



New Marlborough 5 Village News

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FINDING GRATITUDE IN 2020

By Fiona Kerr

This has been a challenging year, which for many New Marlborough residents is ending with changes, uncertainty, and disappointments.

When asked what is in store for him in December 2020, Robert Olsen perfectly described how many of us are feeling. "The biggest change for me this holiday season is the total absence of music-making with friends and neighbors. For people who relish making music with their voices, especially in community with others, not singing has been very difficult. Typically we would have begun rehearsals the first Sunday in November and continued for eight weeks until Christmas Eve. Those nights together with friends and neighbors outside the church are just as meaningful as the Lessons & Carols service itself.

"Also, during this Christmas season, many of us at church and in town would be busy preparing for the holiday market. That event has become, for many, a final time to gather together with friends and neighbors for fun and conversation, food and shopping, before the snow really starts to fly. Not so this year. And while I love having very little work to do at a busy time of year, I sorely miss it, and Christmas Eve is going to be so different and empty and perhaps a little melancholy. Somewhere in all this is a theological lesson to be taken in. Perhaps with the extra time, I'll be able to put words to it. Or maybe I should just put my words away and let the silence speak to me."

Silence will not only be felt at the Southfield church this month; there is usually much excitement and activity at New Marlborough Central School in December, where staff, students, and families are busy preparing for the annual Holiday Fair. Deb O'Brien and her trusty team of library helpers are usually busy arranging the library's holiday event, and local restaurants are usually full of laughter and light. But this year, all is quiet. (It should be noted that NMC will still be selling trees and maple syrup.)

However, this is New Marlborough, and as Robert mentioned, something special about New Marlborough is our sense of community. As the year comes to a close, our neighbors still give voice to their gratitude in these uncertain times — and that even amidst disappointment, change, and fear, our community can be relied on to come together.

Deb O'Brien: "I am thankful for working in a community that values its library and its staff."

Tes Reed: "I am thankful for kids who keep me playing in the woods and respect the earth"

Scottie Mills: "I am grateful for where we live, I am grateful that my grandchildren live nearby so that even though they are not in my 'pod' I get to see them a little. I am grateful that I finally bought myself a drill set and could fix my dishwasher myself."

Nan Smith: "I am grateful for the beautiful fall, and that my daughter delayed college so that I have her around for one more year."

Deanna Mummert: "I am grateful for the sound of the river flowing as I wake in the



photo by David Vosburgh

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Finding Gratitude, continued

morning and when I walk with my neighbor as we chat along the river's edge."

Zoe Kogan: "I am grateful that we can chat with friends outdoors because there's so much space and for the nature preserves with trails so well marked even I don't get lost."

Dan Doern: "For my neighbors."

Michele Shalaby: "I'm grateful to live with a dog, a being who knows nothing about politics or a pandemic."

Cassie Keeley: "I am grateful for all the different creatures that share the earth with humans and make it such an interesting and beautiful planet to live on."

Lynn Webster: "I am grateful there are so many people in the world who make me laugh, especially my kindergarteners."

April Burch: "I'm grateful that during the early days of quarantine our little village became known for driveway gifts. I began leaving kombucha SCOBY, starter and instruction kits for people to take, try, and enjoy. After that, I heard of others leaving flowers, veggies, pickles, and bread at their driveways for others. I am so thankful to live in such a safe and generous community. Today, I learned that the leg of lamb that was offered to us by a neighbor will be ready for Christmas week. That's going to make this year extra special."


Robert Olsen: "I am grateful for all the 'families' I have — my son Mickey, my loving church family, my everyday family at Volunteers in Medicine — the staff, the volunteers, and even the patients, whose gratitude reminds me that I have a lot to be grateful for, too, and for the people in town whose generous donations to the church this pandemic has helped fund the church's dinner delivery program for some of our town's seniors, prepared by my 'family' at the Old Inn: Peter and Meredith, JP, Gustavo and Joe."

Occasionally now, the silence that has fallen in our community is broken by the music of a neighbor playing an instrument around a campfire, or the chatter of friends walking on quiet roads; by the neighborhood coyotes howling at the winter moon; by a new resident walking their dog; by the background chatter of your kids Zoom classroom; or by a Town committee meeting held over a conference call; or maybe by your friendly neighborhood baker making a special delivery.

These are the sounds of our village overcoming the challenges we have faced together this year, finding new ways to connect with each other and our beautiful surroundings, finding ways to be grateful for each other and where we live. We are finding community. □

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ELECTION, 2020

There were no uninvited poll watchers, no Russians hacking into the voting machinery, no militias patrolling the parking lot. On a crisp November 3, 301 voters journeyed to Town Hall to cast a ballot, adding their votes to those of 665 who had voted early or mailed in their ballot. The total of 966 voters is a record high for New Marlborough (exceeding the 2016 total by 95 voters) and represents a turnout of 86 percent — well above the 66 percent of eligible voters nationwide.

Given the need to restrict the number of people inside the ground floor of Town Hall, where voting took place, the weather cooperated: warm and not a drop of precipitation while voters lined up at times outside the entry awaiting their turn. They were appreciative of the smoothly run operation. One brought the election-day crew a box of still-warm pastries. Another provided pizza pies at supper time.

Herewith, a record, as yet uncertified, of how the town voted:

President: Joe Biden — 677

Donald Trump — 264

U.S Senator: Ed Markey — 671

Kevin O'Connor — 257

School Committee (Sheffield, for two memberships):

Arthur Batacchi — 471

Jonathan Bruno — 351

Andy Fetterhoff — 185

School Committee (Egremont write-in):

Genis Melendez-Delaney — 38

(District-wide, Batacchi, Bruno, Melendez-Delaney, Carrieanne Petrik of New Marlborough, and Hannah Bracken of Monterey were elected to the School Committee.)

Question #1, whether vehicle manufacturers be required to provide owners and independent repair facilities with expanded access to mechanical data related to vehicle maintenance and repair

Yes — 656

No — 226

(The measure passed state-wide.)

Question #2, whether to approve ranked-choice voting in the commonwealth

Yes — 407

No — 468

(The measure failed state-wide.)

Candidates running unopposed:

U.S. Congressional representative, Richard Neal

State councillor, Mary Hurley

State senator, Adam Hinds

State representative, William (Smitty) Pignatelli

Register of probate, Anthony Patella

School Committee (Monterey), Hannah Bracken

School Committee (New Marlborough),

Carrieanne Petrik



photos by Joe Ponderer

Top, Marilyn Fracasso helps a voter register his ballot. Above, voters were socially spaced indoors and out.

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November 2: With all three members participating remotely, the Board convened its regular meeting by addressing concerns raised by the Highway Department. Foremost among these are curb cuts for hillside driveways on the town's dirt roads. As Selectman Mark Carson explained, when there's heavy rain, the water runs down these steep-slope driveways, picking up speed, so that when it hits the dirt roads it results in erosion and washouts. "The amount of water that's coming off these driveways is huge," he said, "and we're left to manage the runoff. What the Town needs is a strategy for dealing with curb cuts."

It's his view that property owners and their contractors should be made to redirect the water onto their own property – to minimize the amount of water that reaches public roads. Contractors, according to Highway Superintendent Chuck Loring, are required to apply for curb cut permits from the Highway Department, but they don't always follow his direction in dealing with the runoff. When that happens, he said, he has very little recourse. "We have no teeth in the permitting process." In addition, even when curb cuts are done properly, there's no requirement that property owners maintain them after the fact, say, by keeping the runoff ditches clear.

After much discussion, the Board agreed with Mr. Carson that a curb cut strategy was indeed warranted, and it came up with a multi-part approach to the problem, including putting more legal muscle into the permitting process, exploring what, if anything, can be done legally to require property owners to maintain existing curb cuts, and looking into the possibility of creating a driveway bylaw.

Other concerns brought to the fore by Messrs. Carson and Loring included school buses traveling the dirt roads

to pick up and drop off children. Whereas in the past school buses would transport the children to a designated drop-off spot, usually on a blacktop road, now, according to Mr. Carson, "you have these big buses traveling up and down the dirt roads, and they're tearing them up. They're large, they're not four-wheel drive, and they're loosening up the gravel," he said. Mr. Loring also mentioned the problem of property owners who install fences, stone walls and plantings too close to the road edge in the public right of way, making plowing and road repairs problematic.

Finally, the Board reviewed emails from two residents of Hatchery Road complaining about the condition of the road, with one saying it is increasingly dangerous to travel on, especially after dark, while the other compared it to a battlefield, because of the many large and deep potholes. Both wanted to know what the Highway Department's plans are for fixing it.

Mr. Loring said his crews patched the road several times over the summer, "and it was holding up well," he said, "but with the rain in the last month it's really started to fall apart again." He said the Department is planning to do more patching in the coming week, but before he could address the longer term outlook, **Chairman Tara White cut him off, saying she wanted to set up a capital planning working group – not a committee, she said, because committees have to post agendas and put out minutes – but a working group that would look at all the roads in town and put together a prioritized road repair plan.** Members would include a selectman — likely Mr. Carson — the Highway Department's Mr. Loring, a member of the Finance Committee, and a "lay person," someone from outside Town government with a working knowledge of roads and road repair. The group, she said, would report to the Board of Selectmen.

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There was immediate pushback from Finance Committee Chair Steve Klein, who was also on the call, who questioned how capital planning for the roads could be separated from planning for the other capital needs of the Town. "I certainly think a highway improvement plan, let's call it that, should be an input to a capital planning discussion," he said, adding that while Highway accounts for the largest share of the Town's capital budget, it's only one input, and there are other big items that have to be considered in the context of the capital planning process. "I just want to make sure we don't get the cart before the horse here and then have a tough time undoing something later on."

"I agree with your point, Steve," said Selectman Richard Long "but we do need this highway-focused planning effort to give us the information needed to determine what those capital requirements will be." Conceding that, although it's not exclusive of the Town's other capital requirements, "it is something we need to do in order to get started." Mr. Klein said he would check with Finance Committee members to see who might represent it on the working group.

Next up was a summary from Mr. Klein, who also chairs the Cable Advisory Committee, on the status of the broadband build-out. He said crews from Charter's subcontractor are busy stringing fiber optic cable on the Town's so-called backbone roads, that is, the major through roads from which most of the smaller roads branch. **He said of the seventy-five road miles that are part of Charter's installation plan, as of October about twenty miles of cable had been strung.** In addition, he said there are a significant number of infrastructure areas where all the utilities are underground, including Peter Menaker Road and Windemere, and those have been finished as well.

He expects that all the infrastructure work will be finished by spring, and that once the system has been

fully installed and tested, individual homes will be connected, a process that's expected to take several months, finishing up in mid-summer, at which point the system can be lit up. As a point of interest, he mentioned the large coils of cable that can be seen hanging from utilities poles around town indicate where the pole-to-pole wiring has been done. Ultimately, they will be used to bring the service to individual homes.

Mr. Klein said that the Committee has tried to reach the property owners of homes, 4 percent of the total, that because of their location are excluded from the project. Charter, too, has contacted them by letter explaining the situation and promising to make every effort to connect them into the system.

In other matters, the Board reviewed and approved the annual letter of appreciation to the town's veterans; appointed Mike Smith, general manager of Gedney Farm, to the Housing Committee, and indicated that Selectman Long has agreed to serve as the Board's liaison to the Highway Department in labor negotiations.

Under Town Administrator updates, Mari Enoch reported the Town received a \$3,000 payment in lieu of taxes (PILOT) from Edward Goodnow. Mr. Goodnow, she explained, donated land to the Land Trust several years ago for what is now called the Goodnow Preserve and committed at the time to making two PILOT payments to the Town. This is the second and final payment, she said.

Under Board updates, Mr. Long said there have been performance issues with the work being done by Tasco Construction Corp., the contractor installing the culverts on Route 57. He said the Town will be sending Tasco a letter outlining the deficiencies identified by the outside engineer and that Tasco will be required to submit a plan of correction before any payments for the work will be authorized.

Contractors are required to apply for curb cut permits but don't always follow directions in dealing with the runoff.



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After the approval of minutes from the September 29 and October 5 meetings, the meeting was adjourned at at 7:59 p.m.

Peter Schuyten

November 17: Chairman Tara White informed everyone that the Zoom meeting, which included Town Administrator Mari Enoch, Fire Company President David Smith, Tom Stalker, and Nat Yohalem, was being recorded.

First up, the Board approved the revised leases for the Fire Department buildings on Norfolk Road in Southfield village. Ms. White then informed Mr. Smith that plans to renovate Town Hall to meet ADA compliance would eliminate the room the Police Department presently uses there and asked for assurance that the firehouse would be ready to accommodate the police department within a couple of years. The Fire Company plans to begin foundation work, probably this fall, said Mr. Smith, who added that he didn't see any problem with the timeline for the move. He said they don't have a lot of renovations to do for the Police Department and that he would meet with the the chief to go over them. In response to a concern voiced by Mr. Stalker that the building housing the Police Department be ADA compliant, Mr. Smith said he didn't see any issue with that.

Next, the curb-cut issue, runoff from driveways washing out public roads, reappeared from the meeting of November 2. Ms. White reviewed the language on the permits and said they are clear about how the work should be done when a new home is being constructed. As noted in the previous meeting, Mr. Loring speaks with the contractors but that if the work is not done correctly, the Town hasn't any recourse. Ms. White said the building inspector told her he could not withhold a Certificate of Occupancy if curb cuts are done incorrectly but suggested the Town might require a deposit for curb

cuts, to be refunded once inspected and approved. Ms. White added that this deposit would address newly built properties but not work for maintenance being done on existing properties. The building inspector suggested that the Planning Board inquire as to how other towns address these concerns.

Selectman Mark Carson said there must be a way to provide the Town with enforcement tools to assure that curb cuts are done correctly. Language in the state

statutes, he noted, allows for towns to go onto private land to make repairs where drainage flows onto public roads. Mr. Long suggested the Board reach out to town counsel to clarify existing regulations, the legality of requiring a deposit, and whether the issue of maintenance of curb cuts by homeowners should be referred to the Planning Board for a new bylaw. Board members agreed,

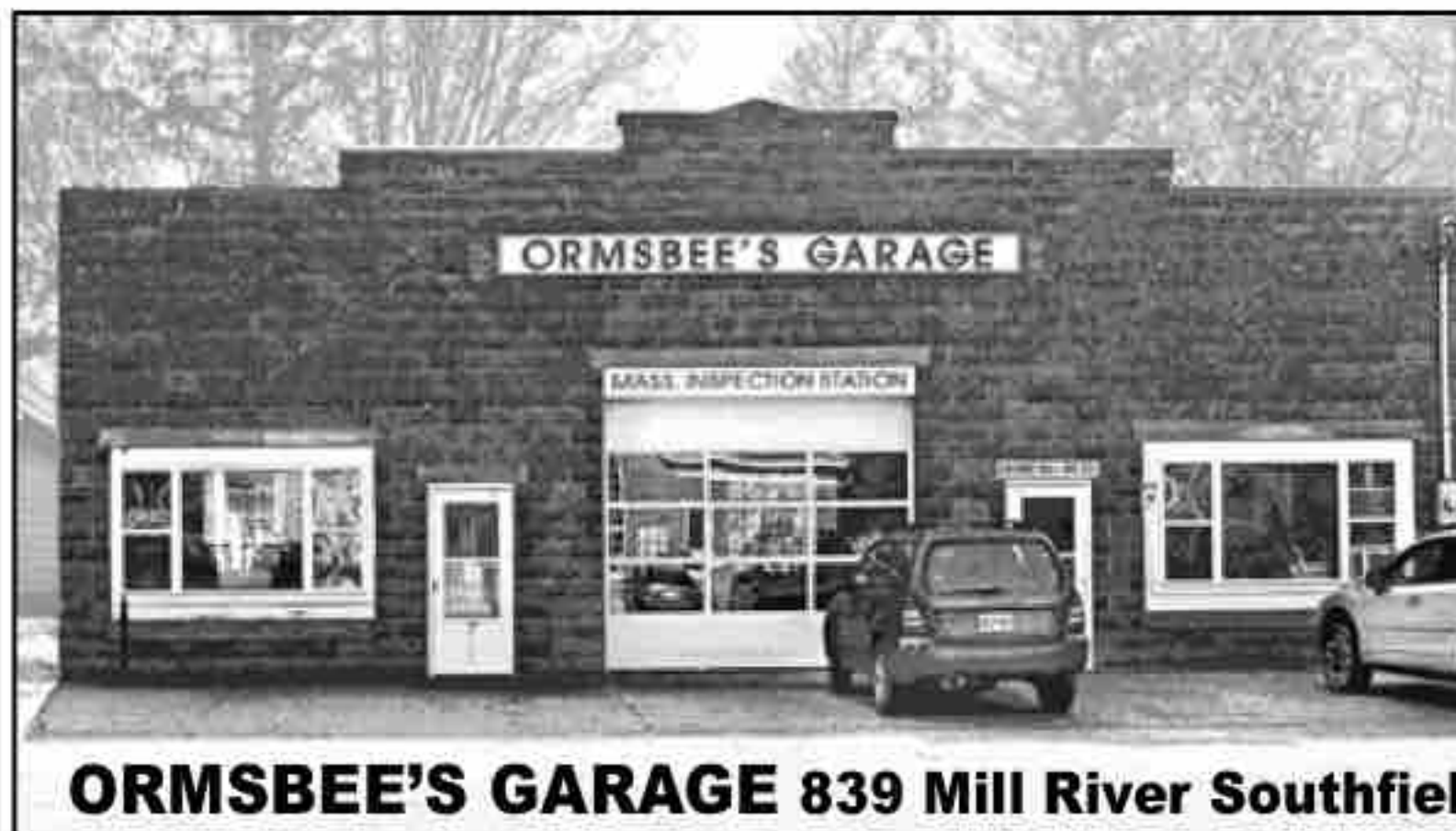
and Ms. White said she would follow up with Town counsel.

Moving on, the Board appointed Mr. Carson, Finance Committee member Barbara Marchione, Highway Superintendent Chuck Loring, and resident Matt Wright to the newly formed Highway Planning Group. The Group will study the needs of town roads and develop a plan to present to the Board.

Town Administrator Mari Enoch then presented the Board with the proposed MIAA insurance contract for Town property and workmen's compensation, guaranteeing no increase for FY22 and a 2.5 percent increase for FY23. The Board approved it, with the understanding there could be changes in the coverage due to claims or new property being added.

Ms. Enoch proceeded with a request from the Department of Agriculture to reduce the notice period from 120 days to 60 days regarding the state's acquisition of property owned by Scott Mackenzie in New Marlborough as an Agricultural Preservation Restriction. Ms.

Highway accounts for the largest share of the Town's capital budget, but there are other big items that have to be considered in the context of the capital planning process.



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White asked for information regarding how much land is involved, if the land is now in Chapter 61 (a state program that allows for a property tax abatement on land the owner agrees not to develop), and if so, would it be removed from Chapter 61, thereby eliminating any tax payments to the Town. Ms. White also wondered why it was time sensitive and needed a shorter waiting period. Ms. Enoch responded she would obtain the answers, and the Board deferred this item to its next meeting.

A lengthy discussion followed on the management of the Town website, which according to Ms. Enoch was upgraded eighteen months ago but continues to need improvement for ADA accessibility. Tom Stalker, she said, had offered to work on it. Mr. Stalker said he has encountered some reluctance on the part of Town Hall staff to accept his assistance and to provide contact information for the web host. The latter, he said, would let him better learn the capabilities of the website. Asked by Ms. White whether planned changes to the site would be independently checked, Mr. Stalker said he sees issues with staff postings and that he would like to help clear those up. Ms. White stated she had spoken with staff after an email was sent by Mr. Stalker about a posting. There is a process for posting, she said, and interruptions occurred which caused the issue.

Sandra Walker, reporter on the meeting for the 5 Village News, changed hats temporarily to provide her views as a former technical advisor on the website. The Town, she said, needs a webmaster, somebody with expertise to run the website. At present, Town Hall employees are burdened with website management they have neither the time or technical training to perform. The Board needs to hire a person who has the authority to manage a website and can keep an eye on it on a regular basis. Ms. Walker estimated it would take five to six hours a week.

Noting that there is at present no money budgeted

for a webmaster, Ms. White asked Ms. Walker what she did when she worked on the website with the staff. Ms. Walker answered that they designed all the pages, updated all the information on the old site before moving it to the new website, and made corrections. She also said she had access to the website but not authority. Changes that the staff did not agree on did not happen, she said.

Following an offer from Mr. Stalker to serve as a volunteer webmaster, Mr. Long made a motion to appoint Mr. Stalker as webmaster to work collaboratively with Ms. Fleck and Ms. Chretien. Any conflicts that might arise, he said, would be presented to the town administrator and the Board. With Mr. Long recusing himself, Mr. Carson and Ms. White approved the motion.

Finally, Ms. Enoch announced that a hearing for a special permit application by David and Carla Hoffman of 120 Hillside Avenue for an extension of their preexisting non-conforming single family home is set for December 15 at 6:00 p.m. via Zoom. Those wishing to view the application, she said, can obtain a copy via email to Administrative Secretary Sharon Fleck or herself.

The meeting adjourned shortly past 7:00 p.m. □

Sandra Fusco Walker

Plans to renovate Town Hall to meet ADA compliance would eliminate the room the Police Department presently uses there.

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PLANNING BOARD

The Planning Board continues to meet safely via telephone conference. Meetings are normally scheduled for the second and fourth Wednesday of each month. If members of the public would like to participate or just listen in, the number to call is (800) 719-6100, and the access code is 3635915. You will be prompted to identify yourself as an attendee.

In recent meetings, the Planning Board has continued honing language for two protective bylaws. The first is a reworking of the existing bylaw pertaining to “unregistered or dilapidated motor vehicles” (aka junk cars). This bylaw, adopted in 1966, requires six complaints in writing by landowning citizens of New Marlborough; also, if the owner of such a vehicle is found to be in violation, the fine is set at a maximum of \$10 per day. In retooling this bylaw, the members of the Planning Board are considering the idea that two complaints would be sufficient to begin the process, and a change in the level of fines is under discussion.

The second bylaw would be a new one, having to do with nighttime light pollution. This bylaw, referred to as “Dark Skies,” would be aimed at new construction, and would restrict the use of outdoor lighting to inward-facing, so that neighboring homes would not be subject to the glare of exterior spotlights.

Most recently, according to Chairman Mark Carson, the Board has joined in the discussion on the erosion of gravel roads across town, due to run-off from driveways. (See the Board of Selectmen report for November 2 on



Tom Sebestyen
photo courtesy of Tom Sebestyen



Jonathan James
photo courtesy of Jonathan James

page 4 for more on the erosion problem.) Mr. Carson thinks the Planning Board may be asked by the Board of Selectmen to come up with a new bylaw to address the issue – one that would apply to gravel driveways that slope upward from the road, triggering the requirement of a “water discharge plan.” He added that he and others hope there will be an effort made to educate our citizenry on the problem in advance of the writing of such a bylaw. Along with the erosion problems stemming from new, uphill driveways, another aspect of the education effort would be to look into the increasing role that school buses are playing on the degradation of the Town’s dirt roads. Mr. Carson is hoping that school buses might be limited as much as possible to the asphalt roads.

In the course of the past two months, the Planning Board has succeeded in filling out its membership, with the addition of Tom Sebestyen and Jonathan James. Both men are lawyers, and both relatively new to town. Tom and his wife have lived in Berkshire County for the last twenty-three years, and moved to New Marlborough in March of this year, just as Covid-19 was changing everyone’s lives. He is a lawyer who specializes in civil prosecution of child abusers and, for the last seven years, has worked full-time for the Massachusetts Department of Children and Families. He says the aim of his agency is to try to reunite parents with their children, but, failing that, to protect the children. In terms of what he brings to the Planning Board in the way of experience and interest, Tom’s undergraduate degree from UMass Amherst was in urban and regional planning.

Jonathan James has been practicing law for thirty-five years, specializing in real estate and commercial transactions in New York and New Jersey. He and his wife bought their house in Mill River five-and-a-half years ago, and they have been living here full-time since March. On his decision to join the Planning Board, Jon says he wanted, “to give back to our community and help preserve our great environment.” The expertise both these men bring to the table will no doubt serve our town well. □

Larry Burke

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A BIT OF HOLIDAY CHEER – ‘SNOW FOLK’!

Our celebrated New Marlborough artist, **Ann Getsinger**, has created a set of a dozen stand-up figures meant for coloring by children of all ages. About eight inches tall, they will make for cheerful seasonal decorations around the house or under the tree. Ann has chosen four from the collection and with the sponsorship of the NM5VN, will get them printed up on card stock and distributed around town – at the Library in Mill River, the Mill River General Store, the Southfield Post Office, and the Southfield Store. Keep an eye out for them at these locations, and happy holidays from Ann and the staff of *The New Marlborough 5 Village News*! □

CARRIEANNE PETRIK: 'A RIVER RUNS THROUGH IT'

By Robbi Hartt

In explaining “The Way It Is,” poet William Stafford wrote, “There’s a thread you follow. It goes among things that change. But it doesn’t change. People wonder about what you are pursuing.... You don’t ever let go of the thread.” Carrieanne Petrik’s studies and life’s work have followed three threads: climate science, community outreach and education, and public policy. Thus, it is no surprise that Petrik is currently serving as the Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) Program Regional Coordinator for the Berkshires and Hilltowns and was recently elected to represent New Marlborough on the Southern Berkshires Regional School District (SBRSD) School Committee. When asked if the two roles have any connection to each other, Petrik slips in a river analogy — “these passions are like streams that keep flowing apart and together in my professional and personal life.”

Although the words “municipal vulnerability preparedness” hold enough angst to fuel an arsenal of fears in the long absence of warmth known as “winter in the Berkshires,” the program is actually cause for hope, perhaps even celebration. The Baker-Polito administration is investing \$11.1 million through the MVP Program to provide support for cities and towns in Massachusetts to begin the process of planning for climate change resiliency and implementing priority projects. As Jeffrey Malloy, senior climate adaptation planner with BSC Group, explains in the MVP introductory video on the Town’s website, the State’s objective is to provide communities with funding to complete vulnerability assessments and develop action-oriented resiliency plans. Communities who complete the MVP program become certified as an MVP community and are eligible for MVP Action grant funding and other opportunities. The added bonus of having Carrieanne Petrik as leader and liaison for this process should make us all sleep a little more soundly.

Petrik is no stranger to the Berkshires, having moved here at sixteen to attend Bard College at Simon’s Rock (“dropping out of high school after my sophomore year,” they note, basking a bit in the rebellious nature of that decision) and stayed in the region for most of the years since. (In self-reference, Carrieanne Petrik prefers to use they/them instead of gendered pronouns.) “I fell in love



Carrieanne Petrik and Brujo

photo by Veronica Horne

with the landscape when I was a political science major at Simon’s Rock and moved to Monterey after graduation, eventually finding my way to Rawson Brook Farm,” says Petrik. “Susan Sellew [the owner of Rawson Brook Farm, who grew up in New Marlborough] was one of my most beloved educators, fostering a spirit of curiosity as she showed me all of the biological processes involved in producing goat cheese —genetic trait inheritance, fermentation, yeast, biochemistry.” This farming experience, Petrik notes, instilled a passion for science and asking questions.

After spending several years working in landscaping and farming, Carrieanne began feeling an even stronger pull toward science and decided to go back to college for a second bachelor’s degree, studying geology at UMass Amherst. “Understanding how the earth worked was the most fundamental science I could study, laying the foundation for all of the other sciences,” they note.

It took multiple years for Petrik to satisfy the eligibility requirements to enter the geoscience graduate program at UMass — “I racked up a lot of debt, but I do have a lot of knowledge.” Petrik worked many jobs to help finance these studies, including working in a bakery, waiting tables, and being assigned to a work-study job in an interdisciplinary lab that integrated biology, geology, and chemistry in studying isotopes to learn about past rainfall. This lab experience inspired a love for paleoclimatology, or looking at various indicators from the past trapped in the rocks to see what they can tell us about past climate. “This got me thinking about climate change,” Petrik notes, before drifting into further explanation of the three systems (hard rock, soft rock, and no rock atmospheres) used to study past climate. “I had the opportunity to do my graduate work with the state geologist who was working to determine if our rocks had the potential to lock, or sequester, carbon dioxide. It was very, very cool.”

Jane Burke, founder and long-time (and now former) director of Flying Cloud Institute, whose collaborations with Petrik through science and education were rich and varied, describes Carrieanne in those early years as “someone who could tackle anything.” When Carrieanne moved back to the Berkshires after becoming a geologist, Mrs. Burke hired them to be a visiting expert in the

science residencies that Flying Cloud Institute was offering in local schools. She notes, "I was amazed by Carrieanne's abilities as an educator and teacher trainer."

Although the Berkshire region is known for protection and preservation of its land and natural resources, legislation relating to climate change is a more recent phenomenon. Then-Governor Duval Patrick passed the Global Warming Solutions Act in 2007, the first legislation aimed at reducing carbon emissions statewide. This was another milestone moment for Carrieanne, bridging policy and science. "Things started coming together for me after that," they note. Petrik realized that, while scientists could be brilliant, many were unable to communicate with non-scientists. Here is perhaps where the value of Carrieanne's initial studies in political science became more apparent. Working on the sequestration project, Petrik got the opportunity to go to test sites around the country and play a leadership role within those contexts. They also tapped into several unique teaching opportunities, including conducting training on carbon sequestration through the United Nations for leaders from African countries. This ignited a special interest in applying knowledge and influencing public policy that continues to infuse Petrik's work.

Desperate not to be stuck in an academic lab setting, Petrik turned back to what they describe as "a secret love affair with farming." Building on their affinity for farming and desire to inspire deeper interest in learning, Petrik developed a curriculum for high school students through Seeds of Solidarity farm in Orange, Massachusetts (whose owner, Deb Habib, is another mentor Petrik credits with motivating and supporting her work). "It was important to me to ensure that students could get down and dirty and integrate their knowledge through hands-on experiences," Petrik explains, adding "There is only so much information you can absorb before fatigue sets in."

Petrik has also worked as engagement manager with The Trustees, both at Naumkeag and Bartholomew's Cobble, developing place-based curricula for field trips and working with hundreds of school-age kids in the Southern Berkshires and Berkshire Hills districts, including canoe trips designed to teach students about river exploration and stream dynamics. Carrieanne gained valuable experience working with teachers at local schools and leading professional development training at Flying Cloud over the past five years. "Many educators teach geology using textbook examples like the Grand Canyon, when the rocks we stand on every day are some of the oldest rocks you can find," Petrik observes, adding "Getting kids to look at their own surroundings can overcome the textbook disconnect."

Jane Burke has also had the opportunity to work with Petrik through The Trustees and points out additional qualities that enhance advocacy and leadership, both as MVP regional coordinator and school committee rep.

"I was always impressed with Carrieanne's direct, fair, and insightful approach to solving problems, especially those involving interpersonal challenges," says Jane. "Carrieanne is clearly open to learning and helping others look at things in new ways, with an infectious passion for equity and unique ability to talk about issues without judgment."

Perhaps the greatest good fortune for our New Marlborough community is Petrik's deep love for the Konkapot River and its ecosystems and understanding of local needs. As Jane Burke observes, through working for the state, Petrik has gained insight into how western Massachusetts is impacted by legislative decisions that are not appropriate for the rural counties and is helping the School Committee advocate for changes needed at the state level, especially increased financing of local schools. "Carrieanne knows how to read budgets and dig into financials with a keen eye," says Jane, "while energizing fellow committee members to explore how to put their anti-racism, anti-bias statement into action. Their experience in that area will be very helpful."

Though the impact of the pandemic and of climate change is testing our community, Petrik is energized by both our strengths and our unique challenges. Carrieanne's goal is to get as many community organizations as possible to participate in the MVP study in order to secure more funding for our area. "Our town of New Marlborough is facing the same challenges as other small towns in this region," Petrik explains. "Our smallness is a great strength. We have the ability to get to know our neighbors, to speak to each other, which creates greater opportunity for resilience."

That positive, hope-filled outlook characterizes Carrieanne's work at both the state and local level. Though both roles are big commitments, there is genuine excitement for these opportunities and gratitude for the chance to live and farm along the river. With the kind of joy you can sense even in a phone interview, Petrik ends by simply repeating, "I'm living my dream!" □



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NEIGHBORS



Last month's Neighbors included the happy news of the wedding of **Elizabeth Menaker**, daughter of **Daniel Menaker** and **Katherine Bouton**. This month, sadly, we must report the news of Dan's passing.

On October 26, **Daniel Menaker** died at his home on Mill River Great Barrington Road with his wife Katherine and two children by his side. He was 79. Although much of his distinguished career as an editor and writer was spent in Manhattan, Dan had a practically lifelong connection to New Marlborough, due initially to his two uncles, Peter and Enge, who created and ran a pair of camps on Lake Buel, in the area now known as Tohone Shores. Dan chronicled the history of the camps, his colorful uncles, and his own younger years at the camps in two installments in *The New Marlborough 5 Village News* in June and July of 2018, and we encourage you to seek these out on our website, nm5vn.org. In addition, for a deeper understanding of Dan's accomplishments as a longtime editor for *The New Yorker*, senior editor at Random House, and author of fiction, non-fiction, and

poetry, we encourage you as well to read the obituaries that appeared in *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, and, locally, in *The Berkshire Edge*.

We reached out to a few of Dan's friends and admirers here in New Marlborough, and these are some of their thoughts:

Roy Blount Jr.: "I knew Dan Menaker, and have known his wife Katherine Bouton, for years and years. Their country house (with deep Menaker roots) is just a few miles up the road from us. Katherine commissioned a painting by Joan Griswold, my wife, for Dan's 70th birthday. When we all got together, we had a good time. But only every year or so did we manage to connect.

"Tracking e-mail to and from Dan, I see it consisting mostly of "Sorry, can't do it this Saturday, maybe next?" But ten years back, there is this from him: "Someday soon, we have to talk about the effect that being a humorist has on the spirit and the soul." A rhetorical suggestion, I reckon. Ours was a "hey-we-got-to-get-together-sooner" friendship, which ran out too soon.

"I did visit Dan, at home, a couple of weeks before he died. He'd just had drastic injections, and was very thin and talkative. Doctors had promised him six more months, he said, but he was sure he could stretch that to a year. He had placed an ad in the *Times Book Review* – paid for by prescient stock tips from a fellow publishing notable – for his new, self-published book of thanatopsical poems, *Terminalia*. The ad featured several blurbs, on which Dan cast a cool eye. Only one of them, he concluded, came from the heart.



photo by Katherine Bouton

Daniel Menaker

"He was a keenly witty writer, a close student of words. In his book *The African Svelte: Ingenious Misspellings That Make Surprising Sense*, he shares with us a host of far-better-than-correct verbalizations. For instance, 'above approach,' 'self of steam,' and 'fool hearty.' I blurbed that book as 'a whole new comedy of errors,' and meant it."

Joe Poindexter: "A while back, Charlie Chubb and I recruited Dan to help us plow through a reading of T.S.Eliot's thorny "Four Quartets." We could not have been better served. With Dan's literary grounding, our sessions were illuminating, and the poems finally began to make sense. With his frequently indulged punnery, they were always fun. Dan sought humanity in poetry — perhaps that is why he preferred Yeats to Eliot. Time shared with Dan was imbued with humanity."

Charlie Chubb: "One thing that stands out in my memory of Dan is the puckish fun he always had with language. When there was some task X that he despised, Dan liked to announce with great fanfare, "I hate X more than life itself!" He would then wait gleefully for confusion to dawn in his listener. The turn of phrase (which Dan attributed to Norman Rush, the author of *Mating*) tickled him because it sounded right at first but made less and less sense the more you thought about it. One of the last pieces Dan wrote was a wonderful essay entitled "What's so Funny?" in which he presented an "existential bafflement" theory of humor. I can't do justice to the theory in a sentence or two, but I can say that Dan saw laughter (the sweet, deep kind) as a gift that comes through accepting the ridiculous randomness of existence — and he really knew how to laugh."

Larry Burke: "I had known of Daniel Menaker's presence in New Marlborough for years, and, as a sometime English major, was well aware of his stature in the literary world. Consequently, I was a bit too shy to reach out to him until, however a couple of years ago, I read his set of short stories, "The Old Left," in which he lightly fictionalizes his uncles, particularly Enge (Sol in the book), and the left-leaning lives they led here in New Marlborough. Intrigued

by that writing, as well as by the tidbits I had heard about the actual Camp Tohone, I thought that perhaps I might approach Dan with the idea of the *5 Village News* telling the history of his uncles' camps on Lake Buel. Better than I could possibly have imagined, Dan not only welcomed the idea but ended up writing the piece himself. In the process of putting this history together, meeting to review the photographs that would accompany the article, I gained the opportunity to know Dan a bit, to discover what a bright, humorous, and down-to-earth guy he was. Jane and I had the added pleasure of enjoying several very pleasant evenings with Dan and Katherine, ones we not soon forget"

Sue Cohen: "Arnie and I have been neighbors of Dan's and Katherine's for thirty or more years, both here in New Marlborough and on the Upper West Side of Manhattan, but I wouldn't say we were close friends – just good neighbors to each other. What I loved most about Dan was seeing him strolling along our road, always with his hands clasped behind his back, and always with a little smile on his face. I imagine that smile came from his thinking about the next thing he would write as soon as he returned home."

A new award, named for **Mike and Gloria Levitas**, has been established at *Moment Magazine*. The initial winner of the Mitchell and Gloria Levitas Literary Journalism Award, announced by Gloria on November 22, is Calvin Trillin, the humorist and journalist, who once called out the parsimony of his editor at *The Nation* by writing that he paid him "in the high two figures." □

compiled by Barbara Lowman: deeuell@yahoo.com

OUR WILDLIFE NEIGHBORS

In the micro-fauna category, **John Schreiber**, who lives on the outskirts of New Marlborough Village, wrote on November 4, "I turned over a rock last week in my wildlife search and found two types of salamander – an **eastern red-backed** and what I think is a **northern two-lined salamander**."

Donald Beauchamp, down in Clayton, checked in on November 16: "Well, it's been an interesting thirty days of bird viewings, lots of times where groups of different birds would fly in and eat berries for ten or fifteen minutes then leave. These visitors included several groups of young **cedar waxwings**, a **wren**, and **lots of bluebirds** during the warm days. Today, I am seeing a **red-tailed hawk** that's been hanging around for about a month right around the house." Don has been hampered of late in sending along photos, ever since his computer crashed. Hopefully he'll be back up and running soon.

Larry Burke, up near York Lake, says, "Unlike last year, it seems to be a very good year for the wintering-over birds. I held off putting out the feeders until

the cold stretch in mid-November, figuring I would just lose them to the very large bear that destroyed our compost bin and garden fence in October. The birds, all the usual suspects – **chickadees**, **titmice**, **nuthatches**, **downy and hairy woodpeckers**, **juncos**, **goldfinches**, **mourning doves**, and **bluejays** – instantly showed up in droves, and I have been refilling the feeders twice a day ever since. With the weather becoming mild again, we shall see if Mr. Bear gets his share after all!

Ann Getsinger, who is situated not too far down the road from New Marlborough Village on the way to Hartsville, wrote in on November 19: "For the past few years, year-round, I've noticed a **pair of bobcats** regularly going through my yard, always passing boldly between barn and house, going from woods to field and back again. It used to be two – a larger male generally followed a minute or two later by the smaller female – but lately I've just seen the male. They're gorgeous in their furry range of grays to red-brown, with long hind legs, tufted ears, stripes, and such striking, handsome faces – larger versions of my indoor cat, Beulah, who often watches them too. Not unrelated, there are lots of **rabbits** in the field." □



photo by Larry Burke

To borrow from Bob Marley's "Three Little Birds," "Don't worry 'bout a thing, 'cause every little thing is going to be alright."



photo by John Schreiber

Two types of salamander sharing the underside of one stone

Compiled by Larry Burke. Send your wildlife sightings and stories to larryjburke@gmail.com

CAR GUY

Frank Twing Takes Over at Ormsbee's Garage

Three things to know about Frank Twing: He is, going back to his great-grandfather, the fourth in a line of six Frank Twings; he gets his kicks driving 115 miles per hour; he will fix your car. Starting January, Frank becomes chief mechanic at Ormsbee's Garage, as Paul Marcel heads into retirement and a long-sought dream of wintering in the area of California's Salton Sea.

Frank moved from Sheffield to a house built by his grandfather in an area known locally as Twingville (midway between Southfield and Mill River villages) when he was twelve. He took an auto mechanic course at Mount Everett High School and has been working in repair for twenty years. He brings a wealth of experience to New Marlborough: he worked most recently as one of six mechanics in a major repair facility in Schodack, New York, where according to his count, there were recently more than forty cars in the lot awaiting attention. Ormsbee's promises to be somewhat less intense (and a half hour closer to his current home in Becket), but no less capable of solving automotive problems. "The scanning equipment may need to be updated," says Frank, "but whatever is being done elsewhere, I can do here."

About the speeding. It all takes place at dirt tracks in New York state on the Pro Stock racing circuit. Frank has been racing for thirty-six years in a vehicle welded together, piece by piece, by Frank himself. Not much use for errands to the supermarket, it has no windows, no lights. "It's an all-out racer," he says. He has won thirty-six events with it.

Nice, but he's nowhere near the winningest Frank Twing. That title goes to his grandson, who at age ten has already won 112 Junior Slingshot races. Something in the Twing DNA, maybe? □

Joe Poindexter



Frank Twing, settling in at Ormsbee's Garage

photo by Joe Poindexter



Frank's Pro Stock racer

photo courtesy Frank Twing



The youngest Frank Twing, with his Slingshot racing machine

photo courtesy Frank Twing



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RETURN TO SENDER

Addressee Undecided

If you have something better to do, skip this story: it goes nowhere.

On January 31, 2020, the U. S. Postal Service closed its branch inside the Mill River General Store. In late February, owner Dave Herrick received eight registered letters, each one describing a safety, health, or security matter that needed attention before the Post Office could reoccupy the space. According to Mr. Herrick, the needed repairs were all taken care of by mid-March. New Marlborough health and building inspectors signed off on the work, and Mr. Herrick sent copies of their certificates to a real estate subcontractor for the Postal Service in Denver, Colorado, and a postal safety inspector in Hartford, Connecticut. So, what has happened in the intervening nine months? “Nothing,” says Mr. Herrick. “They have been absolutely silent since then.”

Undaunted, the 5 Village News went in pursuit of an answer. It started off in the Southfield Post Office, where letters to zipcode 01244 were being handled. There, the paper was advised to call the Sheffield Post Office, whose postmistress has area responsibilities for the Postal Service. She said she did not know of plans to re-open Mill River but speculated that the Covid-19 pandemic might be contributing to indecision.

Back at the Southfield Post Office, a reporter was handed a Connecticut phone number, identified as a contact for USPS Consumer Affairs. A woman at that office said that the matter was being referred to New York City, and, two days later, bingo! A real person called the



Dave Herrick catches a few rays adjacent to the closed Mill River Post Office. photo by Joe Poindexter

paper, listened to the query, and said she would get right on it. This led to the following exchange of emails:

“Hi Joe! Ok fabulous. I will check that out. Thank you so much. I am researching now. It looks like there were some developments in a positive direction. Will get you accurate information.

Amy”

“Hi Amy, I hope I will hear from you on the Mill River Post Office situation by, say, Monday. That would

give me time to put something together for our December issue readers.

Many thanks, Joe”

And then, four days later:

“While repairs to this facility have been going as scheduled, we do not have a timetable to occupy the space at this time. Either myself or Amy will update you as we get more information.

Thanks,
Steve Doherty
Strategic Communications Specialist
United States Postal Service
Atlantic Area – Northeast Region
Boston, Massachusetts”

Okay, you were warned that this story would be a waste of your time. But wait. There’s a sliver of good news: The Postal Service is still paying rent on a lease that stretches out to October 2024. “And they are a nice tenant,” says Mr. Herrick. “They always get the check to me two or three days early.” □

Joe Poindexter with additional reporting by Nat Yohalem

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THE LOG

Police Department (selected entries)

- Oct. 1 10:38 a.m. An officer dispatches a deer that was badly injured when it was struck by a car on Norfolk Road.
- 2:36 p.m. After dropping off their last student on Cross Road to Canaan Valley Road, the driver and an aide who have locked themselves out of their bus, ask the Department to summon a New Marlborough Central School employee to bring them a spare key.
- 6:20 p.m. Following a stop of a black Ford Focus on Route 57 for a broken tail light, an officer determines that the license plate actually belongs to a maroon Kia; the vehicle is towed and impounded pending a show of proof of ownership.
- Oct. 2 12:42 p.m. Tree on wires on New Marlborough Southfield Road.
- Oct. 5 5:45 p.m. A caller reports an unoccupied vehicle parked at the foot of the driveway of a residence on Hayes Hill Road.
- Oct. 7 5:37 p.m. Telephone wires down on New Marlborough Hill Road.
- 6:53 p.m. A downed tree blocks Canaan Southfield Road in Clayton village.
- Oct. 9 2:29 p.m. A caller alerts the Department to her suspicion of nighttime theft from cars in the vicinity of her Adsit Crosby Road residence.
- 2:32 p.m. The Department alerts National Grid after a caller reports that a utility pole has begun to tilt outside his Mill River village residence.
- Oct. 11 12:52 p.m. Alerted by a Hartsville Mill River Road resident that her husband, out for a run, had not returned when expected, an officer locates the runner, who explains he had gotten lost, and transports him back to his home.
- Oct. 13 11:38 a.m. The Highway Superintendent is alerted to two oil spills on Norfolk Road in Southfield village.
- Oct. 15 4:11 p.m. A resident alerts the Department to a tree on wires on Hadsell Street.
- 8:22 p.m. A tow for a truck parked at the New Marlborough Land Trust entry to Thousand Acre Swamp is ordered when an officer discovers that its registration has been revoked for lack of vehicle insurance.
- Oct. 16 4:57 p.m. Officer checks a truck parked at Thousand Acre Swamp boat ramp that is suspected of transporting ATVs for use on Cookson State Park trails, where they are not allowed.
- Oct. 17 6:50 p.m. A Cross Road to Canaan Valley Road resident reports the theft of a Fed Ex package left at the foot of his driveway.
- Oct. 21 12:24 p.m. An officer assists a driver who has run out of gas on Mill River Southfield Road.
- Oct. 26 10:33 p.m. Responding to a 911 hangup, an officer discovers two children hiding in the upstairs of a Mill River village residence who had had a disagreement over clothes.
- Oct. 27 8:23 a.m. An officer is alerted to a low hanging fiber-optic cable on Mill River Southfield Road.
- 11:13 a.m. Following a call from a Rhoades and Bailey Road resident about a suspicious vehicle at the end of her driveway, an officer determines that it belongs to a member of the crew working on the road.
- 11:23 a.m. A caller reports a suspicious vehicle parked at the end of her driveway on South Sandisfield Road.
- Oct. 30 11:47 p.m. National Grid alerted after a resident reports wires on fire on East Hill Road.

Graham Frank, Chief of Police

FIRE AND RESCUE

- Oct. 1 3:25 p.m. Hartsville Mill River Road Fire Alarm
- Oct. 2 9:03 p.m. Hartsville New Marlborough Road CO Alarm
- Oct. 2 11:29 p.m. Mutual Aid to Sheffield Medical Call
- Oct. 3 12:28 p.m. Old Hitchcock Road Medical Call
- Oct. 4 8:45 a.m. Peter Menaker Road Medical Call
- Oct. 7 7:50 p.m. Mill River Great Barrington Road Fire Investigation
- Oct. 7 8:14 p.m. Juniper Hill Road CO Alarm
- Oct. 8 4:22 a.m. Canaan Southfield Road Medical Call
- Oct. 8 10:28 a.m. Juniper Hill Road CO Alarm
- Oct. 8 12:49 p.m. Cross Road to Canaan Valley Road Fire Alarm

Oct. 9	5:35 p.m.	Standby Structure Fire	Oct. 17	6:45 a.m.	Mill River Southfield Road Medical Call
Oct. 11	2:04 p.m.	Canaan Southfield Road Medical Call	Oct. 19	10:06 a.m.	Clayton Mill River Road Medical Call
Oct. 15	4:12 p.m.	Hadsell Street Tree on Wires	Oct. 20	4:31 p.m.	East Hill Road Medical Call
Oct. 15	9:00 p.m.	Mutual Aid to Agawam Landfill Fire	Oct. 22	8:19 p.m.	Peter Menaker Road Fire Alarm
Oct. 17	2:35 a.m.	Mill River Southfield Road Medical Call	Oct. 25	3:11 p.m.	Hayes Hill Road Medical Call
			Oct. 30	11:50 p.m.	East Hill Road Wires Down

Fire Company President David Smith

Time Flu: Passersby on the early afternoon of October 8 might have thought they were witnessing a flash mob in the parking lot of Town Hall, but what was actually going on was a very robust turnout of mostly senior citizens in search of flu shots. The weather was fine and the wait was long, but that all provided the opportunity for folks to catch up with each other by speaking loudly through masks and from an appropriate distance. A good time was had by all, and so many showed up that the nurse who was administering the shots ran out of doses! □



photo by Larry Burke

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THE SCHOOL REPORT

NEW TEACHERS AT MOUNT EVERETT

By Jane Burke

The pandemic caused upheaval at Southern Berkshire Regional School District. Providing education remotely in the spring and then spending the summer planning for safe return of the students was a grueling journey into unknown territory. It led to a number of teachers deciding to leave their jobs. At Mount Everett three veteran teachers found the combination of the stress of working with their students remotely and concerns about possible health risks associated with in-person classes good reasons to retire. Without a final budget the District could not assure jobs to the young new teachers who had not worked the three years to attain professional status. This meant that a beloved elementary art teacher took a job in another district.

These losses could have further threatened the quality of the educational experience for students. Instead they have resulted in some gains. Mount Everett Principal Jesse Carpenter said, "The three new teachers have been great additions to our staff. They have brought excitement and energy in their lessons, and they have shown compassion and caring in their relationships with students. They have quickly become contributing members of the Mount Everett and SBRSD community."

Alex Izatt, a new high school history teacher is commuting from Belchertown, Massachusetts, and hopes to find housing here so he can become more involved with the school and community as a whole. He has a Bachelor's degree from the UMass Amherst and a Master's from the American International College. His first year of teaching was at Northamp-



Alex Izatt



Peter Lynch

ton High School. At Mount Everett he teaches World History and an elective called "Psych in Film."

"I love to stay active with anything like hiking, running, biking, going to the gym etc.," said Alex. "I'm also very interested in nutrition and food/cooking and would love to integrate that into my courses. I hope to coach and lead extra-curriculars in the spring after things normalize." He intends to pursue further study to earn a Certificate of Advanced Study or a doctorate.

Peter Lynch was hired as the sixth grade social studies teacher and as a high school history teacher. Raised in Mamaroneck, New York, he moved to Mill River, where his parents have a home, to shelter from the pandemic. He has a BA in History and an MA in Education from Quinnipiac University in Hamden, Connecticut. This is his first year as a teacher. He said, "When I was a student, it was always the educators who had a genuine excitement for teaching that had the most impact on me. I enjoy building relationships with students and showing them that history is all around us. I try to bring a positive and enthusiastic energy to the class."

He described the challenges of having to make lessons work for students in the classroom and remotely. He said, "There is so much enthusiasm from parents and students about the work we are doing, and the return to any form of normalcy, that has been encouraging and makes things easier. My sixth graders are having no trouble adapting to a more online form of education. Many of them are much more tech-savvy than I was at their age!"

The move to New Marlborough has not been difficult, as he had worked as a paraprofessional in past summers in the Project Connection program in the Berkshire Hills Regional School District. He said, "As a bird watcher and nature lover, being in the Berkshires is ideal for me. I am really excited to be a new member of the SBRSD team."

The pandemic also put **Parker Synder** on the path to SBRSD. She grew up in Sheffield and attended Mount Everett High School, graduating in 2016, and went on to Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts where she ma-

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jored in English and Secondary Education. She said, "I love to write. I concentrated in journalism, literature and creative writing, and I enjoyed my practice teaching at McCann Technical High School, where I got a job as a paraprofessional. I really liked it there but came back to be with my family during the pandemic."

She was delighted to discover an opening for an English teacher at Mount Everett and quickly applied. She teaches seventh grade and high school journalism. She admires Principal Jesse Carpenter, who was her English teacher — while finding it a challenge to call him by his first name. She is taking over for a retired teacher who inspired her when she was in his class five years ago and has a special feeling about teaching the high school journalism course. "It is easier for me to gain the trust of the students because I know their older siblings," she said. "I am also familiar with on-line education platforms, as I used them at MCLA and in my work using Google Classroom at McCann."

As a basketball and volleyball player, both at Mount Everett and MCLA, she loves team sports and hopes to coach as soon as those sports resume. "I want to be the teacher I wish I had," she said. "Someone who really knows you and cares." She also wants antiracism to take hold at SBRSD. "While I was at MCLA, I led activities at high schools in north county that allowed students to open up about racial profiling and discrimination. I know in our mostly white population our students have limited exposure to people of color. I have bought posters showing people of color to put up in my room and also books with antiracist themes."

At the elementary school the sadness of losing a beloved art teacher has given way to enthusiasm about the addition of **Todd Titone** as the new elementary art teacher. After earning bachelor's degrees in both visual arts and fine arts from the State University of New York at New Paltz in 1995, he worked as an instructor for the Classroom Without Walls' Around-the-World Trip from 1996 to 1997. This brought him to the Great Barrier Reef and Cape Tribulation rainforest and to travel in Australia, Tahiti, Indonesia, and Thailand, volunteering at churches, national parks, farms, and an orphanage. Upon return to the U.S. in 1997 he began a

twenty-four-year career as the grade two-through-twelve art teacher at Kildonan School in Amenia, New York. While his specialty is photography, he also taught drawing and sculpture. He said, "Teaching is my passion. It is my mission to instill a love for art and for my students to develop a desire to become life-long learners." His time out of school is devoted to his family — he and his wife and two children live in Lakeville, Connecticut — and his hobbies, which include skiing, biking, photography, and drawing.

Another consequence of the pandemic was a change in the administrative team. **Dr. Amy Lyn** had been dividing her time between her roles as elementary school assistant principal and director of curriculum and professional development. Over the summer she did an amazing job of leading the preparation for remote and hybrid learning. She realized that helping teachers learn new best practices was her real passion. So this fall, she resigned from her position as assistant principal in order to focus on professional development and curricular issues.

Principal Charles Miller reported to the school committee that he was very excited to have found **Julie Dolan** through the principals' network and happy to introduce her as the new assistant principal for the elementary schools. In addition to a BA in Sociology she has a Masters Degree in Education from International College in Springfield. She has met the Performance Assessment for Leaders, which is required to become a licensed principal in Massachusetts. In her twenty-eight-year career in education she has taught in various states and now lives in Granby, Connecticut. For the past ten years she has worked in the Southwick Tolland Granville Regional School District. Three years ago she was elevated to be the Instructional Coach for PreK-sixth grade. She has grown children and now has time to craft, decorate, cook, and entertain.

The pandemic presents challenges for a newcomer to the SBRSD. "It is harder to get to know staff, families, and students when everyone is wearing a mask and socially distant," she said. "But I am thrilled to be working with a wonderful administration that cares deeply about the district's success. I am honored to be a part of a great team." □



Parker Snyder



Todd Titone



Julie Dolan



photos by Larry Broke



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Park Avenue Solar is still, according to a construction worker at the site, at least a year from going online. The gleaming array is not only protected from erosion by the grading of the slopes around it but artfully hidden from view by its being situated behind a hillside across from the Highway Garage.

Thank You to Our Contributors:

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RECIPE OF THE MONTH

Growing up in the '70s in Australia, all green vegetables were cooked the same way, boiled until they no longer resembled anything edible, and with the exception of peas, anything green was firmly on my no-go list. This was no fault of my mother (or the vegetables); it just seemed to be the way of things at the time, but thank heavens that has changed. A few years ago I braved trying a recipe that parboiled then stir-fried sprouts in bacon and it turns out that sprouts can actually be quite nice.

Thankfully, I am not the only one who likes sprouts. Brussels sprouts are one of Carrienne Petrik's favorite vegetables and, like me, one that they have the most difficulty growing — with cabbage worms turning their delicious sprouts “into beautiful green lacy balls”.

Carrienne writes “I love how this recipe turns these vibrant green balls into a candy that I can eat by the mouthful. I spend a lot of time thinking about food. I grow a lot of it and try to preserve as much of the harvest as I can. I love how this time of year I find myself so grateful for the last of these deep greens still out in the garden. Having the ability to grow a big garden was one aspect that I was very excited about when I moved here to New Marlborough (from Monterey) a few years ago.” And aren't we all grateful that they made the move, as Carrienne is New Marlborough's newest representative on the SBRSD school board (see page 10). Thank you and congratulations.

The following recipe is one of Carrienne's favorites for Brussels sprouts, originally from Alice Cozzalino of the Old Creamery in Cummington, Massachusetts. □

Fiona Kerr

Brussel Sprouts

Ingredients:	2 lbs. Brussels sprouts	1/2 tsp. salt
	2 tbsp. olive oil	1/2 tsp. fresh ground pepper
	1 tbsp. tamari	1 tsp. granulated garlic
	1 tbsp. balsamic vinegar	

Directions:

- Preheat oven to 425°
- Trim the knobby stems off of each brussels sprout with a paring knife. After you've cut the stem end into a flat surface, carefully cut a shallow “X” into the flat surface with your paring knife.
- Bring about a half gallon of water to a boil. Add the trimmed sprouts and blanch for 6-7 minutes. Drain well.
- Transfer the sprouts to a mixing bowl. Add the remaining ingredients and toss well to coat.
- Spread out in a single layer on a baking sheet and bake in the hot oven until golden brown, 15-25 minutes.

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LIBRARY NEWS

Scariest than ever: "Even a pandemic couldn't keep us from celebrating Halloween," says Librarian Deb O'Brien of her favorite holiday. She and her crew (among them, Autumn Snyder, Tom Stalker, Sally Turner, Michael Dolinish, Deb O'Brien, Pam Gillette, and Tara White, photo, center, right) handed out fifty-one bags of candy to drivers-by with children and waved ghoulishly to everyone else. "I had a ton of help setting up and breaking down," says Deb. "I couldn't have done it without them." photos by Laura Endacott, Robbi Hartt, and Marsha Harvey



Library Hours
Monday - Wednesday - Saturday
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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

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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:

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

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Contributing writers and artists: Ann Getsinger, Fiona Kerr.

Index: Donna Weaver

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

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