over the available cow moose. The cow is apparently attracted to the bull by the size of its antlers (the more symmetrical, the healthier the animal). After mating, the two sexes go their separate ways until the following year and, although they may occasionally feed in the same grounds, they tend to ignore each other. Males drop their antlers, which by now have served their purpose of attracting a mate and battling other suitors, to conserve energy for the winter. A new set will be grown in the spring and reach full size in three to five months, making them one of the fastest growing animal organs.

All this mating activity usually results in the birth of one or two calves in the spring — each weighing some thirty pounds. Calves grow quickly (they will weigh almost 300 pounds by the fall) and can outrun a person by the time they are just five days old. Young moose typically stay with their mother until the following

spring, when she shoos them away so she can calve and start the mothering process all over again.

In 2019, Biologist Stainbrook estimated that there were approximately 1,000 moose in the Commonwealth (almost all in central and western Massachusetts). Unlike northern New England states where there are roughly four moose per square mile, there is about one moose here for every two square miles.

Some other Massachusetts moose material for your musing:

- Their typical range is eighteen to twenty square miles.
- They are most active at dawn and dusk.
- They are extremely dangerous to drivers, given their seeming obliviousness to vehicles, their height, and their dark bodies, which make them harder to see at night, and the fact that headlights won't reflect off their eyes, which are above the range of headlights.
- They love young forests, so newly cleared land with new growth is quite attractive to them.
- Their keen sense of smell helps them locate food, water, and even a potential mate.
- Given their enormous size, they have few natural predators, which may explain their boldness and general lack of fear of humans. Nonetheless, moose are often undone by vehicle collisions, winter tick, brain worm (a fatal parasite carried by white-tail deer), heat stress, and other issues, some of which have been made worse by climate change.

So, make no mistake about it. Moose are indeed among us and there are likely to be more moose meet ups every year. As this issue was going to press, still another moose was spotted on East Hill Road.

If you are lucky enough to see one, stay a respectful distance away, don't approach or pursue it (you might chase it into traffic, or the moose could become aggressive), and keep your dogs leashed. Additionally, if the moose has calves with it, don't get between the mother and her offspring, and, particularly in the fall breeding season, drive carefully, for your sake as well as your moose neighbor (no one wants to meet a moose as it crashes through a front windshield with often fatal results for everyone involved).

Finally, if you have a camera when you see a moose, please send a photo or news of your sighting to our Wildlife Neighbors column. You will get top billing and even more acclaim than a sighting of a renowned actress buying salmon! □





photos by Larry Burke

Fun and Games on The Farm: Mild weather, a few sprinkles notwithstanding, prevailed throughout The Farm New Marlborough's Harvest Festival on October 10, much to the satisfaction of the many happy visitors to the event. Hayrides personally conducted by farmer-in-chief Tom Brazie, Irish dancing, contests involving farm-related skills, beer-tasting, homemade food, and a plentitude of crafts and collectibles made for a highly successful and enjoyable afternoon. Chances seem pretty high that the Harvest Festival at The Farm will become a popular yearly occurrence.

Local and organic fresh greens, produce, eggs, meats, milk, and shelves of groceries await at the newly reopened store. Stop by and say hello!

Open daily from 7 AM to 7 PM

shop@themillrivergeneralstore.com 413-229-2663

MAHAIWE & CHIROPRACTIC & HEALTH SERVICES

Dr. Lawrence Bronstein
Chiropractor, Board Certified Nutritionist

15 Mahaiwe Street
Great Barrington, MA 01230

(413) 528-2948
www.DrBronstein.com

DAVID LOWMAN

David Lowman passed away suddenly on October 8 at his home in Southfield at age eighty-nine. He leaves behind his wife, Barbara, sons John and Joshua and their wives, two granddaughters, and his beloved spaniel, Virgil.

David was born on December 2, 1931, in New Castle, Pennsylvania, and grew up in Cleveland Heights, Ohio. He graduated from Bowling Green State University with a degree in business, and later received a masters degree from the University of Michigan in English and education. He taught English for several years in Fontana and Claremont, California, where he started a union affiliated with the American Federation of Teachers. In 1971 he moved to Lansing, Michigan, and for nine years worked in the Michigan Department of Education as a consultant in a variety of programs.

In 1980 he and Barbara purchased the Southfield General Store and moved here to pursue a radically different lifestyle. They spent the next twenty-one years cutting meat, pumping gas, making sandwiches, and trying to keep the store as a welcoming center for the village. They also delivered a rural mail route out of the Southfield Post Office for thirty years.

David served as a New Marlborough selectman for twelve years, was one of the founders of *The New Marlborough 5 Village News* in April 2000, and received New Marlborough's Elihu Burritt Award for Community Service in 2015. For forty-one years he actively enjoyed being part of the New Marlborough community, and happily contributed to it in many ways. A memorial service will be held December 4 at the Southfield Church.

David's sons recall meaningful times together: **Joshua** writes: "He took me to Cedar Point, just the two of us, when I was six or seven. We rode the Mine Ride together. Lots of kids never have that link of one-on-one time with their fathers. It was awesome.

"Another memory that stands out was when he and I would go to the VFW in Great Barrington to play pool. They had a little bar there and a pool table. The patrons were old World War II vets who sat around playing cards and saying things like 'that was lower than whale s...t.' We used to say that to each other a lot ... it made us laugh."

Son **John** enjoyed the frequent analyses of various



David Lowman

University of Michigan athletic teams and tips from David on Triple Crown horse races. David was a serious baseball fan, a faithful New York Mets fan, and enjoyed their conversations about the fates of the Mets, the Detroit Tigers, and many other teams throughout the season. He and David had an ongoing cribbage battle for fifty years. John pointed out that David never did pay him the \$1.79 he owed.

Larry Burke recalls his long-time friendship: "David and Barbara arrived in New Marlborough in 1980, at about the same time as Jane and I, and David and I joined the Fire Department as volunteer firefighters shortly thereafter. So, between my frequent visits to the

Southfield Store and weekly training at the firehouse, we became friends. In those days, it was fun to stop by the store to shoot the breeze about sports or goings-on in town while David sliced meat behind the counter – at that point a newly-acquired skill for him.

"David's connection to and concern for his adopted hometown grew quickly, and, by the mid-1980s, he found himself engaged enough in town governance to run for a position on the Board of Selectmen, leading to a twelve-year stint in that largely thankless but crucial role. In 2006, after an eleven-year hiatus, and at the urging of friends and supporters, David ran again, and was elected to yet another three-year term, proving himself no slouch in the glutton-for-punishment department.

"In 2000, David and Barbara joined in with a few others, myself included, to begin publication of this very newspaper, the *5 Village News*. David served as treasurer of the organization until ill health caught up with him a year or so ago, and, over the years, he wrote articles that revealed the wry, trenchant wit that was so much a part of his personality. The monthly staff meetings over these last twenty-plus years were always made better by David's humorous and keen observations, something I and my fellow NM5VN staff members will greatly miss."

Joe Poindexter first met David at the Southfield General Store, where David, writes Joe, "offered meat that was the equal of the best we could find in New York City. Better yet were the baseball cards, an irresistible source of fascination for our two sons.

"It was some years later when an essential element

of David's personality was revealed to me. I had become interested in a faded Mobil Oil sign hanging inside the store after David and Barbara had sold it and offered to write about it for the *5 Village News*. While they were still proprietors, the Lowmans had switched gas suppliers from Mobil to an independent. Mobil ordered David to take down its sign and threatened 'appropriate action in the courts' if he did not. In a true David vs. Goliath moment that speaks volumes about David, he answered with a lengthy letter that ended, '... it's your sign ... if you want it removed, come and get it.' Mobil not only removed the sign but rehung it after over-painting the words 'Southfield Store' on it in a handsome script of the Lowmans' choosing.

"On the other hand, with friends and allies David was cordial and generous, and he served an excellent Scotch. We shared similar tastes in classical music, and I have a collection of LPs David gave me that I treasure. A visit with him was always engaging and rewarding."

And this from **Merritt Fox**: "David has been a central figure in our lives here for almost forty years. For decades our near daily trips to the store gave us a chance to chat about everything from politics to our kids' lives. David kept a keen eye on all of us: one January 1st, when my older son was about 18, he asked 'was Peter in Times Square last night?' Peter had been, and David revealed an uncanny ability to pick out one person from a million on TV. And then there was our University of Michigan connection, with David, in his mail delivery role, scribbling "Go Blue" on the occasional letter I received from the University, a prankish violation of what I suspect were Postal Service rules. There are countless



David Lowman, who served as a selectman for twelve years, addresses the Board

other cherished memories, but one that still stands out is his thoughtful talks in his years as a selectman at the Memorial Day parade. His passing leaves a big hole."

Merritt's son, **Edward Fox**, adds: "I just wanted to write to say how sorry I am to hear about David's passing. He was an indelible part of my childhood. The Store was always a place of wonder as a small child, between the candy aisle, balsa flyers, and baseball cards among other things. I know it's more than twenty years, but I can still see him in there, always sharp-witted and in full command. I also remember you both kindly had me over to watch the Lions on one of the rare occasions when they had a meaningful game around Christmas. Even after I saw him less, I always enjoyed looking through the *5 Village News* for his pieces, which seemed him all-over: clear with a bit of mordant humor. We'll all miss him." □

LEISURE POOLS

DESIGN • CONSTRUCTION • SERVICE

Pools • Spas • Saunas

208 Norfolk Road
P.O. Box 112
Southfield, MA 01259

Tel: {413} 528-1765
Fax: {413} 528-3039

www.leisurepools.net

SUSAN M. SMITH

Attorney At Law

38 Mahaiwe Street, Suite 1 Telephone: (413) 528-4300
Great Barrington, MA 01230 Facsimile: (413) 528-4306
email: ssmithlaw@barringtonlawoffice.com



Keep on TRIning

Pediatric, Sports, Pool,
Manual Therapy: Cranial Sacral,
METs, MFR

TRI P.T.

of the Berkshires

Tamera S. Gebo-Wilber P.T.

C: (413) 717-7218
H: (413) 644-9198
tamerapt35@gmail.com
www.triptoftheberkshires.com

Town Business Is Your Business

BOARD OF SELECTMEN

October 18: The Board's regular meeting was pushed back a bit to accommodate a so-called Nuisance and/or Dangerous Dog Hearing brought at the request of Southfield resident Cole Rossiter to review the behavior of Blue, a rescue dog owned by fellow villagers Rachel Weingeist and Jeff Wallman. According to Mr. Rossiter, on September 10, Blue, running through the village alongside a car driven by Ms. Weingeist, broke away into Mr. Rossiter's yard, where he chased down and killed one of Mr. Rossiter's forty chickens. The hearing required the selectmen to decide whether Blue was a "nuisance," "dangerous," or just doing what dogs do.

Mr. Rossiter described how Blue had jumped out of Ms. Weingeist's arms and then went for his chickens. "It's obvious Blue can be dangerous to others," he said.

Ms. Weingeist disagreed. She and Mr. Wallman rescued Blue, a mixed Australian cattle dog, who was seriously emaciated when they adopted him, and have been training him to be around other dogs and creatures since he arrived in Southfield. Blue has been invited to get acquainted with other animals by a nearby farmer. "I felt horrible" about the incident, said Ms. Weingeist, who added that she took full responsibility for letting Blue run off-leash. "Blue had never seen a chicken before," she said.

Chairman Richard Long, recalling an earlier hearing in which a dog that killed chickens was deemed to be "dangerous," expressed his concern that the Board act consistently and asked, "Where did Blue cross the line between "nuisance" and "dangerous?" Animal Control



Officer Cassie Keeley, present at the meeting, said she has not visited Blue and that there is a gray area between the two designations. It fell to Selectman Tara White to declare that she did not find Blue's actions "vindictive," that he thought what he was chasing down was food, and that he should be declared a nuisance, not a dangerous dog. The other two selectmen agreed. They ordered that Blue be restrained on a six-foot leash whenever he was in public but rejected as impractical Mr. Rossiter's request that he be kept at least 100 feet from his property.

**"Where did Blue
cross the line
between "nuisance"
and "dangerous?"**

Proceedings then segued into the regular Board meeting. The selectmen heard an update from Joe Poindexter (switching hats temporarily from meeting reporter to president of the New Marlborough Historical Society) and Society Vice President John

Schreiber on the Society's campaign to preserve the historic stone-arch bridge on Campbell Falls Road. **Cracks on the underside of the arch, they explained, have been expanding over time and had suffered marked deterioration in the last year or so because of the closing to repair another Campbell Falls Road bridge.** At its expense, the Historical Society had the damage assessed by an experienced stone arch engineer, who determined that catch basins should be installed on both sides of the western end of the bridge and then the cracks repaired. Cost of the project: about \$200,000.

The Historical Society, said Dr. Schreiber, would be conducting a fund-raising appeal and applying for grant money. The bridge being a Town property, the funds would go to the Town but be earmarked specifically for

**Call today to join our family
new customers welcome**



**KIMBALL
FUEL**

FUEL OIL • PROPANE • BIO FUEL
• SERVICE & INSTALLATION

168 Main Street Great Barrington 413-528-1410

MERCIER STONE

FINE STONE MASONRY
BRICK OVEN
FIREPLACE
HARDSCAPE
RESTORATION



508.560.7844
MERCIERSTONE.COM

Campbell Falls Bridge repair. Dr. Schreiber pointed out that the cost of repair would be a fraction of the cost of replacing it, which would inevitably follow further neglect, and asked for Town participation in the project.

The selectmen thanked Dr. Schreiber and Mr. Poindexter and moved on to an update from the Elizabeth Rosenberg, chair of the Housing Committee, on that Committee's proposal to convert Cassilis Farm to low-cost housing units. Ms. Rosenberg explained that an analysis by June Wolfe, Housing Director of Construct, Inc., determined that conversion of the Hartsville New Marlborough Road estate, now for sale, to thirteen living units is estimated to cost about \$6.2 million, including the purchase of the property.

Ms. Rosenberg pointed out that a state regulation meant to encourage the provision of low-cost housing recommends that at least 10 percent of a town's housing be affordable. New Marlborough's percentage: zero. The Committee, she said, is in the process of applying

for grant money. Since some sources require that towns involved contribute financially, Ms. Rosenberg urged the Board's participation in this project. "If we don't build housing for young people," said Ms. Rosenberg, "we will become a town of old people."

The project would be "a huge gain for the town," said Chairman Richard Long, who is also a member of the Housing Committee.

Barbara Marchione, chair of the Highway Planning Working Group, reported that it was still seeking federal and state emergency funds to help finance the repair of rain-damaged roads and that the Group would be meeting with the Planning Board to

help expedite this process.

Following a review of minutes from previous meetings, this one was adjourned. □

Joe Poindexter

boydpoindexter@gmail.com

A state regulation recommends that at least 10 percent of a town's housing be affordable.

COMPLETING THE ROSTER OF CIVIL WAR VETERANS

Help Identify New Marlborough Citizens Who Served

Harold D. Rood American Legion Post 350 has prepared a list of New Marlborough Civil War veterans through research of the Town's Bounty Record Book, which was transcribed by the late John Sisson. This list has been posted in the Town library, the Southfield Post Office, Town Hall, and the Mill River General Store. Those with long family histories in town may check for inclusion of known ancestor veterans of the Civil War, or identify any veteran known to be missing from the list. Even if that knowledge has not been passed down to you from previous generations, you may see familiar family

names that we often can trace to confirm your ancestor's Civil War status.

Any information that you can supply will help Post 350 recognize and honor our Civil War soldiers and seamen. Currently more than 200 are known. Please contact Ann Riou (413-229-2589) or write to Harold D. Rood American Legion Post 350, Attention Adjutant, P.O. Box 231, Southfield, Massachusetts, 01259, with names we may have missed or if you would like to learn more about this effort. □

Ann Riou

Your Local Family Owned Propane Company for over 60 years

We provide friendly, prompt & reliable service for all your propane needs



839 Mill River-Southfield Rd.
New Marlborough, MA

413-229-2800

Low Prices
Budget Plans
Bulk & Cylinder Deliveries



Please call to join our family of satisfied customers!

ANOTHER MILL RIVER

A Hidden History of Power Along the Whiting

By David Hosford

The Whiting River is probably best known for its spectacular cascade over Campbell Falls at the Massachusetts-Connecticut border. It is the shortest of New Marlborough's three rivers — from its rise in Cookson State Forest until it merges some seven miles later into the Blackberry River and ultimately the Housatonic. Much of the Whiting's run is obscured from casual observation as it winds through private property and frequently difficult terrain, from its head waters at East Indies Pond to the dam at Thousand Acre Swamp dam, under a half-dozen bridges, and finally over the border into North Canaan. Also obscured by the passage of time and twentieth century development are most of the sites of six mills established along its course in the 1800s.

Unlike the much larger manufactories of Mill River village, with eight dams and sophisticated products on offer, those along the Whiting River were simpler enterprises but representative of similar undertakings in Norfolk (to the south) and other hill towns in Massachusetts. Water power was important everywhere in New England. New Marlborough's good fortune was an abundant resource and, in the case of the Whiting, a topography encouraging its use given a vertical drop of about 800 feet from East Indies Pond down to the Blackberry River.

As early as the 1830s, the McAlpin brothers created a dam just below the natural outlet to East Indies, powering a sawmill, a shingle mill, and a cheese box factory making round wooden containers with close fitting tops. According to John D. Sisson's *5 Village News* article "The Mills of New Marlborough" (December 2002), the boxes produced there were in high demand. So, too, were wooden shingles, in an age before asphalt and metal roofs, with some "26½ thousand" inventoried



The railroad viaduct over the Whiting just across the state border in Connecticut

for estate purposes in 1870.

As noted by Berkshires historian Bernard A. Drew in the *Berkshire Eagle* (January 21, 2012), the sawmill also produced some 250,000 board feet of lumber annually for its new owner, Francis G. Holt. Although the site is a bit of a hike across New Marlborough Land Trust property and then another half-mile into Cookson State Forest, enough physical evidence remains to make it a worthwhile excursion.

Downstream a winding mile or so below the Thousand Acre flood control dam, the Whiting passes under the Norfolk Road at the beginning of another steep drop-off. Although the site is not now accessible, it was the locus of Sheldon Norton's oyster keg factory. Before the advent of refrigeration, most people generally ate oysters only in months ending in "R," packed in wooden barrels with sawdust and the contents stored inert in the cellar for up to the beginning of the new year. All that remains at this site is evidence of a dam (long ago breached) that allowed water to be diverted into a channel marked now by a tall loose-stone pillar, which presumably held up one

continued

DOWNING & LANE, LLP ATTORNEYS AT LAW

623 MAIN STREET, SUITE 1
GREAT BARRINGTON, MA 01230

TEL: (413) 528-5040
FAX: (413) 528-5095

COURTNEY S. LANE
COURTNEY@DOWNINGLANE.COM

SCOTT MacKENZIE EXCAVATING

Email: excavatorscott@aol.com
(413) 528-2921 TEL (413) 528-3864 FAX
381 Adsit Crosby Road
New Marlborough, MA 01230

Mill River, continued

side of the axle for a large undershot water wheel.

Further down the Whiting, according to John Sisson's article, was a steam saw and shingle mill located at the confluence of the river and a stream exiting Haymeadow Farm Pond. The mill was capable of processing 200,000 feet of lumber annually and also manufactured oak pails and tubs on the side. It was apparently built by Origen A. Gibson in 1865 and then passed into the hands of his brother William B. Gibson and the latter's son. The complex, destroyed by fire in 1897, left almost no visible remains, and the location is basically inaccessible thanks to significant beaver activity.

Next comes the puzzle of Campbell Falls itself. According to a *Norfolk Now* note by Andra Moss (July 2, 2020) it was named for John Campbell, a Connecticut pre-revolutionary war entrepreneur, who built and operated a small grist mill upstream from the stone bridge over the Whiting on the Campbell Falls Road. That story comports with both Jon Swan's "Looking for Mr. Campbell" in the *5 Village News* (September, 2008) and an article and poem in "The Lure of the Litchfield Hills" (1941) to which he refers. In any event, John Sisson and other sources identify the Clark family as the 19th century owners of a sawmill there of which

no trace is apparent. Finally, on the half-mile or so stretch of the Whiting below the Falls are remains to be seen from the road of two additional mills and their races. One was a saw and planing mill built in 1844 and purchased by William Canfield in 1876; the other was yet another sawmill owned by the Chapin brothers who are otherwise unidentified.

The remaining course of the river is relatively placid as it passes over the border into Connecticut. There is, however, a significant landmark — the Whiting Viaduct in East Canaan, a remarkable engineering feat dating back to the 1870s. To allow the Connecticut Western Railroad to extend a line from Canaan to Norfolk and then to connect variously to Hartford or Springfield, side-by-side stone tunnels were built to accommodate both the deep cut of the Whiting River at that point in the Canaan Valley and a turnpike running briefly alongside. A harbinger of a difficult economic future, it was almost as though a line was being drawn across the countryside, cutting off New Marlborough and its dependence on water power and a steadily diminishing number of mills for lack of a rail connection. □



LAND TRUST NEWS

The landscape is electric with fall colors, mostly blue skies and tremendous cloud formations. It is an exhilarating time to be outdoors. We hope you are exploring new trails and looking up at the skies.

The Land Trust is thrilled to be developing new partnerships with New Marlborough farmers. These collaborations create bridges between agriculture and land conservation, all the while supporting local businesses, the local food economy, land conservation, and building New Marlborough soils. In 2016 as part of the project for the New Marlboro Preserve, we partnered with Tom Brazie of The Farm New Marlborough, leasing the open fields at the preserve for his farm business. He has made significant improvements to the open space and continues to build the soils with his grazing chickens and cows. You can see the fields greening up under his care.

Just last month we partnered with another New Marlborough farm business, Off The Shelf owned by Anna Houston and Rob Perazzo. They graze both sheep and chickens on pasture in New Marlborough. We were thrilled to support their need for rich pasture at the end of this farming season. Their 720 pullets quietly moved onto the Goodnow Preserve and are rotating daily throughout the field fertilizing the pasture. These partnerships feed the animals, feed us humans, feed the soils — all good for the neighborhood!

Fall property projects continue: cleaning up stone walls in the village of New Marlborough by cutting the crowns of the barberry, cleaning up blowdowns on the trails, repairing trail signage, tuning up the suspension bridge at Thousand Acre Swamp, and getting ready for the Halloween Scare at the Goodnow, where the New Marlborough Library and the Land Trust will co-host a Halloween bash. Beware! It is our librarian's favorite holiday, and there is something scary at every bend, plus a bonfire, treats and storytelling in the open field as night falls.

We are all fortunate to share these spectacular lands. Hope you get out there and breathe the fresh air. □

Executive Director Martha Bryan



Off the Shelf chickens, plus moveable enclosure, at Goodnow Preserve

photo by Martha Bryan

WHOSE LAND IS OUR LAND?

A Meeting House Program Poses a Thorny Question

By Judith Friedlander

Over 100 people gathered at the New Marlborough Meeting House on October 2 for the last program of the season, to listen to a powerful condemnation of European colonialism and the impact it has had on indigenous peoples around the world. Drawing on ideas from Simon Winchester's latest book, *Land: How the Hunger for Ownership Shaped the Modern World*, a panel of experts challenged the audience to reconsider bedrock notions of land ownership and the impact they have had on indigenous peoples. In addition to the best-selling author, the panel included, Kathleen Brown-Pérez, a lawyer, senior lecturer, and director of Native American Studies at the Five Colleges in central Massachusetts, Yale Professor Emeritus and historian John Demos, and artist and writer Setsuko Sato Winchester.

Simon Winchester's book traces land ownership back to early 17th century England, when Parliament introduced the Enclosure Acts — laws that brought an end to the age-old tradition of farming on open or common lands. These acts set in motion, Mr. Winchester argued, a tragic series of events, the impact of which he summarized with the words of Jean-Jacques Rousseau: "What crimes, wars, murders and horrors would the human race have been spared, had someone pulled up the stake and cried out ... you are lost if you forget that the fruits of the earth belong to all and the earth to no one!"

In the same spirit, Mr. Winchester quoted Chief Seathl, who reported in 1854 to members of the Duwamish and Suquamish tribes of the Pacific Northwest: "The



Simon Winchester's most recent book examines the consequences of private land ownership.

President in Washington [Franklin Pierce] sends word that he wants to buy our land. But how can you buy or sell the sky? Buy or sell the land? If we do not own the freshness of the air and the sparkle of the water, how can you buy them?"

The Meeting House program focused primarily on encounters between Native Americans living on the East Coast and English, Dutch and other European settlers, both during colonial times and since the United States declared its independence. Leading off that discussion, Kathleen Brown-Pérez, who is a member of the Brotherstown Nation, and has family ties to several other Native American communities, including the Stockbridge-Munsee, focused her remarks on the history of indigenous peoples who lived in

Western Massachusetts, Connecticut, and New York.

She described how several indigenous communities, after having been dispossessed of their lands, came together under the leadership of Samson Occom, a Mohegan Presbyterian minister, and formed the Brotherstown Nation. Like the Stockbridge-Munsee and Oneida peoples, the Brotherstown Nation was eventually forced to resettle in Wisconsin in 1831. Ms. Brown-Pérez also described some of the work she has been doing as a consultant to legal firms that defend present-day land claims of Native American nations.

John Demos, an eminent scholar of early American history, described in vivid detail the many ways that European settlers and Native Americans misunderstood one another. Having no common language or shared

THE WHIP SHOP



OFFICE & STUDIO SPACE

High Speed Fiber Optic Internet

- In Southfield Village Center
- Cell Phone Service
- On site US Post Office
- Steps from the Southfield Store

FOR AVAILABILITY, CONTACT:

413-229-3576

cultural assumptions, their inability to imagine what the others were thinking added yet one more layer of complexity to what was already a complicated encounter. Like Kathleen Brown-Pérez, John Demos reminded the audience that serious conflicts continue to the present day, no longer compounded by cultural misunderstandings but by breaches of treaties that the U.S. Government had made with Native Americans many years ago.

A prolific writer, two of Professor Demos's books touch directly on the theme of the Meeting House program: *The Unredeemed Captive*, the history of the abduction of the daughter of a Protestant minister in early 18th century Massachusetts who chose to remain with her captors and marry a Mohawk Indian; and *The Heathen School*, about a 19th century missionary academy founded to convert to Christianity and "civilize" the children of "heathens" from around the world, the majority of whom ended up being Native Americans.

Setsuko Sato Winchester connected the experience of Japanese-Americans during World War II to the history of Native Americans: After the bombing of Pearl Harbor, Japanese-Americans, many of them farmers, were rounded up and interned in concentration camps, for no reason other than that their families came originally from Japan. When they returned to their homes in 1945, they discovered that they had lost their land. It took the U.S. Government until 1988 to apologize.

The Meeting House program sparked increased interest among a number of New Marlborough residents in our own history with the Mohican peoples during colonial times. In my welcoming remarks (Judith Friedlander served as moderator of the discussion), I noted it is customary to acknowledge, at cultural events

like this one, that our buildings sit on lands that once belonged to Native American communities. In some cases, English and other European settlers purchased the land from Native Americans for a pittance, but much of it they stole. In New Marlborough, we occupy land that

members of the Mohican nation sold to English settlers. This gives rise, as Professor Demos suggested, to the question of what precisely the Indians understood about their financial transactions.

On June 2, 1737, Chief John Konkapot and several other Mohican leaders relinquished for 300 pounds ownership of huge parcels of land to a few English settlers — parcels that became the towns of Monterey, New Marlborough, Sandisfield, and Tyringham. As recorded in the deed, these Indians proclaimed, "We do Acknowledge ourselves fully Satisfied." But did Chief Konkapot fully understand what he had signed onto? All we know for sure is that he died in 1765 an

impoverished and broken man. By 1780, the Mohicans had essentially disappeared from the Berkshires, having died of European diseases or, if they managed to survive, lost what lands they still owned in the area at the time.

Some scholars of 18th century New England have reassured us that the lands we live on in the Berkshires were seasonal hunting grounds of the Mohicans and that they did not actually live here. But as Stockbridge historian Rick Wilcox noted in a recent report he made to the Bidwell House Museum in Monterey: "The sheer volume of artifacts, home sites and burials suggests a significant presence over time and may call into question that theory." We now suspect that several of those burial grounds exist right here in New Marlborough.

After a very stimulating afternoon with Simon Winchester and the other panelists, questions about how New Marlborough acquired our treasured lands are here to stay. We now look forward to organizing another program on the prehistory and history of the Berkshires, to hear more about recent archeological excavations in the area, organized by Bonney Hartley, Stockbridge-Mohican Tribal Preservation Manager. Based at Williams College, Ms. Hartley and a team of archeologists identified this summer what they believe to be the living floors of Mohican dwellings at two sites near Stockbridge. With the hope that we can contribute to their efforts, we have informed Ms. Hartley and her team about possible burial grounds in New Marlborough. □



A 1778 drawing of Stockbridge-Munsee Indians recruited as scouts by the Continental Army.



WEBSTER
design landscape horticulture

413-229-8124 websterlandscapes.com Sheffield, MA

ERIKA EIGEN: A CORNUCOPIA OF TALENTS

By Robbi Hartt

If you should by chance stumble on the tiny musical jewel called the *Sound of Sunforest* album, circa 1970, you may find yourself echoing the reactions of many — “How did I not know this?” “What a gem!” “Why didn’t they make another album?” One YouTube reviewer rated it “Beatles level brilliance!” Those wanting a step back in time or a reminder of the variety that is possible within one creative trio’s collection will enjoy finding treasures like “Overture to the Sun,” “Lady Next Door,” “And I Was Blue,” and many other tunes that will become earworms that keep you humming the rest of the day.

Of particular note to the New Marlborough community are two songs featured on the album: “I Want to Marry a Lighthouse Keeper” and “Mr. Bumble.” Erika Eigen, who grew up in Astoria Queens but spent weekends and summers in Mill River, moved to the Berkshires in high school (attending Mount Everett High) and, after living for many years in England, has resided in New Marlborough the past two decades. She is one of three musicians involved in making the album. While Wikipedia found that “little is known about the trio,” the story of their blending of talents is one of the music industry’s most intriguing tales.

Following her graduation from high school, Erika tried several different clerical jobs in Great Barrington and New York City. Finding them dreadfully dull during the cultural explosion of the late 60s, she moved to Wash-



Erika Eigen's newest project




Sound of Sunforest album cover, with Erika Eigen's artwork.

ington, D.C. and took a typing course to open up more job opportunities. She was typing, in fact, when news of John F. Kennedy’s death hit the airwaves. “Close your machine and go home,” she recalls the instructor telling her, “the president’s been shot.” It was a chaotic and devastating time.

She was soon hired by the FBI, first as a typist and then as a file clerk (which proved more interesting). In her first week in the new position, she was invited to a weekend party where she met Freya Hogue, a twenty-six-year-old guitarist. “There were forty to fifty people there,” Erika explains, “and I remember I wore an S&H green stamp on my forehead to identify as ‘one of the crowd.’ [Don’t ask.] They were playing Beatles’ songs, and we began harmonizing — something that draws people closer, I think.”

Freya Hogue introduced Erika to a third woman and fellow musician, Terry Tucker, who had set Ms. Hogue’s poems to music. Shortly thereafter, they began writing songs together. Although Erika was the only one of the three without formal music education, strong musical talent was passed along by both parents, who had met in a singing group and sang in the chorus of Richard Strauss’s *Die Fledermaus*. “I always loved singing, ever since I was three, and harmonizing came easily for me,” she notes.

On Ms. Hogue’s initiative, the group decided to move to London to be part of the music scene. They took rooms at a house in the London district of Chalk Farm



ALL TYPES OF SERVICE FOREIGN AND DOMESTIC CARS AND TRUCKS

- Tires • Oil
- Brakes • Exhaust
- Mass Vehicle Inspection
- Commercial Inspection

ORMSBEE'S GARAGE 839 Mill River Southfield Road, Mill River 413-229-2515

owned by one Francesca Wilson, who never asked for rent, preferring instead to support young artists by letting them stay in exchange for help around the house. "That's where we had our loveliest times," says Erika of the fortuitous living arrangement. "What a treasure she was," she recalls, adding that Ms. Wilson had worked with Eglantyne Jebb, the creator of the Save the Children fund, retrieving children from Serbia and Russia.

How did three young women from the States end up with a record label in England? "We were at a coffee bar in London in the late '60s, and an interesting-looking young man with a fur coat was sitting near us reading a copy of *The Melody Maker* (one of the earliest British weekly music magazines). We asked, 'When you're finished, can we have a look?' He was a Decca sound engineer named Vic Coppersmith-Heaven, and he invited us to come to his studio that evening. Because Decca Records had been offered a chance to sign the Beatles but passed it up (one can only imagine the regret over that decision), Decca/Mills Music was on the lookout for new talent. The three young women signed a contract with Deram Nova (a progressive label that released twenty-three albums but lasted less than a year) and became known as "an American-English psychedelic folk music trio."

"We wrote our own songs and he recorded them," Erika explains. "We wrote the song 'The Lady Next Door is a Hippy' about our neighbor on Fleet Road in Hampstead. Such fun!" They designed the album cover themselves, and Erika did the artwork. "We came up with the band name Sunforest because of the way the forest looks when the sun shines through the trees," she adds. "Freya was a terrific poet, Terry was the musician and arranger, and I was the harmonizer." *Sound of Sunforest* was considered a "tea time classical folk rock pop album" (this was how they introduced themselves), which made it an unusual achievement for its time but also likely limited its long-term success.

During the next several years, Vic Smith took care of them, managing their contracts, booking singing gigs, and protecting them from being exploited as a girl band. There were solo female artists at the time, but it was quite unusual to find a girl band. When Stanley Kubrick approached their manager looking for possibilities for the soundtrack to his film *A Clockwork Orange*, Mr. Smith

showed him *Sound of Sunforest*. Kubrick chose two bright songs (the instrumental piece "Overture to the Sun" and the light-hearted tune, "Lighthouse Keeper") to use in his disturbingly dark movie; he reportedly liked the album cover so much he kept it up on his mantel. Whether you find the movie to be a brilliant exposé of modern society or a horrific reflection of the worst of human destructive impulses, it is considered by many to be among the 100 most important films of all time, perhaps the greatest cult film ever. The film took two little known songs by the Sunforest band and gave them overnight fame.

"I was in my twenties and having a wonderful time!" Erika continues. Starting in 1970, the band mostly performed on stage, including in the Marquee Club, the One World Club, the crypt of St. Martin-in-the-Fields, and at an international music festival in Italy. This lasted for about three years. "Then life took another turn," Erika sighs. "Terry and Freya kept on with their music, but I went to a women's college, Hillcroft College for Mature Women. Soon after, I met someone and got married and my life changed dramatically."

Shortly after Erika left, the group dissolved. In 2001, she returned home to the Berkshires just before the September 11 attacks. Since that time, she has spent half of the year here and half in England visiting old friends, with

the exception of the past two years when Covid-19 restrictions kept her from traveling. She still harmonizes, singing in the choir at the Southfield Church, where her mother also sang.

Erika Eigen recently traveled to West Virginia for a reunion with Terry Tucker. During their visit they discussed the idea of turning Terry's song "Mr. Bumble" from their 1970 album into a children's book. Erika quickly went to work drawing colorful images to bring each line of the song to life, and she is now arranging meetings to find a publisher. Children are sure to love the story/song lyrics and whimsical illustrations as much as their parents enjoyed the catchy 1970 tune! In the same way "I Want to Marry a Lighthouse Keeper" serves as a melodic counter-balance to the weighty Kubrick movie in which it appears, "Mr. Bumble" celebrates nature and childhood innocence during a pandemic that has left us all in need of a little extra love, family, and community. □



Erika Eigen, Freya Hogue, and Terry Tucker



Erika reviews a bit of artwork for Mr. Bumble.

RECIPE OF THE MONTH

This is a terrific dish for a quiet dinner at home or for company, all of whom will be dazzled by its fun presentation and wonderful taste. It is highly seasonal since you need one or more whole pumpkins to make it, so grab a pumpkin or two while they are still available, open a lovely bottle of red wine, and serve it to family and friends. □

Marjorie Shapiro



Photo by Barry Shapiro

Carbonada en Zapallo

(Argentine Beef Stew in a Pumpkin Shell) Serves four.

Ingredients

- | | |
|---|--|
| 2 lbs. of beef stew meat
(from Tom Brazie, if possible),
cut into 1" to 1/5" pieces | 1/2 tsp. freshly ground pepper |
| 1 large onion, finely chopped | pinch of red pepper flakes |
| 2 garlic cloves, finely minced | 1 tsp. sugar |
| 3 tbsp. olive oil | 1 cup dried apricots, chopped |
| 2 large tomatoes, chopped
(or a 14 oz. can of cherry tomatoes) | 3 yams, peeled and cut into 1" pieces |
| 1 large green pepper, chopped | 2 cups beef broth |
| 1 tbsp. dried oregano | 3 russet potatoes, peeled and cut into 1" pieces |
| 2 bay leaves | 1 or 2 medium pumpkins |
| 2 tsp. salt | 2 tbsp. unsalted butter, melted |
| | 8 ounces frozen corn |
| | 1/2 cup red wine |

Directions:

- Brown the beef in the oil over medium-high heat in a Dutch oven.
- Remove the beef to a plate.
- Add more oil as necessary and add the onion, garlic and green pepper; sauté until softened and lightly browned, about 5 minutes.
- Deglaze with 1/2 cup of red wine, then bring to a boil and reduce by 1/2.
- Add tomatoes, salt, pepper, oregano, red pepper flakes, bay leaves, sugar, apricots, russet potatoes, yams, and broth.
- Return beef and any accumulated juices to the Dutch oven.
- Stir all ingredients together, cover, bring to a boil and then reduce to a simmer.
- Cook for 1.5 hours or until the meat is softened.
- Add the corn and stir.
- While the beef stew is cooking, carefully cut off the pumpkin top (keep it nearby); scoop out all seeds and membrane.
- Brush the inside of the pumpkin(s) with melted butter and lightly sprinkle with salt and pepper. Use one or more pumpkins as necessary to accommodate the stew.
- Ladle the beef stew while still warm into the pumpkin(s).
- Replace the pumpkin tops on the pumpkins.
- Carefully place the pumpkins onto a lined baking pan and bake at 325 degrees for one to 1.5 hours, until the pumpkin meat is tender.
- Place the cooked pumpkin onto a plate and serve, ladling the stew onto a dinner plate while scraping out pumpkin flesh along with it.
- Serve with a green vegetable and a crusty bread to scoop up the sauce.

REWARDS — AND RISKS — OF MUSHROOM HUNTING

By Steve Nester

John Wheeler strides through the Benedict Pond picnic area in Beartown State Forest, pointing out various mushrooms sprouting from the mossy ground. It has been a week or so since a soaking rain, the ideal time, says Mr. Wheeler, for a “good flush,” and mushrooms are underfoot everywhere. Some are edible, others are questionable. In addition to those that will make it into this evening’s meal, he keeps other varieties that pique his interest for later identification. Amateur mycologists, it seems, are ever-curious — and wary — of the curveballs Mother Nature might throw at them.

Mr. Wheeler seems in a hurry, not from the diminishing light and the imminence of colder weather, but from the excitement of being in his element and doing what he loves to do. President and founder of the Berkshire Mycological Society, he knows that by mid-autumn, heavy frosts are not far behind. There are still plenty of mushrooms in the forests of western Massachusetts, and so little time to pick them. If the day’s pickings can’t be eaten or shared with friends, he pickles or dehydrates them for later use.

The art of mushroom foraging is rooted in the proper identification of the quarry. The best way to break into foraging, he says, is to interact with the community. “People new to the activity really should contact someone who’s known for foraging. It’s better to see mushrooms fresh in the wild instead of in pictures.” Each variety of edible mushroom has a season, Mr. Wheeler says, and right now is the time for hen of the woods, honey mushrooms, and black trumpets, among other varieties common to the Berkshires.

Mushrooms can be deceiving, such as the prized chanterelle. Some varieties of this mushroom are poisonous, and some, while edible, can cause gastric distress. Guidebooks don’t always differentiate between them, and reference to several field guides can be useful.

John Wheeler was introduced to mycology through a course in fungi identification at Berkshire Community College. He now leads groups on Sunday mornings during the various mushroom seasons. He can’t stress education enough on proper identification. “People should join their local mushroom club and be sure you know exactly which wild mushroom you are going to eat. A mistake could make you sick or kill you. They should have an Audubon Guide and use it if they are beginners not too sure of genus. Photographing and posting on mushroom ID forums can



Hen of the Woods, if purchased fresh, can cost anywhere from \$16 to \$24 per pound.

also be a good resource.”

Some foragers are lucky enough to have learned the skill at an early age — a purposeful walk in the woods as much a family activity for them as going to the ballpark, say, was for others. A local chef and fungi aficionado who was taught to forage by his grandmother, has brought this, and his cooking skills, to the Berkshires where he now makes his home.

Vivacious though self-effacing (he asked to remain anonymous for this article), he’s full of recipe

ideas for easy-to-prepare mushroom dishes. At this time of year, he says, Hen of the Woods mushrooms are abundant. They grow at the base of oak trees, and can weigh more than five pounds. Our chef recommends cleaning before cutting into florets; then, placed on a roasting pan, tossed with salt, pepper and olive oil and placed in a 400-degree oven for thirty to forty minutes. They are then ready to be tossed into salads or on pasta. Another simple way to serve this mushroom is to cut it into steaks and prep the same way. Or they can provide an aromatic note by being added to a turkey stuffing. (Our chef’s recipe: Instead of sage, use plenty of thyme; lightly brown chopped garlic and onions in a pan with oil or butter; then add mushrooms, bread torn into pieces, and fresh turkey or chicken stock; salt and pepper to taste.)

Foraging is a treasure hunt, but understanding which fungi are in season and knowing how to identify them will make the search simpler. Finally, be open to surprises. “Focus on the quarry and walk the area,” says our chef, and “you’ll find unexpected things.” □

Reiner White & Sons, Inc.
Remodel • Additions • New Construction

New Construction • Remodeling • Siding • Windows • Interior Finishes
Decks & Porches • Sunrooms • Kitchens & Bathrooms • Roofs

(413) 229-8450 | www.reinerwhiteandsons.com
MA Lic #20390 • MA HIC #137599 • CT Lic #4485 • CT HIC #578070

WILDLIFE NEIGHBORS

Coyotes have been making their presence known in spots all over New Marlborough this summer and fall. **Liz Goodman**, who lives in Clayton, has a story to tell about her encounters with *canis latrans*: “All summer we have enjoyed hearing and occasionally getting a glimpse of the coyotes that have taken up residence on our property in Mill River along the Konkapot River. We mostly hear them yipping and screaming at night, often times very close to the house. About a week ago, I think it was Sunday, October 10, I spotted a beautiful pair about 200 or 300 yards down the hill from our yard and I watched them with my binoculars for about ten minutes while the female was enjoying eating what looked like a squirrel, with her mate watching close by. If he tried to get near her, she gave him the stink eye, and he quickly retreated but waited patiently while she finished before they loped off together out of my sight. I did a bit of research and I learned that the coyote’s natural rhythm is to be active during the day, and it’s only been the presence of humans that has caused them to be more nocturnal. So, it makes sense that in our rural area they behave as they naturally should. I also learned that this is a time of year when they are seen more frequently because the juveniles are starting to break from the family unit.



photo by Larry Burke

A pair of coyotes on the prowl

“My second encounter occurred on Thursday, October 14, about the same time of day, around 4:00 p.m. I was traveling along the river in my golf cart with our older dog Jolie running alongside and our little, eight-pound Bitsy, “the bear terrier,” riding with me (which turned out to be a good thing, since it is more usual for Bitsy to run along as well). We saw what I think was the male coyote, the female being a little more gray. Initially, when he first spotted us, he started to run away, but then Jolie started barking and running towards him and, out of the corner of my eye, I saw him turn to run towards Jolie. I turned the cart around and started screaming as loud as I could, all the while holding a very squirmy and excited Bitsy, who very much wanted to join in. That little dog is solid muscle! My view was partially blocked by trees, but I thought Jolie was a goner, until she decided to turn away from the coyote and follow me. I thought the drama was over but, lo and behold, the coyote continued his pursuit. I kept screaming and, when he was about fifteen yards away, he finally decided to retreat. It was very scary. If Bitsy had not been in my grasp I shudder to think what might have happened. Needless to say, I am saddened to think I cannot walk my dogs off leash along the river for the foreseeable future. I plan to start carrying a small air horn on my walks as well. That coyote was too bold for my comfort level!”



photo by Joe Poindexter

A porcupine at the front door

On the subject of wildlife neighbors, there are some of which prefer our pets to keep their distance. **Joe Poindexter** sent along an overhead view of a **porcupine** on East Hill Road. Joe wrote, “This fellow seemed content grazing near our front door but got a bit prickly over his privacy being invaded by a photographer.”

And, to point out another wildlife neighbor that we all want to keep our distance from, and certainly do not want to find as a visitor inside our house, **Mike Bruns**, a Smith Park volunteer at Camp Segowea, sent along a photo of a **skunk** that made itself at home in the main lodge at the camp this summer.



photo by Mike Bruns

Camp Segowea's uninvited guest camper



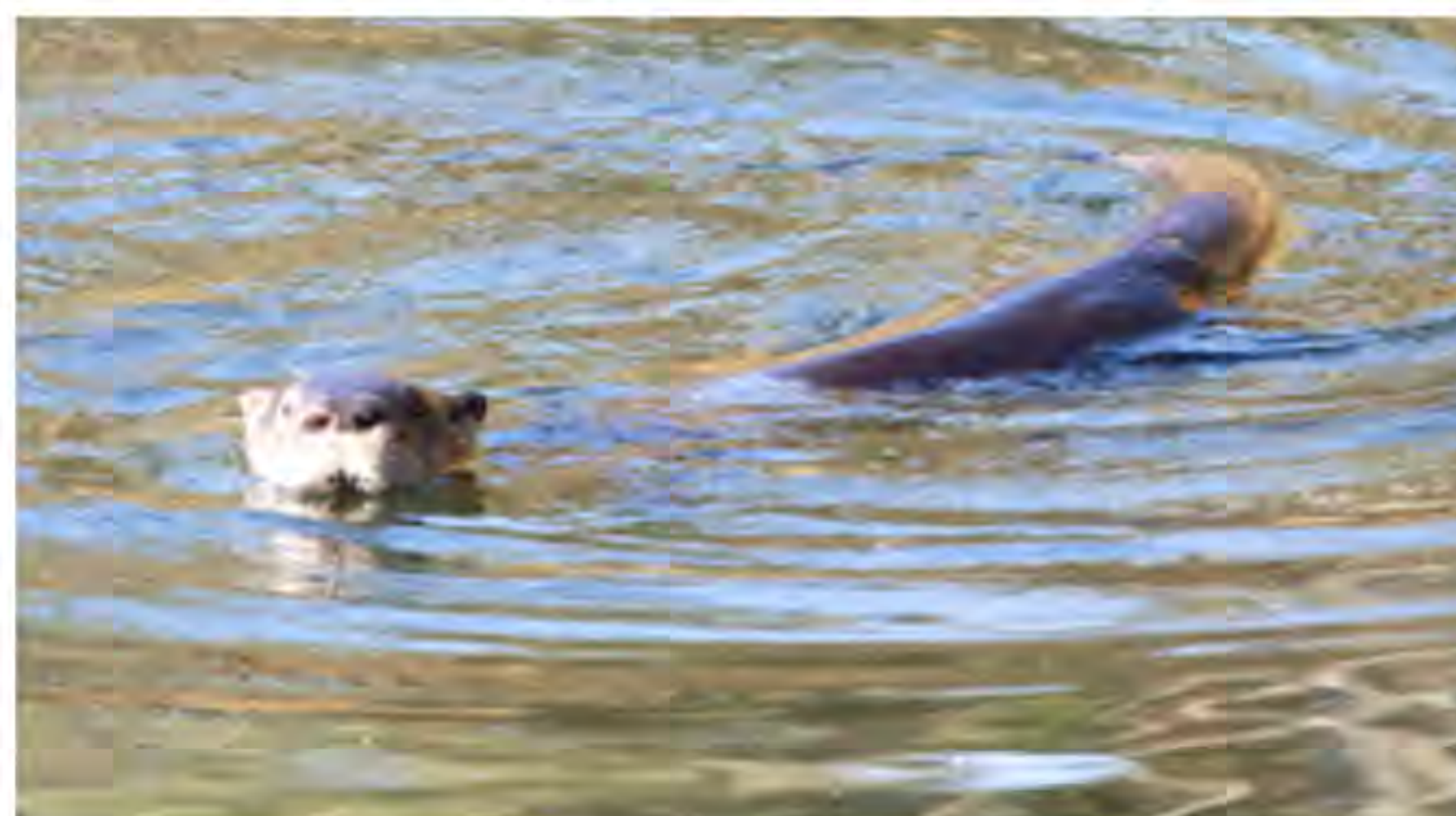
An otter makes a visit ...

Larry Burke has this report about some unusual doings in the pond below his house: "Back in early October, I noticed the water level in my farm pond was quite high, and, on inspection, discovered that culvert that serves as the pond's outlet was plugged up. This kind of thing happens every so often and the culprit has always been a beaver who would like to establish a home in the pond.

"Assuming it was yet another beaver, I was nevertheless intrigued by the unusual materials the creature was using to wall up the culvert – no sticks and mud, but instead, sand, rocks, and pondweed roots. Over the next two weeks, I would go down to the pond each morning to undo the blockage, sometimes wondering why the beaver would not show himself, slap his tail on the water, and chug around the pond the way territorial beavers do.

"The mystery deepened on the afternoon of October 19, when I happened to glance in the direction of the pond just as a very long-bodied **otter** sashayed its way across the driveway and into the water. An hour or so of observation persuaded me that, unusual as it may seem, this critter appears to be in the process establishing a den at the waterline on a sloping embankment. In the past, when otters have appeared, they would stay for a day or two, enjoying the crayfish and tadpoles, and then move on to the next waterhole. Perhaps this otter is a female wanting to find a cozy home in which to raise her kits?

"Hoping to establish whether the otter was responsible for the unusual dam-building methods, I set up my trail camera that evening with a view of the culvert. The images recorded over the course of the night only muddled the question. The camera captured a beaver entering the pond from across the driveway, and then, over the next several hours, checking out the culvert but making no attempt to block it up. No sign of the otter. Further surveillance to follow!" □



photos by Larry Burke

... or perhaps an extended stay.

Compiled by Larry Burke.

Send your sightings to him at larryjburke@gmail.com

(413) 229-2544

Free Estimates

Roofing
Tiling
Decks
Porches
Sheet Rocking
Flooring
Additions
Odd Jobs

Herbert W. Eichstedt III
Jason W. Eichstedt

Heating Systems and Repairs , Oil tanks,
Chimney Liners, and Air Conditioning

"We don't sell oil, We save oil!"

James "Jesse" Lane
Southfield, MA 01259
413-229-2370
Independentheating@gmail.com

License# BU 056967 MA
License# 31674 MA

BERKSHIRE HATHAWAY
HomeServices

Barnbrook Realty

Mary White and her team
are here to help you sell

(413) 528-4423
BarnbrookRealty.com

THE LOG

Police Department (selected entries)

- Sept. 2 7:51 a.m. An automobile, traversing a flooded section of Adsit Crosby Road, hydro-planes into a guardrail.
- Sept. 3 1:35 p.m. An officer assists a Clayton resident whose leg was injured when it was trapped under a motorcycle knocked over by his dog.
- 1:46 p.m. A driver, stopped on South Sandisfield Road, is issued a criminal complaint after his vehicle is found to be unregistered and uninsured, and he, unlicensed.
- 8:42 p.m. A driver, passing two cars against oncoming traffic in a no-passing zone on Hartsville New Marlborough Road, is issued a criminal complaint.
- Sept. 4 4:44 p.m. The Department alerts the Highway Department to a tree down on Hayes Hill Road.
- Sept. 7 12:01 p.m. Following a call from a Clayton resident that a car has been parked across the road since the previous night with someone in the rear seat, an officer determines that the occupant is a private investigator who says he is conducting surveillance of the area; he is asked to register with the Department whenever he is in town.
- Sept. 9 10:46 p.m. A resident reports the theft, the previous night, of three marijuana plants from her Mill River property.
- Sept. 10 9:57 p.m. An officer alerts the animal Control officer after a caller walking her dog in New Marlborough village reports observing two dogs shut inside a van, windows closed, for more than three hours.
- Sept. 12 12:00 p.m. The animal control officer is called after a Berkshire Woods Road resident reports that a stray pit bull dog has wandered onto his property.
- 1:30 p.m. An officer helps return a hiker lost near Campbell Falls to her car.
- 3:06 p.m. After an alert from a resident that cows are wandering on Mill River Southfield Road, an officer locates their owner.
- Sept. 21 2:00 p.m. An officer assists in calling a tow for a vehicle disabled on Adsit Crosby Road.
- 10:11 p.m. A driver, under the influence of alcohol, collides with a tree on County Road.
- Sept. 23 12:08 p.m. Utility wires catch fire after being hit by a falling tree on Sisson Hill Road.
- 1:40 p.m. An officer removes a fallen tree branch blocking Canaan Southfield Road.
- Sept. 25 4:11 p.m. A driver reports being flagged down by a seemingly disoriented male walking in the middle Campbell Falls Road.

In September the department logged 143 calls for service, had three arrests, issued twenty-five citations and sent two motor vehicle accidents reports to the state.

Graham Frank, Chief of Police

FIRE AND RESCUE

- Sept. 2 7:53 a.m. Adsit Crosby Road MVA
- Sept. 3 12:47 a.m. Canaan Southfield Road Medical Call
- Sept. 3 1:53 p.m. Mill River Great Barrington Road Outdoor Burn
- Sept. 4 7:48 p.m. Hartsville New Marlborough Road Fire Alarm
- Sept. 5 4:33 p.m. Knight Road Fire Alarm
- Sept. 7 6:00 p.m. Red Fox Lane Medical Call
- Sept. 12 1:36 a.m. Foley Hill Road Medical Call

PRECISION AUTOCRAFT INC



- PPG Paint Guarantee
- BBB Accredited Business
- Eco-Friendly Waterborne Paint
- Laser Frame Measuring
- Plastic Welding
- We Arrange For Rental Cars
- Open Mon-Fri 8:00-5:00

PERFECTING THE ART OF COLLISION REPAIR SINCE 1979

1939 N Main St (Rt 7), Sheffield MA 01257
(413) 528-1457
www.precision-auto.com
email: precision.auto@roadrunner.com






Sachs Reisman, Inc.

**jewelry design & fabrication
appraisers & diamond brokers
buyers of gold, platinum,
& bulk silver**

**25 Maple Avenue ~ Sheffield, MA.
413-229-0050
www.sachsreisman.com**

Sept. 12 4:07 p.m.	Canaan Southfield Road Medical Call	Sept. 24 2:15 p.m.	Mill River Great Barrington Road Fire Alarm
Sept. 12 7:00 p.m.	Clayton Mill River Road Outdoor Burn	Sept. 25 1:49 p.m.	Canaan Southfield Road Medical Call
Sept. 16 10:29 a.m.	Stratford Road Medical Call	Sept. 28 11:42 a.m.	Canaan Southfield Road Medical Call
Sept. 17 6:31 p.m.	Downs Road Fire Alarm	Sept. 29 10:32 a.m.	Cross Road to Canaan Valley Road Medical Call
Sept. 18 9:07 a.m.	Stand by for Sandisfield Structure Fire	Sept. 29 12:07 p.m.	Foley Hill Road Fire Alarm
Sept. 20 1:29 p.m.	Norfolk Road Medical Call	Sept. 29 2:07 p.m.	Deerwood Park Road Fire Alarm
Sept. 21 11:30 a.m.	East Hill Road Fire Alarm	Sept. 30 9:37 p.m.	Lake Road Medical Call
Sept. 21 10:12 p.m.	County Road/Mill River Great Barrington Road MVA		<i>Fire Company President David Smith</i>
Sept. 23 12:12 p.m.	Sisson Hill Road Wires Down/Fire		

HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT NEWS MEETING THE CHALLENGES OF WINTER

There are more than two hundred catch basins and probably over a thousand culverts in the Town of New Marlborough. You can imagine, it's a daunting task to keep them clean and clear of debris. The highway crew has seen residents blowing lawn clippings and leaves into and across the roads. This debris often clogs up drainage and ditches, which causes flooding, backing up, and washing out their property, as well as their neighbor's. Please refrain from blowing leaves and grass clippings into or across the road, and ask your lawn mowing or cleanup person to do the same. It will not only help the highway crew, but if we keep the water flowing, it will benefit you and your neighbors as well.

Forecasters are calling for a snowy season compared to last year's relatively mild winter. The Highway Department is prepared for winter and will provide reasonable snow and ice control to public roads and properties. Our highest concern will continue to be personal safety, environmental protection, and cost. We are asking motorists to use common sense and recognize that they are traveling at their own risk in inclement weather.

The highway crew is responsible for close to ninety miles of road. With five highway workers, one working foreman, and the highway superintendent, we ask for your patience and cooperation. On school days, bus routes take priority. After the paved roads are plowed, the unpaved roads are taken care of. During a rain storm, when road temperatures drop below 32°F, unpaved roads freeze almost instantly, and the sand that is applied quickly freezes over. We will treat roads during a storm, and right after the storm passes, but please be aware that it is almost impossible to keep unpaved roads passable at all times.

Sand for residential use only, no contractors please, is always available at the Highway Garage under the shed on the left upon entering the yard. We ask you take no more than two buckets at a time. Highway workers do their best to avoid damaging private property. Anything installed in the Town's right-of-way (mailboxes, fences, signs, etc.) is placed there at the owner's risk. The Postal Service recommends that mailboxes be placed six to eight inches away from the edge of the road. Creating an apron where the mail carrier can pull off the road to make deliveries is ideal. Because roads vary in condition, please use your best judgment and understand that the Town does not reimburse for property damaged by snowplows. Privately owned installations should be inspected regularly to insure that they are secured properly and that wood posts have not rotted. Please review the following guidelines:

- Reduce your speed, drive cautiously, and refrain, when possible, from driving during a snowstorm.
- Avoid distractions. The hands-free law in Massachusetts prohibits operators of motor vehicles from using electronic devices while driving, unless the device is used in hands-free mode.
- Contrary to what your tire dealer or local garage may tell you, all-season tires work well in Florida but are not the best choice during winter months in New England. There is no substitute for good quality snow tires. Studded snow tires are recommended if you travel on unpaved roads. We are responsible for the roads, not for poor tires or bad driving habits.
- Do not park your vehicle on any road or property that is maintained by the Town.
- Vehicles parked in driveways should be far enough off the road to allow plow trucks to pass safely.
- Plowing or blowing snow into Town roads is illegal and dangerous. Please find proper means to dispose of snow on your property; violators can be ticketed by the police.
- Tune in to the local weather forecasts and pay attention to changing conditions.

Please drive carefully.

*Charles Loring
New Marlborough Highway Superintendent*

THE SCHOOL REPORT

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

By Jane Burke

Every November offers a fresh start for the Southern Berkshire Regional School District School Committee, but the run-up to this one has been grueling. Work on the Committee, staffed by unpaid volunteers dedicated to the health of our students during this pandemic, has been stressful — figuring out how to agree on masking and vaccination policies that meet local and state requirements while being responsive to the needs of teachers, parents, and community members. Difficult as it often is to come to a consensus when everyone is in the room, the hybrid meetings, combining the in-person and on-screen participation currently allowed during the pandemic, make discussion much more difficult. Progress can be very slow.

This year we have three new members — from Egremont, Monterey, and Sheffield — who were appointed by their towns officials because members elected in 2020 could no longer serve. Our charge is governance of the district, not management of its operations. To this end on November 18, we will hold our annual mandated reorganizational meeting of elected officers, including the chair, vice chair, secretary, and treasurer. We will also reorganize the subcommittees that advise the full committee on such matters as policy, superintendent evaluation, budget, technology, food services, and buildings and grounds. During the first weeks of the month, members will also attend training sessions by the Massachusetts Association of School Committees to improve their practice as members.

After completing months of effort to implement policies for mask wearing and staff vaccination that contribute

to the health of our staff and students, we now look forward to working together with the superintendent to help her lead her team to the best educational outcomes for our students at an affordable cost to the towns. In the coming months we will be reviewing District improvement plans that over-arch all aspects of the District, as well as approving school improvement plans that guide the principals' and teachers' work for the elementary and secondary schools. Approaches to helping students and teachers recover from pandemic-related educational and emotional losses are of key importance in these plans. The administration will soon be working with us in crafting the budget for next year and entering contract negotiations with the Southern Berkshire Education Association.

The School Committee also looks forward to progress toward the goals outlined in its Anti-Racist, Anti-Bias Action Plan. The Community Outreach and School Advocacy Subcommittee will help organize regular Zoom community conversations with the superintendent on a variety of topics. It also intends to send print newsletters to the community in the fall and spring. The committee approved a contract with the internet connection service Apptegy so that community members can go to <https://www.sbrsd.org/> to live-feed and download an app onto computers and phones that includes a calendar of events and news items about Southern Berkshire Regional Schools. □

Jane Burke is chair of the Southern Berkshire Regional School District School Committee


Thank You to Our Contributors:

Ned & Ellie MacDowell; Ramona Veretto; Walter Agar; Hope Crocker



BILMAR
VETERINARY SERVICES

413-528-1180 Hello@BilmarVet.com 776 Main Street
413-528-1763 BilmarVet.com Great Barrington, MA 01230



A•C•R•E•S
ALDEN COUNTRY REAL ESTATE SERVICES
DANIEL L. ALDEN, TRANSACTIONAL BROKER
413-335-9300
PO Box 132, Mill River, MA 01244
dan@berkshireacres.com berkshireacres.com
RESIDENTIAL • LAND • COMMERCIAL

THE NEW MARLBOROUGH PUBLIC LIBRARY

New Aquisitions

Adult Fiction

Cloud Cuckoo Land, by Anthony Doerr
Damnation Spring, by Ash Davidson
The Love Songs of W.E.B DuBois, by Honoree Fanonne Jeffers
Oh William, by Elizabeth Strout
Over My Dead Body, by Jeffrey Archer
Judge's List, by John Grisham

Adult Nonfiction

Estate Planning 101, by Vicki Cook
The Ultimate Scholarship Book 2022, by Gen & Kelly Tanabe
Fiske Guide to Colleges 2022, 38th Edition, by Edward B. Fiske

Children's Fiction

Pax Journey Home, by Sara Pennypacker
Big Nate: Aloha! by Lincoln Peirce
Amelia Bedelia Scared Silly, by Herman Parish
Bug in the Bog, by Jonathan Fenske

Children's Nonfiction

Where is the Bermuda Triangle, by Megan Stine

HAPPY THANKSGIVING



Library Hours

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



Thanksgiving

Pie Sale

Due to the pandemic, the New Marlborough Friends of the Library are unable to hold their annual Pre-Thanksgiving Pie Sale in-person. But, they will be taking pre-orders for pies.

All orders must be placed by November 15

and picked up at the library **November 23 by 4:30 pm.**

On offer are apple, cherry, pumpkin, pecan, and berry pies.

All pies \$16. We have a limit of twenty pies total — so get your order in early!

Call 413-229-6668 or newmarlborough@gmail.com



Holiday Raffle

at the New Marlborough Library

Enter to win hand-made Christmas ornaments
 and a tree skirt by Pam Gillette,
 and a six-foot Christmas tree donated by Ward's Nursery.

Tickets are \$5 each or a book of six for \$25.

Drawing will be November 20th at 1:00 p.m.

Tickets available at the library.



Contributions are needed to continue the paper!

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

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

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

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

NAME _____

MAILING ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

Town Times

Board of Selectmen: Every Monday at 6:00 p.m.
Town Administrator: Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, 8:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.
Planning Board: Second and fourth Wednesday at 7:00 p.m.
Board of Health: First Tuesday of the month at 7:00 p.m.
Conservation Commission: Last Saturday of the month at 9:00 a.m.
Board of Assessors: Monday through Thursday, 8:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
Fire Department training: Every Tuesday at 7:00 p.m. at the fire station
Building Inspector: Monday 4:30 - 6:00 p.m. or by appointment.
First Responders: Meeting/training: First and third Wednesday at 7:00 p.m. at the fire station
Cultural Council: Second Thursday at 4:15 p.m. at the library
Post Office: Mill River (413) 229-8582 — if and when it re-opens:
 Window hours: Monday - Friday 11:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.
 Saturday 9:00 - 11:30 a.m.
Southfield (413) 229-8476
 Window hours: Monday - Friday 9:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. and 1:30 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.
 Saturday 9:00 - 12:00 p.m.
Town Treasurer: Monday & Tuesday 8:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.
Tax Collector: Monday 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., Tues and Thurs 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.
Selectmen's Administrative Secretary: Monday - Friday 9:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.
Dog and Animal Control Officer: Cassie Keeley, (413) 429-7603
Town Clerk: 229-8278; 7:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. weekdays; Saturday by appointment
Town Hall: 229-8116
Police: Business office: 229-8161
Library: 229-6668

Transfer Station Hours:

Wednesday: 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
 Saturday: 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
 Sunday: 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

PERMITS ARE DUE JULY 6

and can be purchased for \$180

by mail or online at

www.newmarlborough.gov.

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

Emergency calls:

**Police, Fire, Medical
911**

New Marlborough Highway Department

Located on Mill River-Southfield Rd.

Hours:

Monday - Friday 7:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.
 PO Box 99, Mill River, MA 01244
 (413) 229-8165

We welcome advertisements from businesses owned by New Marlborough residents.

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

NM5VN Editorial Team

Joe Poindexter, issue editor; Diane Barth, designer; Martha Bryan, Jane Burke, Larry Burke, Robbi Hartt, Barbara Lowman, David Lowman, Steven Nester, Peter Schuyten, Barry Shapiro, Rachel Perera Weingeist.

Contributing writers and artists: Ann Getsinger, Fiona Kerr,

NM5VN Board of Directors

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

New Marlborough 5 Village News

appears monthly,

also online at

www.nm5vn.org

The next issue will be dated December 2021.

All copy must be submitted no later than November 17.

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

PO Box 243, Southfield, MA 01259

5villagenews@gmail.com

New Marlborough 5 Village News
P.O.Box 243, Southfield, MA 01259
e-mail 5villagenews@gmail.com

U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Non-Profit Org.
PERMIT #95
GT. BARRINGTON
MA 01230

CHANGE SERVICE
REQUESTED

SERVICE SECTOR 11/21

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

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