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MAGGIE'S LIST

Where it Came From —

Where It's Going

By Debra Herman

I started Maggie's List on April 14, 2008 — the day before tax day (I don't remember whether I had filed early or requested an extension). My motivation for starting the list was pretty simple. I had a list of email addresses for a now-defunct community group, and I was finding it cumbersome to manage mass mailings. I did not want to hand over the addresses of everyone on the list to everyone else; still, I wanted all list members to be able to converse. What to do?

After pondering this conundrum for a few days, it occurred to me that there was a need for an easy way for people in town to communicate about whatever was on their mind. I did imagine people promoting garage sales or seeking good plumbers, but I also thought that local candidates could make their pitches for votes and field questions from list members. I guessed that others would find uses I didn't anticipate — and they have, indeed, done so.

In choosing a vehicle for implementing the list, I briefly considered Yahoo Groups, a facility with which I had had previous experience, but I soon concluded that Google was the wave of the future, and that is the vehicle I chose. (By the way, I originally wanted the name to be maggieslist and not maggies-list with a hyphen, but I made a silly error and the hyphen won the day.)

To prime the pump, I invited all of my New Marlborough email contacts to join. A few signed up im-



Debra Herman and Maggie

photo courtesy of Debra Herman

mediately, maybe just because they knew me. Others had no idea what the list was about and demurred. In the beginning, I hoped to get things going by setting an example, and I was by far the most prolific poster. If I knew of something happening in town, I posted a message. Sometimes I posted for those who wanted to get information out but who felt shy about posting themselves.

I used a variety of strategies to expand membership. I created postcards that I handed out at Elihu Burritt Day. I accosted people using the library Wi-Fi or collecting their mail at the Mill River Post Office. Growth was slow in the first few years, but I never lost faith in the idea, and the list grew in fits and starts.

At some point, list members themselves became my best salesmen. Steve Cunningham, for example, has likely recruited anyone and everyone who bought produce from him at the Southfield farmer's market. Others sent me neighbors and friends. In the beginning I knew just about everyone on the list by name and face. Now many are known to me only through their posts.

As the list has grown, the complexity of managing it well has also grown. There have been periods when controversy has threatened to get a bit too heated. People have sometimes questioned my decisions, and I have, at times, taken their criticisms and complaints

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Maggie's List, continued

a bit too much to heart. Nonetheless, I stuck with it because I never lost the conviction that Maggie's List matters and the belief that good things have come and will continue to come from the information it spreads and the connections it makes.

Now, eight-plus years in, I have begun to ponder what the future of the list should be. I have no intention of abandoning Maggie's List, but I do feel that its growing importance portends a time when it should be something other than one person's project. At the same time, I am loathe to give the list over to a person or a group that does not share my vision.

For me Maggie's List is, in essence, a list of people who are part of the New Marlborough community and who wish to communicate with other community members. For now, it functions well enough as a Google Group, but the day may come when technology moves on to something else. The list should be able to evolve with the times.

While there are now for-profit companies offering to manage a community email list, I prefer to see our list remain non-profit and locally based. I have also toyed with the idea of expanding the Maggie's List idea to other Berkshire communities. (Some towns, such as Egremont with its egremontneighbors community bulletin board, already have their own group.)

How to ensure that Maggie's survives and thrives is something that is on my mind. In pondering the possibilities and challenges, I welcome the thinking of other list members. If you have something to say on the subject, you know how to reach me — and all the other list members. Sign up and give us your two cents.

The Maggie's Mechanics

I like to think of Maggie's List as a list of people — linked by a connection to the town of New Marlborough and an interest in being part of a free-form, online community dialog. Structurally, however, Maggie's List is a Google Group. Much of how the list functions is dictated by how Google designed and implemented such groups.

As a Google Group, Maggie's List is actually a list of email addresses. I add addresses upon request. Interested parties can also request that their names be added via the Google Groups website. (I do ask people to state their connection to New Marlborough before I add them.) I remove addresses upon request, but list members can use a Google provided self-service link to remove themselves.

Anyone with an email address on the list can post messages by emailing maggies-list@googlegroups.com from the listed email address. Because Maggie's List is a moderated group, I receive a message via Google asking me to approve or deny the post whenever a member sends a message to the group address. In the rare instances that I choose to deny a post, it is typically because the sender's email account has been compromised, and the content of

the message is not truly from the list member and likely contains malicious links or other dangerous content. I also deny messages that clearly were intended for my eyes only and not for the group as a whole. Sometimes people post the same message twice or more, because they are not sure that their first attempt succeeded. I deny the duplicate.

On very rare occasions, I have found some aspect of a post unacceptable and have chosen not to post it. In such cases, I typically contact the poster with my reason. I loathe denying messages so I use this power sparingly and reluctantly.

Because Maggie's List is moderated, there is a delay between the time a sender requests a posting and the time at which it is actually posted to the list. If you are lucky, I might see your post moments after you make it. If you are not so lucky, there might be lag of several hours or more. As I am generally able to access my email several times a day, the delay is likely to be no more than half a day, but I make no guarantees. (I feel especially bad when posts about lost dogs don't appear in a timely fashion, as Maggie's List is named after my now deceased dog Maggie, who loved hiking at Questing and listening to children read to her at New Marlborough Central School.) Be assured that I do my best to get things out as soon as I possibly can.

Here are some things people get confused about:

- For reasons known only to Google, if you post a message, that message is not sent to your email inbox. If you must know that your message has actually been posted, go to <https://groups.google.com/forum/#!forum/maggies-list> and check to see if it has appeared.
- Even though I do get to say thumbs up or thumbs down on each message, do not include any text intended for my eyes only. Create your message exactly as you want it to appear.
- There is no prohibition on talk about politics or potentially controversial topics. I do not censor posts because I disagree with their content. I do, however, insist upon politeness and something I will call neighborliness.
- I do my best to offer individual assistance to people who are having issues with the list. Please understand that how quickly I respond is a function of the complexity of your request and what else I have on my plate at the time. Then, too, there are times when I am just stumped.
- Originally I required that list members had to live or work in town. I have loosened this rule over the years and have allowed some who do not meet these criteria to join. The exceptions are typically people with some other connection to the town, such as someone with a child in New Marlborough Central School, former residents, people who grew up in town and who want

THE DAY OF THE ARBORISTS

They stole into New Marlborough village in the early light of October 26 like brightly colored invaders from some prehistoric era. Then they deployed to the New Marlborough Cemetery and the Village Green and, crying out with the whir and rasp of sharpened steel, attacked. Their foes: the dying trees and limbs of trees that threatened centuries-old headstones and the safety of passersby.

It was Arbor Day in New Marlborough, a day in which Southern Berkshire tree service companies donate their skills and labor, not to mention their lifts, stump grinders, limbers, and chain saws, to worthy causes. The event, in which area tree service companies “give back” to their communities, was sponsored by the New Marlborough Historical Society, after arborist John Field communicated an interest in the historic New Marlborough Cemetery to Society Vice President John Schreiber. The arborists pruned seventeen trees whose limbs threatened headstones, removed a dying maple, and planted four new sugar maples along the entryway into the cemetery. They also removed a dead maple on the New Marlborough Village Green (and were rewarded with a lunch generously provided by Peter Platt and Meredith Kennard of the Old Inn on the Green).

The group has tackled tree problems in the Berkshire Botanical Garden, which is its sponsor, and surrounding towns for a dozen years. The day in New

Marlborough was its thirteenth. As in the past, the tree professionals earned continuing education credits with an afternoon seminar, this time on chain-saw safety and technique presented by Mark Przekurat of Weare, New Hampshire.



Top: Twenty-nine professionals donated their services to New Marlborough. Above: Whelan Nurseries contributed four sugar maples to the New Marlborough Cemetery. Left: An arborist prunes a limb high up on a white pine.



Tree services that contributed their time and talent included: Barrett Tree Service, Sheffield; Brush Hill Tree Service, West Stockbridge; Burkhart Works; Butternut Tree and Land Care, New Marlborough; Ingersoll Land Care, Sheffield; John W. Field Tree Service, Sandisfield; Race Mountain Tree Services, Sheffield; Treecology, Tyringham; and Whalen Nursery, Great Barrington. □

Joe Poindexter

Maggie's List, continued

to maintain a connection, residents of neighboring towns with an interest in activities in town, and so on. There may come a day when I need to rethink this flexibility, but that is how it stands today.

- Maggie's List is not a public utility. It is just my personal project. Perhaps that needs to change! But for now, I am the sole “owner” of the group and, in the end, I am the arbiter as to what is allowed and what is not.

There are now more than 450 email addresses on the list. In the early days, I worked hard to recruit new members. I still invite anyone I meet who lives in New Marlborough to join. (I just found a new member in someone who helped with some work around my house.)

Feel free to email me at debra@dtrain.com if you want to be added to the list. If you know of someone who might want to be on the list, please invite that person to write me as well. Do not give me an email address to add without first getting the permission of the owner of that address. Adding someone without his or her permission is a serious violation of Google's policies.

Maggie's List has a life of its own. I try to let it go where it will, while doing my best to keep it healthy and trouble free. Otherwise, I just water and fertilize as needed. □

Debra Herman, a technical writer and trainer for Two Sigma Investments, now lives in Housatonic.

Town Business Is Your Business



BOARD OF SELECTMEN

October 24: With all three members present, the Board's first order of business was to appoint four local residents to the Town's Agricultural Commission. They are Tom Brazie and John Miller from New Marlborough village and Jan Johnson and Eli Cook of Mill River. All four applied to be appointed to the commission. As previously reported, the Agricultural Commission was established by the Board last April to represent the agricultural community and its interests to local government and to promote agricultural awareness and protect farmland and other natural resources. As Chairman Nat Yohalem noted, "We have a farming community here, which is one of our charms, and I'd like to see us attract and encourage more people to engage in farming." The members will serve one-year terms except for this year, when their terms will run from October through June 30, 2017. The commission's first meeting was scheduled for Monday, October 31, at 5:00 p.m. at the Town Hall.

After approving the minutes from the October 17 meeting, the Board received a broadband update from Broadband Committee Chairman Richard Long, who reported that Massachusetts Broadband Institute (MBI) has approached him about the Town making a contribution towards MBI's legal fees. According to Mr. Long, Deputy Executive Director and General Counsel Philip Holahan told him MBI has spent "a lot of money on New Marlborough-related process" and that he's getting pressure to see if the Town would be

"We have a farming community here, which is one of our charms, and I'd like to see us attract and encourage more people to engage in farming."

willing to contribute something towards the legal fees it has been incurring. "We don't have to pay them anything," explained Mr. Long, but suggested the Board might consider making a modest contribution "as a gesture of good will."

A skeptical Mr. Yohalem said he'd never heard of "a government agency of any kind coming in and saying 'would you be willing to pay some of our expenses.' It just doesn't happen." Nevertheless, after a discussion in which it was noted the Town is hoping to receive a grant of nearly \$1 million from MBI toward its broadband build-out costs, Mr. Yohalem suggested to Mr. Long that he tell MBI that "it's too early in the process and we don't know what's going to happen [with the Town's broadband effort], but we promise not to forget the request and will revisit it at a later date."

Under town administrator updates, Mari Enoch informed the Board that Emergency Management Director Ed Harvey is applying for a \$2,600 grant from the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency, or MEMA, for a trailer on which to haul a generator or other emergency equipment for his department.

Selectman Michele Shalaby said that a letter of gratitude, signed by the selectmen, will shortly be going out to the Town's veterans in conjunction with Veterans Day on November 11, thanking them for their service to the country. It will be accompanied by a list of Veterans Day activities, including luncheons and dinners, scheduled to be held that day.

Selectman Tara White said she is in the process of collecting names and setting up appointments with roofing contractors about working on the Town Hall roof, which, as reported last month, has been leaking, apparently due to the way the gutters on the street side of the building were fastened to the slate tiles on the roof.

Mr. Yohalem announced that the new police cruiser, gray and slightly smaller than the previous cruiser, has arrived and is already in service. (For a photograph and further details see page 23.) And finally, just before adjourning, the Board firmed up plans and a schedule for the selectmen to hand out Halloween candy at Town Hall from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. on October 31.

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November 7: After approving the minutes from the October 24 meeting, the Board discussed proposals from three roofing contractors for repairing the Town Hall roof. Selectman White said she met with one contractor who proposed replacing approximately thirty-five cracked or chipped slate roofing tiles at a cost of \$1,575 and caulking the nail heads on the gutter guards on the street side of the building in case they're contributing to the problem. Another contractor said he believes, based on the water stains on the ceiling inside the building, that the leaking is the result of ice dams, probably from two winters ago when they were very prevalent, and that the solution is simply to keep snow from accumulating on the roof. He did note there were some broken tiles on the roof but didn't believe they were contributing to the problem. A third contractor proposed replacing just the tiles over the upstairs side door to the building for \$400, but never got back to Ms. Enoch on what he would charge to replace all the damaged tiles. In the end, the Board voted to accept the first proposal for \$1,575, since the tiles need to be replaced in any case, and see if that cures the problem.

The Board appointed Jane Burke, founder and executive director of New Marlborough's Flying Cloud Institute, as the Town's representative on the Southern Berkshire Regional School District's Superintendent Screening Committee. The Committee, which will comprise thirteen members, including one from each of the five district towns, as well as members representing parents, teachers, the school administration, and the School Committee, will select and interview semi-finalist candidates to replace Superintendent David Hastings, who is retiring at the end of the school year.

Board Secretary Sharon Fleck reported that Deputy

Fire Chief David Smith, who is also president of the Fire Company, recently completed the Call/Volunteer Recruit Firefighter Training program at the Massachusetts Fire Fighting Academy, making him one of only three members of the Department to have done so. As Ms. Fleck explained, it's a rigorous program requiring 240 hours of training on nights and weekends. She said the graduation ceremony was held last week at the Department of Fire Services' Springfield campus. The Board plans to recognize this achievement with a letter of congratulation. (For more on David Smith's award, see page 10.)

Broadband Committee Chairman Richard Long reported that Frontier Communications was the only company to file a comprehensive bid to the Town's request for broadband proposals. A second possibly interested provider, Charter Communications, submitted no bidder's questions, and Mr. Long said he was not surprised when the company did not follow up with a bid. Based on an initial review, the Frontier proposal appears to meet the minimum requirements, said Mr. Long, who added that the Broadband Committee would soon make a recommendation to the Board on whether to accept it. The next step would be for the Town to enter into contract negotiations with Frontier.

Noting this is the first year early voting has been offered in Massachusetts, Mari Enoch reported that 275 voters, out of nearly 1,100 registered in New Marlborough, elected to vote early in this year's election and that the process went very smoothly due to the efforts Town Clerk Kathy Chretien.

Reporting on his most recent shared-services meeting, Mr. Yohalem said Sheffield is looking to hire a part-time conservation agent as of July 1, and that it would

Frontier Communications was the only company to file a comprehensive bid to the Town's request for broadband proposals.



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be "very, very happy to share" the position with New Marlborough. As reported previously, the Board has wanted to hire a salaried conservation agent to handle Conservation Commission business along much the same lines as Sanitary Inspector Scott McFarland does for the Board of Health. Mr. Yohalem also said there was discussion with Sheffield about the towns holding two joint Board of Selectmen meetings. The first would be hosted by Sheffield in January, a second by New Marlborough at a date still to be determined. Further, there was discussion about inviting selectmen from other towns that have shown an interest in shared services.

November 14: With Tara White and Michele Shalaby present and Chairman Nat Yohalem conferencing in by phone, the Board's first order of business was to award a contract to replace two culverts on Clayton Mill River Road, which is due for reconstruction next year. However, because there was only one bid, that of CSI Concrete Systems for \$82,475, the Board concurred with Highway Superintendent Chuck Loring's recommendation to rebid the job.

Similarly, there was only one bidder for the annual snow and ice removal contract, New Marlborough's Keith Wilkinson, who bid \$75 an hour to include a one-ton truck and a plow to assist the Highway Department with its snow removal efforts. This time, the Board was inclined to award him the job, but at **Ms. White's urging, agreed to put the contract on hold for a week to give Mr. Loring a chance to determine how much other towns are paying for their supplemental plowing services.**

Ms. Enoch reported she has been in contact with Tom Scanlon, head of the South Deerfield accounting firm Scanlon & Associates, about conducting an audit of the Town's books for the 2016 fiscal year. He can perform

the audit, she said, in the first quarter of the 2017. Selectman White, who is also the Town accountant, said she would prefer the audit be completed sooner, so as to reconcile a discrepancy between her numbers and those of the treasurer. As reported earlier, the Town's books are technically supposed to close and be submitted to the state Department of Revenue by September 30. Mr. Yohalem asked Ms. Enoch to work with Ms. White, Treasurer Marilyn Fracasso, and Mr. Scanlon to come up with a timeframe that works for everyone concerned.

As reported last week, Sheffield and New Marlborough have discussed holding a pair of joint selectmen meetings as part of their efforts to promote shared services between the towns. Mr. Yohalem said he and Sheffield Town Administrator Rhonda LaBombard have now drafted a letter for approval by the two boards that will be sent to the boards of other area towns, inviting them to attend a joint meeting scheduled for January 23 at 6:30 p.m. at the Sheffield Town Hall. The letter lays out an agenda for the meeting and describes cost-sharing agreements already in place between New Marlborough and Sheffield. These include two pieces of highway equipment and a joint bid on a sand and gravel contract. More recently, the two towns have discussed the sharing of a salaried conservation agent. Saying that Ms. LaBombard will present the letter to her Board tonight for its approval, Mr. Yohalem asked the other Board members for their approval, which they gave.

The meeting then moved to a discussion, led by Broadband Committee Chairman Richard Long, of the broadband proposal submitted last week by Frontier Communications. As Mr. Long summarized, Frontier is offering a basic internet service of 12 megabits per second (Mbps) at no cost to the subscriber. Subscribers would pay Frontier a monthly fee for higher tiers of service, which begin at 30 Mbps and go up to 50 Mbps, 100 Mbps, and 1 Gbps, or gigabit per second. Additionally, subscribers will be offered a so-called triple play of internet, phone, and TV or any combination thereof. Pricing for the higher tiers or added services isn't spelled out, but Frontier included in the proposal a current pricing sheet for their Connecticut subscribers as an example.

For its part, the Town would pay Frontier a monthly fee of \$30 per "premises connected or passed," in effect virtually all the residences in town, to reimburse it for the cost of building the system. Over the course of the proposed fifteen-year contract, this would come

To augment their cost-sharing program, New Marlborough and Sheffield have discussed sharing a salaried conservation agent.

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to roughly \$5.4 million. However, the Town expects to receive a construction allocation grant of \$920,000 from MBI, which would bring the net amount owed to Frontier down to \$4.48 million. **According to Mr. Long, a “step-down” in its price of \$30 per premises after a specified number of years, held out as a possibility in earlier discussion with Frontier, was not offered in the bid.**

Instead, Frontier is offering to rebate \$30 per month to every subscriber who moves up to 30 Mbps or more. So if the town, as expected, imposes a monthly administrative fee of between \$35 and \$40 on subscribers to the service, the \$30 rebate will partially offset the fee when subscribers upgrade to a higher tier of service.

Mr. Long believes that the administrative fee “should mitigate to a large extent the financial impact on the Town, in that we should be able to collect most of the overall cost from subscribers, as opposed to any taxpayer obligation.” He calculates that with a \$40 fee and a “take rate” (the percentage of people who subscribe to the service) of 65 percent, which he believes is relatively conservative, the Town would essentially break even, without any charge to the taxpayer. Frontier typically gets take rates of up to 80 percent, which, Mr. Long believes, is because the base service is free.

In addition, the “linear connection allowance” for driveways and private roads is 500 feet, with the cost of additional distance set at between \$1 and \$1.50 per foot. And finally, Frontier indicated in its proposal that it would waive the \$149 installation fee for subscribers signing up within the first ninety days of service.

On the negative side, Frontier refused the Town’s request that it be responsible for collecting the fee imposed by the Town. Mr. Long said he had explained to Frontier that “we need some leverage to insure that we can collect what is owed to the Town.” In response, Frontier agreed to suspend internet service to any customer who was not on the Town’s “approved subscriber” list. “So that does give us leverage,” he added.

After several rounds of questions from the Board, Mr. Yohalem made a motion to approve the Frontier proposal subject to the following conditions:

- That the Town receives a grant from MBI in an amount that is satisfactory to the Town;
- That the Town and Frontier enter into a mutually acceptable agreement within a time period acceptable to both parties;
- That the agreement is approved at a Town meeting;
- That if a home-rule petition is required, approval is obtained by a date acceptable to both parties;
- That any agreement must be in compliance with state law.

The motion was approved unanimously.

In a final piece of business, the Board formed a contract negotiating committee comprising Town Administrator Enoch, Mr. Long, a second Broadband Committee member of his choosing, and the three selectmen. (For more on the Frontier proposal see page 12.)

Peter Schuyten

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CONSERVATION COMMISSION

October 22: With all four members, Ned Wilson, John Schreiber, Rona Easton, and Freddy Friedman, present the Commission heard a Request For Determination (RDA) for Dr. Schreiber of 112 Hillingdon Road (Dr. Schreiber recused himself from the consideration). Lee Hayes of the Berkshire Environmental Research Center (BERC) explained how a benthic mat (a fabric placed on the floor of a pond or lake that blocks sunlight) would be installed to manage the invasive growth of phragmites in his client's pond. The Commission agreed that the work would not impact the resource area and would not need any further permitting.

With Dr. Schreiber rejoining the meeting, Tom Coote, director of BERC, joined his associate, Mr. Hayes, by conference phone to address the continued hearing for the Notice of Intent (NOI) for Michele and David Shalaby of 1093 Clayton Mill River Road. The scope of work includes restoration of a pond, repair of a valve at the dam, and renovation of a stream crossing. Mr. Hayes reported that he had completed six more test pits to assess the arsenic levels in the pond. The results will determine the size of the area and the location on-site for burial of the soils dredged from the pond. Mr. Coote explained that they would like to proceed with repairing the valve to the dam. After some discussion, the Commission voted to approve the permit pending receipt of a Massachusetts 401 Water Quality Certificate and sign-off from the Army Corps of Engineers.

Mr. Coote and Mr. Hayes continued to address the Commission on behalf of their client Renata Pompa of 964 Canaan Southfield Road in a continuation of an RDA hearing from last month. The work involved excavating and removing phragmites from a catch basin. The Commission agreed that the work would not impact the wetland resource and that no further permitting was required.

Mike Parsons of Kelly, Granger and Parsons next submitted an RDA for Anthony and Donna Prisendorf, of 114 Clayton Mill River Road. At issue was a failed

septic system at the residence. Mr. Parsons explained the location and capacity for a new system. The Commission agreed that no further permitting would be required.

Finally Shannon Boomsma from White Engineering asked for a continuation of the hearing for her client, Sanford Panitch of 1143 Hartsville Mill River Road. The Commission had not yet received a review from the Massachusetts Natural Heritage Endangered Species Program, so the continuation was granted.

After the mail was reviewed, the meeting adjourned. □

Martha Bryan

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A NEW VOICE FOR FARMERS

Do you raise chickens, rabbits, cows or goats? Do you spend summer and fall sharing the bounties from your garden, vineyard, or orchard with appreciative customers? Do you search locally for fresh food to grace your table and tantalize your palette?

On October 24, New Marlborough joined more than 160 other towns in the commonwealth when the Board of Selectman appointed an Agricultural Commission. Among its duties, according to the Massachusetts Department of Energy and Environmental Affairs, are advocating for local farmers and farm interests, resolving farm-related conflicts or problems, collaborating with other town boards on development, and starting farmer's markets.

Appointed by the Board of Selectmen, the members of the newly formed Commission include: Chair Jan Johnson, Vice-Chair Tom Brazie, Eli Cook, and John Miller, each of whom is a local farmer. They are already developing a list of goals, to be achieved over the next eight months, among them reaching out to other town agricultural commissions and researching available resources at the state level. The Commission's first action was to create a notice asking residents who farm to contact the Commission in an effort to start a conversation and

gather local farmers' ideas and concerns.

As a voice for farmers in New Marlborough, the Commission emphasized its goal of promoting sustainability and improving access to local farm goods, while demonstrating the importance of local farming to the community and its effect on the environment and economy. Although the Commission has no legal mandate or enforcement authority, it can make requests and recommendations to the Board of Selectmen. Its first such request will be to establish a twice-weekly farmers' market, to be held in the center of New Marlborough. Since access to fresh food on a regular basis is important to the health and well being of all, commission members are also considering whether residents might be interested in home delivery of fresh goods.

John Miller of Brookmede Farm stated, "The Commission is a good way to build a healthy agricultural environment in New Marlborough." Residents are encouraged to reach out to the Commission to share their views on the role of farming in New Marlborough. Members are listed on the Town's website and can be contacted via email or phone. □

Sandra Walker

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NMF&R STATUS REPORT

Deputy Chief David Smith Attains Hard-Earned Certification

by Larry Burke

On November 12, Fire Chief Chuck Loring, Deputy Chief Dave Smith, and Captain Ed Harvey met at the firehouse in Southfield to talk over the general state of affairs of fire and emergency medical response in the town of New Marlborough. Citing an article in the January 2016 issue of the NM5VN about our firefighters, Chief Loring said that the manpower situation was, "worse than a year ago." He added that, while there are eighteen firefighters on the rolls – not a bad number for a small town – only five or six routinely respond on the calls. Similarly, there are eight EMTs on the emergency medical side of things, but for all practical purposes, only four EMTs handle the great majority of ambulance calls. Chief Loring added that the shortage of responders is not just a New Marlborough problem, but common almost everywhere. Many of our volunteer personnel have day jobs in other towns and simply cannot leave work to respond to a call in New Marlborough, and even if their employers would allow them to go, they could not get to the scene in a timely fashion.

Ed Harvey spoke of a couple of recent calls where the thinning of the ranks was apparent, one being a head-on crash on Clayton-Mill River Road involving a car and a cement truck, where only about six fire and medical personnel handled a complex extrication of a patient suffering severe injuries. Added assistance from the Canaan Connecticut fire department was called in. For a recent mutual aid call for a house fire in Monterey, only four New Marlborough firefighters made the call. Fortunately, in both those instances, the responders were successful in saving the patient and the house.

An added factor in the manpower crisis is that our volunteers are getting older, many having served the town more than twenty years. A major loss to the department occurred earlier this year when Jim Redman took early retirement from his job and moved with his wife, Jess, to northern Vermont. Jim had long served as engineer, one of the real mainstays of New Marlborough Fire & Rescue. His departure leaves a large hole to fill.

On the brighter side of things, and actually somewhat related to the limited ranks, Dave Smith spoke of the great virtues of the new Engine 1, which arrived back in February. The truck has a number of automated or semi-automated features, and is designed to be operated by a small crew – just what is needed at this juncture.

The biggest and best news for New Marlborough Fire and Rescue involves Deputy Chief David Smith himself. On Saturday, October 29, at the Massachusetts Fire Academy in Springfield, Dave received his certification in the Firefighter 1/2 course. Dave was one of twenty-



Deputy Fire Chief David Smith, left, receives a diploma certifying his completion of the rigorous Firefighter 1/2 course from Fire Chief Chuck Loring

nine participants in the three-and-a-half month course, with twelve of his class hailing from Berkshire County. The training signified a huge commitment by Dave (and by his family): 240 hours in the classroom and in practical exercises; starting on July 9, every Saturday and Sunday at the Fire Academy facility in Springfield and every Monday and Wednesday evening; nightly reading assignments totaling 1,200 pages on firefighting theory and practice and another 600 pages on dealing with hazardous materials; and, by far not the least, exams, both written and performed, on close to ninety skills.

Dave, who signed on as a volunteer firefighter in 2000 and has risen through the ranks to be second-in-command, now joins New Marlborough Fire & Rescue members Ed Harvey and Winona Carpenter as Firefighter 1/2 certified. Reflecting on the experience, Dave said that at the age of forty-six he was one of the oldest trainees, which showed a bit in the more physical aspects of the course – ladder work, for instance – but he enjoyed the challenge of keeping pace with trainees twenty or more years his junior. He was also struck by the military-style discipline that he and his fellow trainees were subject to. Frequent inspections of uniform and turnout gear carried penalties. On one occasion, Dave left the belt of his uniform at home, resulting in a deduction in points off his overall grade.

Dave said one of his primary motivations for taking the course was simply, "for the sake of knowledge." Chuck Loring quickly added that, from a practical standpoint, Dave's new wealth of knowledge will be valuable within the department, in helping to train our own firefighters, but also in that he now shares a common understanding

continued

NEWS FROM THE HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT

The New Marlborough Highway Department has been working on several projects this season. In July, Norfolk Road and Corashire Road underwent full depth reclamation and resurfacing. Also in July, Sisson Hill Road, both north and south, received a coat of chip seal to help repel moisture. During July and August, approximately 46,500 square yards of New Marlborough road surfaces were chip sealed. The Canaan Southfield Road was completed in September when a top coat was applied from the four corners to Vaczy's Bridge. The Clayton Mill River Road was closed for several weeks as the bridge and culvert were replaced. This huge project was started in August, and the road is once again open to travelers. It is anticipated that the rest of the road will be completed next summer using a MassWorks Grant.

In an ongoing project, we replaced old concrete posts and cables with 2,200 feet of new guardrails on Canaan Southfield Road in October. Road crack sealing on the Hartsville New Marlborough Road took place in October, as well. Highway workers continue to patch roads and clean culverts, along with keeping the unpaved roads safe.

In August, New Marlborough once again teamed up with the Town of Sheffield with a shared-services purchase of a hotbox. It has been used to keep blacktop hot during the long trip from Lenox. The excavator, which was purchased in July, has been getting a lot of use replacing and installing culverts and cutting shoulders on unpaved roads. The excavator was also used to do

some of the clean-up on the Clayton Mill River Road culvert and bridge project.

Once again, this winter season the Highway Department will provide reasonable snow and ice control to public roads and properties. Motorists should always use their best judgment and recognize that they are traveling at their own risk in inclement weather. With more than ninety miles of roads for which the Highway Department is responsible and only six highway workers, we ask for your patience and cooperation. On school days, bus routes take priority before all other roads. After the paved roads are plowed, the unpaved roads are plowed. Sand, for residential use only — please limit your use to two pails at a time — is always available at the Highway Garage.

A few suggestions for wintertime driving:

- Use common sense and, if possible, refrain from driving during a snowstorm;
- Reduce your speed and drive cautiously;
- All-season radial tires are not the best choice during the winter months; consider using snow and studded tires, especially on unpaved roads;
- Do not leave your vehicle on any road or property that is maintained by the Town;
- Tune in to the local weather forecasts and pay attention to changing conditions. □

*Charles Loring, Superintendent,
New Marlborough Highway Department*

NMF&R, continued

in firefighting practices with all the Firefighter 1/2 personnel from our neighboring towns, whom we team up with on mutual aid calls. Finally, Dave gave credit to his wife Nan for weathering the sixteen consecutive weekends that saw her doing double parental duty while he was over in Springfield.

In closing the discussion, our three fire officers had the following requests of our townspeople:

- Consider joining NMF&R as a firefighter or first responder. New blood is urgently needed. It is a big

commitment, without a doubt, but a valuable and rewarding way of giving back to our community.

- To help your emergency responders, make sure you have your 911 signs placed at the end of your driveway. The signs can be ordered through Dave Herrick at the Mill River Store.
- Check your smoke and carbon-monoxide detectors. Change the batteries, and, if the units themselves are ten or more years old, replace them. And that goes for hard-wired detectors as well. □

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Christmas Eve at Christ Trinity

Children's Service at 11 am
Lessons & Carols Services

At 5pm and 10 pm

Christ Trinity Church, Sheffield

An Episcopal & Lutheran Congregation
Rt. 7 & Maple Ave. ChristTrinitySheffield.org

At Last, a Broadband Proposal

Frontier Communications Offers a Promising Bid

by Barry R. Shapiro

After what seems like an eternity and much frustration for residents, a proposal to provide state-of-the-art fiber-optic broadband service to the Town has finally been approved by the Board of Selectmen and will be presented to the voters as soon as contract details are ironed out.

"It has been a long process, but we are delighted that we will be able to present to the Town what we consider to be an excellent proposal," said Richard Long, chairman of the Broadband Committee.

In the end, only one entity, Frontier Communications, responded to the request for proposals, which the Town published on October 7. The Committee reviewed the proposal upon receipt on November 7, found it "advantageous overall," and presented it to the Board of Selectmen. The Board in turn approved the proposal at its meeting on November 14 and voted to submit the matter at a Special Town Meeting to be held as soon as all of the contract terms are worked out. A Special Town Meeting tentatively scheduled for December 8 has been postponed, since the contract terms are not expected to be finalized for several months.

Frontier, which was formed in 1935 as a utility services company, began expanding into the telecommunications field in the 1990's and, following a number of acquisitions, now has approximately 30,000 employees serving 5.2 million residential customers, 528,000 business customers, 4.5 million broadband subscribers and 1.6 million video subscribers in twenty-nine states. In 2010, through an acquisition of certain Verizon markets, Frontier gained significant experience in operating fiber-to-the-premises markets in Oregon, Washington, Indiana, and South Carolina and has now also expanded to Florida, Texas, and California. It also operates in Connecticut where it has 3,600 customers, with plans to serve another 27,000 in the works. It is ranked as a Fortune 500 and S&P 500 Index Company. Annual revenues are in excess of \$5 billion.

Here is what Frontier is promising:

- To build a fiber-to-the-home network with a basic download speed of 12 megabits per second (Mbps), with optional upgrades of 30 Mbps, 50 Mbps and 100 Mbps (upload and download). Service of 1 Gbps (1,000 Mbps) will also be available;
- To fund the entire capital investment of the network (which would be owned by Frontier) with the Town reimbursing Frontier, for the cost over fifteen years (see further discussion below);
- To provide subscribers with a "triple play" of internet, phone and video services;

- To begin service to some subscribers within twenty-four months of the contract date, with 96 percent of households connected within thirty-six months;
- To connect all homes at no charge with a linear allowance of 500 feet from the pole to the home; for private roads or driveways in excess of 500 feet, the cost for the additional distance would range between \$1 and \$1.50 per foot;
- To provide the equipment necessary for each residence to receive the internet signal and have Wi-Fi service;
- To waive the \$149 installation charge for all households that accept service within the first ninety days of availability.
- To provide a "no fee" basic Internet service of 12 Mbps download and 1.5 Mbps upload to any residents who request it (residents who take the "no fee" option would still be obligated to pay a monthly fee to the Town).
- To use the existing Frontier network in Connecticut to wire New Marlborough, running its cable up Norfolk Road (the Town would be divided into six service areas of 144 to 288 households each).
- To build in appropriate redundancy so that subscribers will not receive less than the promised service speed, even if traffic on the network is congested.
- To provide "highly competitive" pricing similar to what customers in Connecticut pay (pricing won't be determined until initial service). Frontier may also include an opportunity for a two-year rate lock.

The contract is expected to require that the Town reimburse Frontier for the cost of constructing the network by making mandatory payments to Frontier over a period of fifteen years. Such payments would not be subject to the annual approval of a budget by the voters and would need to be made regardless of any budget vote. Such a financial commitment is beyond the powers of the Town and requires state approval through what is called a "home rule petition." Approval of this petition as well as the contract with Frontier will be on the warrant for the Special Town Meeting.

"The Town will be asked to approve the contract and the petition so we can move forward with Frontier," said Nat Yohalem, chairman of the Board of Selectmen. "We consider this an important step forward."

It is not clear how long it will take for the legislature to act on the home rule petition once it is filed.

The economics of the contract with Frontier are still in flux but break down roughly as follows:

- Cost of construction is estimated at \$5.4 million;
- This is the amount the Town will owe to Frontier over fifteen years;

- MBI will provide \$920,000 toward the \$5.4 million cost, so the net amount owed by the Town to Frontier will be reduced to \$4.48 million;
- The \$4.48 million will be paid by the Town to Frontier over fifteen years through a monthly fee that the Town will impose on all residents who take Frontier's service (including those who take the "no fee" option). Current estimates put this monthly fee at about \$40 depending on the number of subscribers. This fee is in addition to the monthly subscription fee, if any, paid by the subscriber to Frontier. It is expected that Frontier will rebate \$30 to customers who take any package other than the "no fee" option.
- The Board of Selectmen hopes that the monthly fee the Town will impose on subscribers will be adequate to fund the amount that the Town will owe to Frontier. However, if the total of these monthly fees paid to the Town should be inadequate to cover the Town's annual obligation to Frontier, the difference will have to be paid out of the general tax revenues collected by the Town from all residents. In other words, it is possible that the cost of providing broadband to the Town will be borne, in part, by all residents, not just those who subscribe to the service, although the hope is that use of the Town's general tax revenue will not be necessary.

"We believe that the Town should be willing to fund any shortfall, given the substantial benefits we will all derive from broadband," said Mr. Long. "However, we're hopeful that enough residents will take the service so that this won't be necessary."

Tim Newman, New Marlborough's representative to WiredWest, confirms that WiredWest will not play a role in the arrangement with Frontier. "WiredWest is not competing with Frontier and would only have a role if the Town intends to build a municipal, town-owned network and is interested in the benefits of regionalization," Mr. Newman said. "WiredWest would aggregate towns that wish to be part of a group of town-owned networks. WiredWest would not be the service provider but would negotiate on behalf of the towns with private firms to provide all services, taking advantage of economies of scale and thereafter managing the network, taking the burden off town staff. This is apparently not the direction the Town has chosen to go."


In response, Mr. Long does not see a compelling reason to go with a regional network managed by WiredWest. "We don't see any meaningful capital cost savings in going with other towns," he said. Mr. Long reiterated that the decision to move forward will be subject to approval of MBI. "MBI is fully aware of what we're doing and we expect them to be supportive," he said. Approval of the Massachusetts Department of Revenue is also required.


While the negotiating committee (consisting of the

town administrator, two members of the Broadband Committee and the three members of the Board of Selectmen) is wrapping up contract details with Frontier, two other initiatives are still percolating. First, neighboring towns (including Monterey, Sandisfield, Tyringham, Tolland, and Blandford) are preparing a request for proposal seeking bidders to design, build, and operate individual networks in their towns. Second, MBI is about to publish its own request for proposals seeking a service provider for the underserved towns. "We are keeping an open mind about these initiatives but moving ahead with Frontier," said Mr. Yohalem.

So, we await the completion of the negotiations with Frontier and the results of a special town meeting. If the article is approved, the home rule petition will be filed with the state where Rep. William (Smitty) Pignatelli has promised quick action, although, as noted, timing is uncertain. Once approved by the state, work can commence and, hopefully, sometime in early 2019 the first homes in New Marlborough will be ushered into the 21st century, and the archaic world of dial up, DSL, satellite dishes, frozen computer screens, and "buffering" will exist, alongside the rotary dial phone, as quaint memories. □

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LAND TRUST NEWS

THE NEW MARLBORO PRESERVE

Buying 114 acres in New Marlborough village before year-end is an enormous challenge. Yet the opportunity to save this iconic land is simply too great not to try.

(For a map, photos and details, go to nmlandtrust.org.)

This land has everything that people care about — a long stretch of Umpachene watershed, deep woods stretching to Woodruff Mountain, open fields that can once again be farmland.

It's the missing puzzle piece in an arc of conserved properties. From Questing to the Village Green and down Route 183, significant connections will be made.

The Preserve can become a magical asset for everyone. Join with your neighbors in helping the Land Trust acquire this special land. □

Martha Bryan



map courtesy of the New Marlborough Land Trust

DECEMBER AT THE SOUTHFIELD CHURCH

By Robert Olsen

In this holiday season in which a sense of community seems more important than ever, I hope that you'll join me to partake in events we have planned at the Southfield Church to bring us together.

Almost Annual Holiday Market: On Saturday, December 3, from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., we will present our fourth Holiday Market featuring artists, bakers, crafters, farmers and writers from New Marlborough and slightly beyond. There'll be organic goodness from Jan Johnson's Mill River Farm and Berkshire Wildflower Honey; stunning photographic prints and cards from Cheryl Luft and Maggie Martin; fresh baked goods, sweet and savory, from Joan Hobart and daughter Laurel, the Flour Bin Gals; a menagerie of stuffed animals crocheted by Margot Rockefeller; historical mysteries from the pen of Leslie Wheeler; a cornucopia of homemade goods from Prue Spaulding; a variety store of toys and gifts from Maryann & Keith Watson; one-of-a-kind ceramics by artist Harry Hoy; baked goods for the animals in our families to raise funds for the Sheffield Whinnies 4H; and whimsical accessories and stylish jewelry from the creative hands of Joyce & Tom Weeks.

The Southfield Church offerings will include a decadent Hot Chocolate Bar and fresh baked cinnamon rolls. Proceeds from the day's sales will help fund the church's Deacon's Assistance Fund from which we provide emergency funds to our neighbors in need.

Please come support all our amazing vendors and enjoy a little holiday cheer!

Christmas Classics Theater: On Saturday, December 17, at 7:00 p.m., the Southfield Church will come alive with two American Christmas Classics. Yours truly will breathe life into Truman Capote's semi-autobiographical short story, "A Christmas Memory," followed by that perennial favorite of young and old alike, Dr. Seuss's "How the Grinch Stole Christmas." With simple props, costumes and staging, you'll be transported to nostalgic, wintery places suffused with these American authors' messages of love and relationship.

Following the performance, everyone is invited to the church hall for a festive reception. Admission for the evening's performance is "one can of soup" per attendee, or any other non-perishable food item, to continue our support of the Sheffield Food Assistance Program.

The Fifth Annual Festival of Lessons & Carols: On Christmas Eve, the sanctuary lights will dim, the candlelight will flicker, our ancient scriptures will be read, and an ecumenical choir of community voices will sing of hope, lift our spirits, and warm our hearts. Everyone is invited and welcome to attend this hour-long service, which begins at 7:00 p.m. An offering will be collected to support our Deacon's Assistance Fund. □

UPCOMING: *Events Calendar for December*

December 3: Holiday Market at the Southfield Church, featuring crafts, baked goods, works of art, and more, 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., proceeds go to the needy this holiday season

December 10: New Marlborough Central School Holiday Fair, a great opportunity to buy your holiday tree, plus cakes, used books, and maple syrup and the annual silent auction, all proceeds going to the Parent Teacher Association, 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at the school

December 17: Christmas Classics Theater, a dramatization of a Truman Capote short story and Dr. Seuss's "How the Grinch Stole Christmas" by Robert Olsen, 7:00 p.m. at the Southfield Church, followed by a reception at the Southfield Church Hall; admission: a non-perishable food item for the Sheffield Food Assistance Food Program

December 23: The Annual Holiday Sing, this year under the direction of Robert Olsen, followed by private consultations with Santa, 5:30 p.m. at the New Marlborough Meeting House on the Village Green

December 24: The Fifth Annual Festival of Lessons & Carols, 7:00 p.m. at the Southfield Church

LUNCHING AND LEARNING

On October 21, the New Marlborough Council on Aging hosted its final luncheon for 2016 and dispensed a lot of good advice for coping with the inevitable challenges of growing older. Catered by the Southern Berkshire Regional School District culinary department, the luncheon was attended by twenty-seven seniors, who were served not only a delicious lunch but also advice on preparing for unexpected emergencies and developing good health habits. They were given information on drug costs and local sources of food, clothing, and camaraderie, and they received an update on efforts to provide internet connectivity from Richard Long, chairman of the the New Marlborough Broadband Committee.

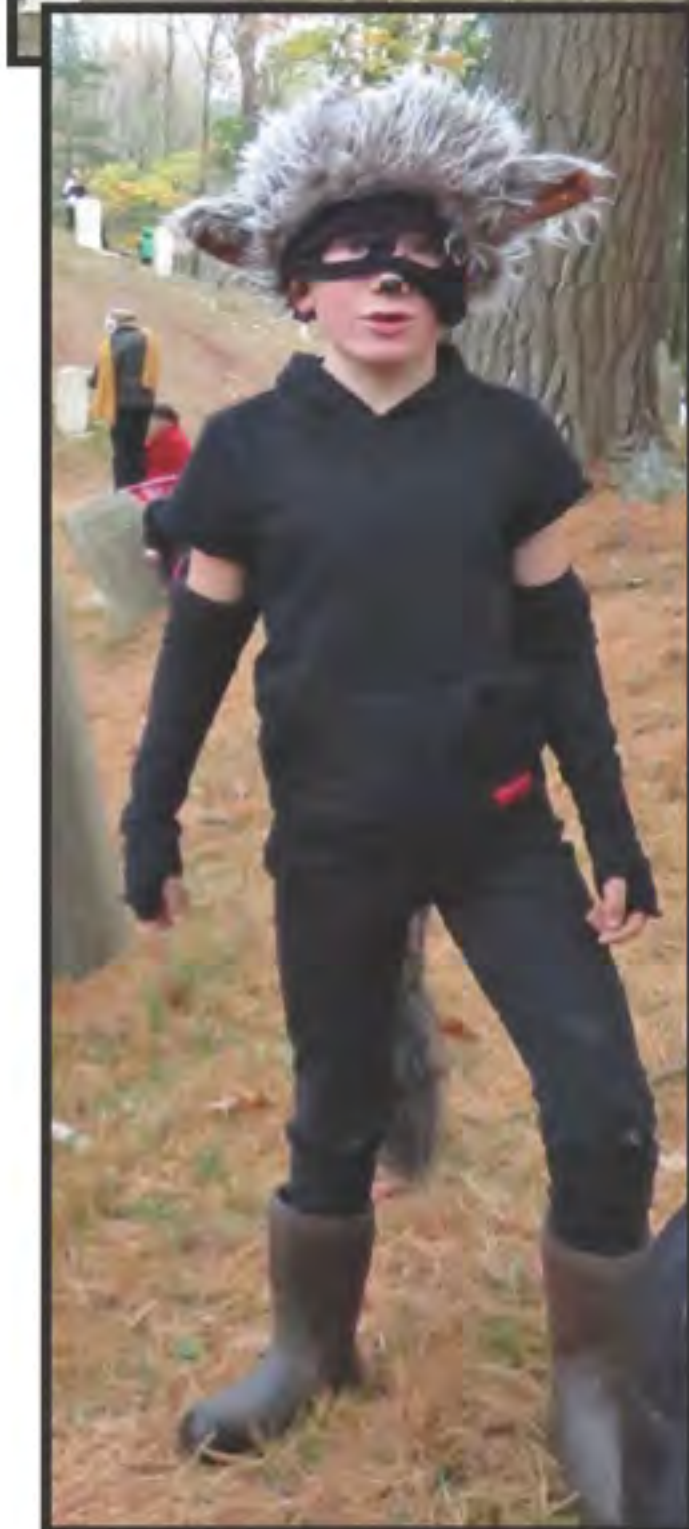
The Council looked back on two outings: one to Bennington Pottery and one to the Clock Museum and the Carousel Museum in Bristol, Connecticut. They were a hit, and the Council is planning other such trips next summer.

Anticipating the hazards of icy walkways this winter, the Council will make available buckets filled with sand and a scoop for placement outside the front door. Those interested should call Merry Abolafia at (413) 528-2816. Finally, the Council always welcomes a helping hand. Those interested in the Council's work to better serve the seniors of New Marlborough should call Prudence Spaulding at 413 229-8407. □

Prudence Spaulding

Happy Holidays





HALLOWEEN-ORAMA

Photographs by Larry Burke

Always a special occasion under the enthusiastic guidance of New Marlborough Town Librarian Deb O'Brien, Halloween got a little spookier in 2016. On October 29, Deb pulled out all the stops, enlisting the resources of the New Marlborough Historical Society and Land Trust, plus Freddy Friedman's hay wagon, to create an especially memorable celebration. Festivities began at the Village Green with a hay ride to the New Marlborough Village Cemetery, where long-deceased town elders made ghostly appearances (with assists from Tom Masters, Judy Thompson, Tom Stalker, and John Schreiber). The hay wagon then transported the revelers to the Land Trust field opposite the Meeting House. There Land Trust Executive Director Martha Bryan served hot cider, and Paul Hess lit the long-standing (and tinder-dry) Hess Spire, which sent a blaze of light into the darkening sky. It was a very spectral evening! □





SOUTHFIELD WATER COMPANY'S CATCH-22

It Needs a Second Well, and That's Just the Beginning

By Barbara and David Lowman

The Southfield Water Company, in existence since 1864, currently serves thirty-three households in the center of Southfield. As one would expect, the regulations governing water supply and distribution during those 152 years have changed considerably. At the present time, the company must address new standards of dependability of the water supply, which also will involve legal and organizational issues.

A bit of history: In 1864, the system began as a series of hand-dug, wood-lined trenches, roughly paralleling East Hill Road, that brought water to the village. It was advocated by Turner and Cook, the factory in Southfield now known as The Whip Shop, as a benefit to its employees, many of whom lived in the village. Water was piped to thirty-gallon crocks in the kitchens, and was dipped out as required. Eventually, indoor plumbing became common, but inadequate water supply was a frequent problem during periods of drought.

In the 1950s, the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) assumed jurisdiction over local water companies. A well was drilled, and a pump to lift water to a 3,000-gallon reservoir in the woods above the village installed. Water was fed by gravity to households in the village. In the 1980s DEP required chlorination to control for contamination.

Operation and maintenance of the system was done entirely by volunteers. As late as the early 1980s, leaks were discovered by noticing wet ground or a puddle that shouldn't be there. Then Water Company members such as Jim Stevens, Dan Litchfield, and Tony Consolini would grab their shovels, dig down to the pipe, and repair the leak. Early chlorination was achieved by Jim Stevens hiking up and dumping a gallon of bleach into the reservoir; the results were immediately obvious when a tap was turned on. Later, a mechanical chlorinator was installed at the reservoir so that the chlorine level was uniform, with no guesswork involved.

The DEP required professional monitoring of the water supply, which was done on a monthly basis by a firm in Lee — and now by Whitewater, Inc., from Auburn, Massachusetts. Whitewater monitors the system at least monthly, sometimes weekly, and supplies annual reports on water quality to the company and its households. Those reports have consistently shown that the levels of all possible contaminants are well below the minimum standards established by DEP. Nowadays repairs must be made by a certified operator, no longer by the water-takers themselves. Local shovels can be put away.



Photos by Barbara Lowman

The Water Company's wellhead and shed-covered reservoir lie uphill from the village of Southfield

Returning to the present: The DEP is concerned about the dependability of the water supply, and is now requiring the Southfield Water Company either to build a much larger reservoir (12,000 gallons) or to dig a second well. Given the daunting logistics of locating a larger reservoir, a second well has been deemed the more feasible solution. And here is where the company faces a classic catch-22 dilemma: In order to drill the second well, the company must have clear title to the land. Ownership of the land is not disputed, but a title search revealed that the deeds are not clear and must be clarified. The company needs to go to the state's Land Court, which can provide the necessary clarification. In order to do that, however, the company must have legal status, and the company has never been formally organized. It has asked New Marlborough resident Attorney Susan Smith to provide legal advice.

Two forms of organization are possible: a Limited Liability Corporation (LLC) or a 501(c)3 non-profit organization. Though a decision has not yet been made, it appears that the 501(c)3 organization would be simpler and more stable over time. Officers and directors of the company would have liability in case of problems but can be insured against that. (In the LLC format, all members are part-owners of the system, deeded to the property, but over time, with property transfers or inheritance situations, the connection may be lost and the part-ownership disappears.) Once the formal organization is in place, the process can begin to unwind the catch-22 situation and bring the company into compliance with the new DEP regulations.

In the words of Southfield Water Company President Joe Krejci, "Bringing a 19th century water system into compliance with evolving regulations has been a challenge for decades of Water Company members. This 21st century situation is just one more chapter in that evolution. At the same time, it's very satisfying to maintain ties to an earlier sense of community, to members banding together and working to meet their common needs." □

WINTER MANTLE

The spare, hard outlines of winter are softened by snowfall — and the crystalline sparkle of frozen air. Even as the year approaches its shortest days, New Marlborough glistens with natural grace. □

Photographs by Erik Callahan erikmichaelcallahan.wordpress.com



NEIGHBORS



In a way, **Paul Marcel** has come full circle. He moved to New Marlborough when he started tenth grade, and **Stanton's (now Ormsbee's) Garage** was his teenage hangout. Now, forty years of automotive experience later, he's back – but running Ormsbee's Garage instead of just hanging out. Paul started work at Spaulding Chevrolet in Great Barrington, but in 1976-77 received a Fiat apprenticeship near Detroit, Michigan. He then returned to this area, and has worked for a variety of dealerships, including Porsche, Audi, Jaguar, and Volkswagen. He also ran his own repair business



Paul Marcel

Photo by David Lowman

after one of the dealerships closed. Somewhat later he had a ten-year stint at Butternut Basin, repairing everything.

Paul expects that many of his former customers will be making their way to Mill River for service, and New Marlborough residents will once again enjoy the luxury of a local garage with a history. Besides which, Paul is looking forward to going home for lunch, maybe on a bicycle. □

Neighbors compiled by Barbara Lowman: deeuell@yahoo.com

Thank You to Our Contributors!

Elizabeth Colhoun; Dean & Laura Godown; Jim & Kathy Palmer; Ellen Sweet & Ari Korpivaara; Cynthia D. Lagace; Mitchell J. Smith; Howard Sheldon; Brian Mikesell & John Weinstein; Martin Love; Arthur & Susan Peisner; Peter & Missy Zdziarski; Timothy Merjos; Diana Stiles Paruta; LuAnn Bailey; New Marlborough Friends of the Library; Leslie Armstrong; Robert DeStefano; Sherri Gorelick; Karen Stiles Brusie, in memory of Bud & Martha Stiles, and their granddaughter, Cindy; Jane & Frank Hiza; Ronald & Ida Leonard; Elaine & Steve Mack; Crozer Martin; Janice & Charlie McSpirtt; Bette Ann Stalker; Arthur & Carol Nedvin; Sara Kiesel Rivadereira; Susan & Richard Silver; Gary Shelto & Michael Buchanan; Carol Parrish & Paul Clark; Harry & Marilyn Fracasso; William & Claire Gillette; Joan & Dick Hulett; Carol & Lance Liebman; John Potoski; Eileen K. Rada; Pat & Tom Rajala; E. Patterson Scarlett; Harold & Vivian Stalker; Constance Booth; John & Marcia Cook; Mari Enoch; John & Linda Lowman; William & Anne Tatlock; David Van Deusen; Christopher Brown; Anna Broggi; Donaldson Brown; Kathleen George; Pat Pecco; David L. & Erika Sheldon; Linda Skipper; Michael J. Thaler; Tara White; Jay & Dena Bock; Marcia Doelman; Dr. & Mrs. Martin Glassman; Helen E. Johnston; Mike & Janett Miller; Pat & Ken Rudolph; Patricia M. Sadera; Marjorie & Barry Shapiro; Mary Richie Smith; Robin Tost; Mike & Pat Brady; Helen E. Dow; Merritt Fox & Natalia Delgado; and Bev & Kim Kimball



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OUR WILDLIFE NEIGHBORS



White Throated Sparrow



photos by Don Beauchamp

Cedar Waxwing



photo by Larry Burke

Muskrat

Apparently, some odd or portentous event occurred in early November that has distracted our regular wildlife contributors from paying attention to the natural world. So, not much to report, but fortunately for us, **Don Beauchamp** of Clayton kept his head up and his camera at the ready, so here is his report from November 13: "I'm not feeding the birds yet, but I spotted a **brown creeper** running around the apple tree, a bird I haven't seen in almost two years. Walking up the lane, I came upon a dozen and a half **cedar waxwings** eating berries from a tree. With them was a **white-throated sparrow**. Across the bridge I spotted a **pileated woodpecker**. A couple of days later I watched for about thirty minutes as a young **Cooper's hawk** tried to catch squirrels.

"I am still having **bluebirds** checking out their housing, as many as five pair at once. I saw several **cardinals**, a species which, oddly enough, I have not seen much of all summer. **Robins** have been looking for crab apples to eat.

"And finally, I noticed a big bald-faced **hornets' nest** high in a tree, which, if you believe The Old Farmer's Almanac, means lots of snow this winter!"

We should be finding out pretty shortly if Don's warning comes true!

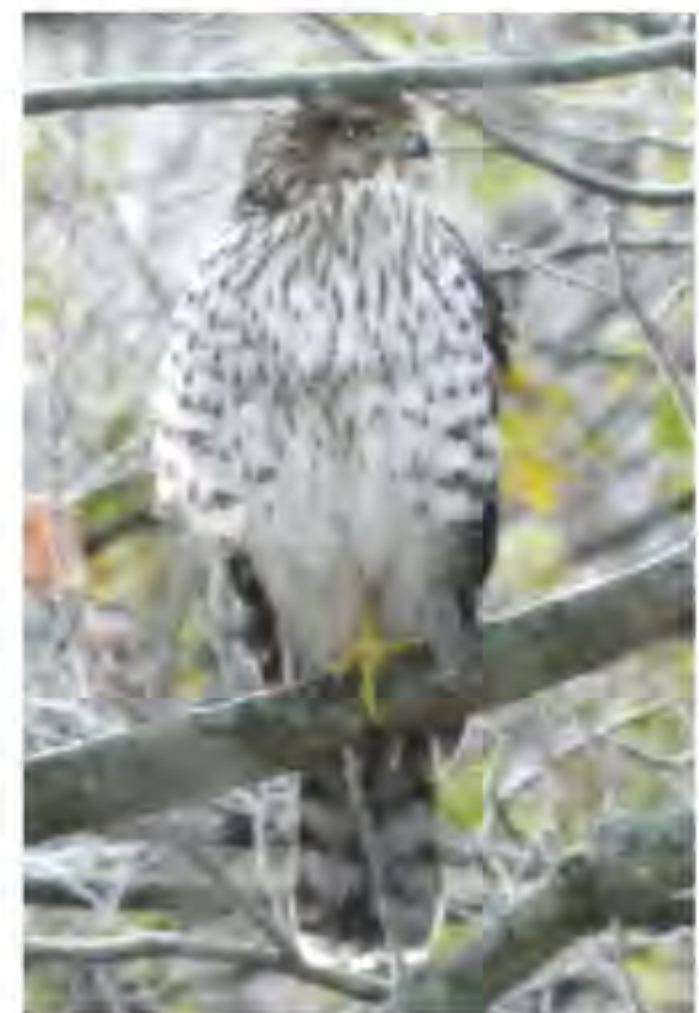
If the load of snow that was dropped on our doorstep on November 20 is any indication, Don's warning just might be on the nose. In the midst of that snowfall, **Larry Burke** was heading down to get the newspaper at the Mill River Store when he noticed some activity in the pond at the edge of his driveway.

"At first I thought I was seeing otters, but, on closer view, it turned out to be three **muskrats**, who were not in the least phased by a November snowstorm."

Happy winter, and we hope we will be able to pass on your stories and pictures of great sightings in December. □



Pileated Woodpecker



photos by Don Beauchamp

Cooper's Hawk

Compiled by Larry Burke, lburke2@me.com

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THE LOG

POLICE DEPARTMENT (SELECTED ENTRIES)

- Oct. 1 2:14 p.m. In response to Canaan Southfield Road resident's complaint of a trespasser on her property, an officer confers with all parties involved.
- Oct. 3 4:04 P.M. Two lost dogs located at Foley Hill Road residence are returned to owner on Norfolk Road.
- 5:30 p.m. Dog loose on Clayton Mill River Road chased back to its residence.
- Oct. 5 1:32 p.m. Officer requests Mill River Great Barrington Road resident to extinguish an unattended fire.
- Oct. 6 3:05 p.m. A single-car motor vehicle accident reported on Canaan Southfield Road.
- Oct. 8 4:28 p.m. Burglar arm tripped by a dog left alone at a Norfolk Road residence.
- Oct. 12 3:20 p.m. An Australian shepherd dog reported loose at the intersection of Canaan Southfield and Keyes Hill Roads.
- Oct. 14 9:07 a.m. Loose dog returned to its owner on Mill River Great Barrington Road.
- 11:33 a.m. Officer dispatches a dying raccoon in the backyard of a Hartsville Mill River Road residence.
- 2:31 p.m. A sedan driven by an Ashley Falls resident collides with a cement truck on a sharp curve on Clayton Mill River Road; car driver, severely injured, is airlifted to a hospital.
- Oct. 19 6:00 p.m. Goat reported loose on Stratford Road.
- Oct. 20 7:09 p.m. Cagney Hill Road resident, reporting receiving harassing calls from a phone located in Manitoba, Canada, is advised to have Verizon block the number.
- Oct. 21 6:27 p.m. In a long-term dispute, a Mill River Great Barrington Road resident complains of the junk accumulating on his neighbor's property.
- 7:55 p.m. Tree down on wires on Mill River Southfield Road.
- Oct. 24 4:02 p.m. Cross Road to Canaan Valley Road resident is concerned that, due to windy conditions, a neighbor's outdoor fire may be hazardous.
- Oct. 25 11:59 a.m. Sheep loose on the road are returned to their owner on Hartsville New Marlborough Road.
- 2:33 p.m. Caretaker reports signs of breaking and entering at a Mill River Great Barrington Road residence.
- 3:59 p.m. Tree on wires on North Road.
- 6:06 p.m. Motor vehicle hits a tree on Hartsville New Marlborough Road.
- 6:18 p.m. Following up on a complaint from a neighbor, officer instructs Cross Road to Canaan Valley Road resident to extinguish fire-pit fire before retiring.
- Oct. 27 5:44 p.m. Motor vehicle accident on Brewer Hill Road.
- Oct. 29 1:30 p.m. Real estate agent showing a house on Hartsville New Marlborough Road sets off burglar alarm.
- Note: Year to date, the department has made a total of 23 arrests and issued 161 citations (combined warnings and civil citations)



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THE LOG: FIRE AND RESCUE

Oct. 3	11:45 a.m.	Mutual Aid to Sandisfield Fuel Leak	Oct. 14	11:58 p.m.	Corashire Road Fire Alarm
Oct. 4	7:13 p.m.	Hartsville New Marlborough Road Medical Call	Oct. 16	4:48 a.m.	Hartsville New Marlborough Road Medical Call
Oct. 8	4:27 p.m.	Konkapot Road CO Alarm	Oct. 19	11:07 p.m.	Peter Menaker Road Fire Alarm
Oct. 12	1:09 p.m.	Hartsville New Marlborough Road Medical Call	Oct. 20	2:35 p.m.	Mutual Aid to Sheffield Brush Fire
Oct. 12		Hatchery Road Wires Down	Oct. 21	6:04 p.m.	Lumbert Cross Road Electrical Fire
Oct. 12	5:45 p.m.	Mutual Aid to Monterey Structure Fire	Oct. 23	8:40 p.m.	Lawrence Avenue CO Alarm
Oct. 12	6:25 p.m.	Norfolk Road Medical Call	Oct. 25	6:08 p.m.	New Marlborough South Sandisfield Road MVA
Oct. 14	2:32 p.m.	Clayton Mill River Road MVA			
Oct. 14	11:20 p.m.	Norfolk Road Medical Call			

Fall Reminders: Members of New Marlborough Fire & Rescue remind residents to check your smoke and carbon-monoxide detectors. Change the batteries, and, if the units themselves are ten or more years old, replace them. And that goes for hard-wired detectors as well.

According to the state Fire Marshal's Office, home fires peak from December through February when the cold weather drives people indoors, heating systems are in regular use, and people turn to alternatives such as space heaters and wood or pellet stoves. Heating is also the leading cause of carbon monoxide poisoning in homes, so make sure you have both working smoke and carbon monoxide alarms *on each floor of your home*.

Residents are also reminded to have their furnaces and chimneys cleaned and inspected as the burning season begins and to practice safe burning habits:

- Keep combustibles away from heat sources;
- Store wood outdoors and pellets for stoves indoors but away from heat sources;
- Do not burn wrapping paper or other trash;
- Dispose of the ashes in a metal container, with a secure lid, away from the house. A single ember can stay hot for days without being detected and easily fanned back to life. Many fires have started when ashes were placed inside cardboard boxes, paper bags, or plastic containers and then stored inside the garage, the breezeway, or under the porch. □

THE NEW CRUISER

You've probably seen it — or maybe you haven't. The Police Department's new cruiser, which hit the pavement in late October, is gray rather than dark blue, has no tell-tale light rack on the roof, and has discreet, dark-gray-on-light-gray lettering low on the door panels. It is, however, the real deal. Herewith, a few specs:

Model: Ford 2017 Police Interceptor Utility
 V6 304hp engine
 All-wheel drive, six-speed automatic transmission
 Police-tuned suspension
 Bulletproof door panels
 Eighteen-inch, heavy-duty wheels

Lead-footed drivers beware. □



photo by Joe Pordexter

Police Chief Graham Frank with his department's newest acquisition

Relocating for the Winter Months?
 Call the NM5VN at 229-2369 to give us your forwarding information.

SNOWFOLK

These fanciful creatures, from the ever-inventive pen of Ann Getsinger, seem to be calling out to someone — you perhaps — to add some color to their chapeaux, scarves and ribbons. So dig out your crayons or colored pencils and help these happy snowmen and ladies strut their stuff. They might just melt with joy.



A MAGICAL TEMPEST AT MOUNT EVERETT

One of the highlights of our local theatre season was Mount Everett's participation in Shakespeare and Company's 28th annual Fall Festival. This year, students from grades 7 to 12 participated in a fun revival of Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, directed by Caitlin Craft and Maizy Scarpa. After many weeks of workshops and rehearsals, the show was performed on November 10 and 12 at the school's theater in Sheffield.

The small but unified cast included New Marlborough residents Odegaard Fields, Angus Kerr, Olivia Marchione, Mary Shalaby, and Maple Webster-Ben David. The Fall Festival gives students an opportunity to work with a professional theatre company to get an inside look at all the hard work, creativity, and fun that it takes to create a production, and culminates in performances both at Mount Everett and in a final and fantastic performance together with other schools from the region at the Shakespeare and Company playhouse in Lenox.

The magical *Tempest* featured intrigue, deception, laughter, attempted murder, mischief, and romance, all blended together with imaginative costumes, creative set, and splendid acting. It was a memorable experience — both for those who got to see it, and the students, parents, and faculty who helped to make it happen. □

*Odegaard Fields, Mary Shalaby,
and Angus and Evie Kerr, with Fiona Kerr*



photos by Larry Burke

With the help of Mount Everett students, Prospero, Caliban, Ariel, Miranda, and the rest of The Tempest gang worked their magic at the Sheffield campus theater and the Shakespeare and Company Playhouse in Lenox.



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NEW ACQUISITIONS AT THE LIBRARY

Adult Fiction

This Was a Man, by Jeffrey Archer
The Magic Strings of Frankie Presto, by Mitch Albom
Recipes for Love and Murder, by Sally Andrew
Salt to the Sea, by Ruta Sepetys
Moonglow, by Michael Chabon
The Chemist, by Stephanie Meyer
The Wonder, by Emma Donoghue
The Spy, by Paulo Coelho
Conclave, by Robert Harris

Children's Fiction

Little Mouse's Big Book of Beasts, by Emily Gravett
Lost Track of Time, by Paige Britt
Nanette's Baguette, by Mo Willems
Pirates in the Library, by Nadia Ali
Boo Hoo Bird, by Jeremy Tankard
Unbound, by Ann E. Burg

Children's Nonfiction

Preaching to the Chickens: The Story of Young John Lewis, by Jabari Asim
Animals by the Number: A Book of Infographics, by Steve Jenkins

Young Adult

Magnus Chase and the Gods of Asgard, by Rick Riordan
Stars Above, by Marissa Meyer
Fairest, by Marissa Meyer

Audio CDs

This Was Man, by Jeffrey Archer
Salt to the Sea, by Ruta Sepetys

DVDs

<i>Finding Dory</i>	<i>Porco Rosso</i>
<i>Star Trek - Beyond</i>	<i>Nausicaa of the Valley of the Wind</i>
<i>Spirited Away</i>	<i>A Place To Call Home, Seasons 1-3</i>

Library Winter Hours

November 1 - March 31
Mon. Wed. Sat. 10:00 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.
Tues. & Thurs. 1:30 p.m. - 5:30 p.m.
Fri. 1:30 - 7:30 p.m.

The Library's Holiday Closings:

December 24-26
January 1 and 2



(413) 229-2544
 Free Estimates



► The Library Says:

The library would like to thank the New Marlborough Historical Society, the New Marlborough Land Trust, the New Marlborough Fire Department, Freddy Friedman, Paul Hess, the New Marlborough Police Department, Rob Sanzone and his ukulele band, and all who participated in our Halloween Spook-tacular. It was a huge success!



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)

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Town Times

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

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

Planning Board: 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, 9:00 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.

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

Building Inspector: Monday 5 - 7 p.m., Wednesday 8:00 - 10:00 a.m.

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

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

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

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

(The Southfield Post Office lobby is open from 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.)

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

Tax Collector: Monday through Friday 8:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

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

Dog and Animal Control Officer: John Springstube 413-232-7038

Town Clerk: 229-8278; 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. weekdays; Saturday by appointment

Town Hall: 229-8116

Police: Business office: 229-8161

Transfer Station Hours:

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

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

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

PERMITS WERE DUE JULY 1

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New Marlborough Highway Department

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Hours:

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

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(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,

Barbara Lowman, David Lowman, Jodi Rothe,

Peter Schuyten, Barry Shapiro, Pam Stebbins,

Jon Swan, Marianne Swan, Sandra Walker,

Contributing writers and artists: 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

The next issue will be dated January 2017.

All copy must be submitted no later than December 17.

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

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- ♦ **Reiner White:** General Contractor; 413-229-8450
- ♦ **Ter Mar Triangle Farm:** 106 Sandy Brook Turnpike (Rte 183), Sandisfield; 413-258-2898; fruits and vegetables in season; pork; jam; eggs; honey; sawmill; kiln milling; firewood
- ♦ **Woodruff Mountain Landscaping:** Excavation and landscape contracting, all forms of stone work and masonry, and outdoor services, including lawn mowing and yard work. 413-229-2919 woodruffmountain@aol.com

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