



New Marlborough 5 Village News

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Clayton ♦ Hartsville ♦ Mill River ♦ New Marlborough ♦ Southfield

A VISIT TO THE SOURCE

Tapping into New Marlborough's Liquid Gold: Water

By Barry R. Shapiro

It's been in the same location on Norfolk Road since 1970, bottling water from a pure mountain spring that runs under Southfield and distributing it locally and out of state. And now, after over a half century of operations, Berkshire Spring Water is primed to modernize its operations.

"Our production line is quite old. We plan to completely overhaul our bottling operations in the near future," says Steve Keim, general manager, adding that the entire production line is slated for replacement. Mr. Keim has been in charge of operations since 2019 when a Marquette, Michigan, company with other investments in the bottled water industry took over the business from the Bosworth family, who founded it in 1970. The reported purchase price: \$2.06 million.



Photo by Barry R. Shapiro

Berkshire Springs General Manager Steve Keim intends to upgrade the water-bottling plant.

Founded by Dale Bosworth, Sr., Berkshire Mountain Spring Water was situated on a 300-acre property on Norfolk Road that included the spring still in use by the present ownership. Prior to founding the company, Mr. Bosworth, a decorated veteran of the Second World War who passed away in 2005, had started several small businesses on Long Island, New York, including a potato chip company and a dry-cleaning business. He also worked as a salesman for New York Life Insurance Co. In 1960, he moved to Canaan, Connecticut, and became a manufacturer's representative for several machine shops, relocating with his family to New Marlborough in 1963.

Dale Bosworth's daughter, Janis Graham-Jones, recalls that Berkshire Mountain Spring Water started in her father's in-house workshop, using old dairy farm equipment. Initially, he produced half- and full-gallon glass containers for supermarket shelves, later becoming a private-label bottler for a health-food store in New York City. The company eventually began selling under its own name, growing through direct sales and its use of independent distributors, a practice continued today.

Steve Keim, a veteran of many years in the bottled water business, is enthusiastic about Berkshire Spring Water and its future. "This is a great company with a great product and we're very proud of that," he says. Then, in recognition of criticism elsewhere of the bottled water industry, he adds. "In case anyone is concerned, there's no risk of our depleting the aquifer or anything like that."

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According to Mr. Keim, here's why: By definition, spring water is drawn from a naturally flowing orifice that brings water to the surface. Berkshire Springs takes only what comes out. If the water weren't captured, it would simply flow into a local creek and then to a river. Because the water is naturally rising from a spring, it is, asserts Mr. Keim, impossible for the company to withdraw too much since the company doesn't "withdraw" anything. Water flows to the surface naturally from a state-certified spring at a variable rate depending on the season, but often between fifteen and thirty gallons per minute. Mr. Keim also advises that the bottled water business uses less than 2/100ths

of 1 percent of water withdrawn from the ground, a figure dwarfed by that used by agriculture and other industries. Berkshire Springs, he says, sells 6 million gallons of water a year.

A visitor to the bottling operation expecting to see a host of 12- or 16-ounce single use bottles marching out of the bottling facility will be disappointed. Individual bottles, which aren't produced or bottled in Southfield, represent less than one half of one percent of the company's business. Instead, a visitor will see the plant bottling three- and five-gallon containers. These are used in the company's primary business, which focuses on bulk sales of water to distributors, either under the Berkshire Springs name or their own. A smaller but still significant part of the business is renting hot and cold-water dispensers to businesses and homes and then supplying those dispensers with water. Between their direct sales, which run from Bennington, Vermont, to New York to Connecticut and, of course, the Berkshires, and sales to their distributors, stretching from Maine to New Jersey, company operations cover a large swath of the Northeast.

As expected, the bottled water process is tightly controlled by the United States Food and Drug Administration, which considers bottled water a "food," subject to its oversight. Additionally, the Town

of New Marlborough, acting on behalf of the state inspects the facility annually.

Testing to assure purity is a critical part of operations at Berkshire Springs. This includes a test for ozone levels hourly to assure constant sanitation, a test for coliform performed on site daily, a more expansive test performed by an outside laboratory weekly, and a highly detailed report performed by a nationally recognized laboratory annually (a copy of this report, examining the water for hundreds of contaminants, is posted on the company's website).

"We can't be too careful about ensuring the quality of our product and we do a good job," Mr. Keim says with obvious pride. Indeed,

Berkshire Spring water is subjected to a cascade of purifying procedures, including filtration and treatment with ultraviolet light and ozone gas — but never chlorine, which says Mr. Keim, can leave a residual taste. The company's bottles, produced in-house using a blow-molding machine, undergo, says Mr. Keim, a very rigorous cleaning process before they are refilled.

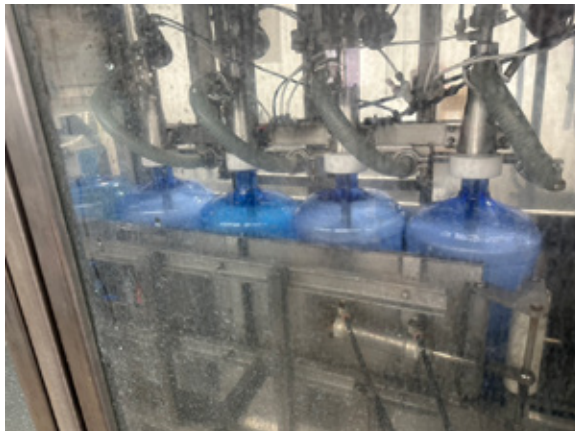
The company employs two dozen workers and owns a fleet of five tractors, ten trailers, four or five route trucks and a few vans. In an abundance of caution, they are whenever possible kept off the property, should there be any leaks from their engines.

"For similar reasons, we don't have any underground fuel storage tanks on the property," says Mr. Keim. "We don't want anything that could affect our water."

The operations director smiles as he points to a certificate from the International Bottled Water Association, a trade organization that represents water bottlers in the United States and sets standards for their operations. "They come in annually and perform a very detailed inspection of our operations," he says. "It's very thorough. This certificate of excellence indicates that we were in the top 10 percent of companies that meet or exceed the FDA's standards. We're quite proud of that." □



The floor of the plant...



...and the current soon-to-be replaced bottling operation

FESTIVE AND TASTE-FULL

First Responders' Wine Tasting Rang All the Bells

First Responders' annual samplings of wine turned out to be the tastiest event of the season. Plentiful quantities of wine were supplied by Domaney's, Jerram Winery, and Land of Nod Winery. Big Elm and Roe Jan Breweries provided beer and ale, while Berkshire Mountain Distillers, Harvest Cocktails, and Dannah and Ben Trachtenberg's mixed drinks offered up the hard stuff. For the designated driver, there was non-pasteurized apple cider from Hilltop Orchards. Pairing the potables with offerings from Roberta's Pizza, Gedney Farm, Old Inn on the Green, Marc Trachtenberg, Rubiner's, and Bernadette Rooney made for a memorable evening at the Fire House on November 11. Dawn Trachtenberg added decor, and the duo of Bobby Sweet and Lara Tupper filled the room with music. □



Photos by Larry Burke

Town Business Is Your Business SELECT BOARD



October 30: The meeting opened with a continuation of the search for a suitable location for war veteran memorials. In anticipation of the addition of memorials for the wars between the Revolutionary War and World War I, the Select Board approached the New Marlborough Land Trust about acquiring a small plot of land opposite the Meeting House in New Marlborough village where the Cincinnati Lodge had once been located. Select Board Chair Tara White read a letter from the Land Trust requesting specifics on such matters as the size of the plot, the number and appearance of the monuments, and who would be responsible for public visitation liability insurance.

American Legion Post 350 Commander Ann Riou and Post member David Hastings, present at the meeting, said they would respond. Town Administrator Mari Enoch noted that the Town owns the monuments (the Legion pays for their purchase and preparation) and that its insurance would cover liability wherever the monuments were located.

The meeting moved on to finalizing a Request for Proposals (RFP) for a new town hall. **The RFP, asking for offers of both existing buildings suitable for conversion and land on which a town hall could be built, had been vetted and now needed only the Board's approval for its release.** A lengthy discussion ensued, however, on the difficulties of choosing among the potential offers, how, for instance, to compare the cost of a new building with a renovated one. "If it were offered a turnkey building and a \$200,000 piece of land," asked Marc Trachtenberg, who was present at the meeting, "how would the Select Board decide between the two?" Other considerations, such as wooded versus cleared

land, would also complicate the decision, said Barbara Marchione, chair of the Town Hall Planning Committee, who was also present.

Eventually, Ms. White stepped in. "We're beating this to death," she said, and asked for a motion to approve the RFP. It was offered by Selectman Beth Dean, who thanked the Town Hall Planning Committee and Mari Enoch for their hard work for putting it together, seconded by Selectman Bill West, and unanimously passed.

At this point, with the appearance of Ben Webster and design coordinator Neil Blackwell, the gathering temporarily morphed into a Special Permit Meeting that would decide whether to allow the Websters to build a primary residence on their property on Adsit Crosby Road. For the past two decades, the Websters have occupied a converted barn on the property. **The "earth shelter" they propose to build will be "ecologically sustainable,"** said Mr. Webster, with a flat, planted roof. Conditioned on an upgrade of the septic system on the property, the permit was granted.

Returning to the evening's agenda, the Board signed off on a Highway Department request to sell a 2001 used truck, which had been purchased a year and a half ago basically for parts. It will be put out for bid.

In her updates, Ms. Enoch addressed a contradiction in the Town bylaw over whether pig farming was allowed in New Marlborough. As was revealed at the October 16 Select Board meeting, the Right To Farm Section 15 of the Town bylaws defines farming as, among other things, "keeping and raising of poultry, sheep, goats swine, cattle, . . ." However, an earlier paragraph, 3.3.4, states that land in town may be put to "any agricultural use except commercial piggeries, fur

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farming, slaughterhouse or greenhouses.” Ms. Enoch brought the matter to Town Counsel Jeremia Pollard, who declared that the broader “Right To Farm” provision trumped the exception and that, yes, piggeries are permitted in town.

Ms. Enoch then welcomed Jennifer Greenberg, who was attending her first meeting as the Town’s new administrative secretary.

Ms. White announced that the state had awarded the Town \$500,000 to be used for infrastructure at Cassilis Farm, the New Marlborough village property that is being converted to affordable housing. She also announced that the Planning Board had been granted \$25,000 to pay for an update of its open-space plan, which was last revised in 2016. The money will be used, in part, for one or two public forums and up to eight steering committee meetings.

November 13: Shuffling agenda items to accommodate Emergency Management representatives present at the meeting, the Board approved a grant application to the state of \$2,500 to purchase an automatic defibrillator. To be stored in Town Hall, the unit will be for Police Department use; Fire and Rescue already has a defibrillator. The Board also approved a \$2,700 grant application that would go toward the purchase of an 800-megahertz communications radio for Fire and Rescue, which has requested that \$4,000 be transferred from the Town’s Reserve Fund to go toward the purchase of a radio. With a total cost \$11,000, the difference would be covered by the Ambulance Fund. The selectmen voted to recommend the Reserve Fund request to the Finance Committee for its consideration.

Next the Board tied up a loose end to restore transport services for seniors by signing an agreement with

TriTown Connector Senior Transportation. Under the agreement, the van service will drive residents — aged fifty-five and up — to Great Barrington (or Monterey, Stockbridge or West Stockbridge) at a round-trip cost of \$4. As a member of the service, New Marlborough pays TriTown \$1,350 a quarter.

Moving on, the selectmen authorized the receipt of \$25,000 from the state to pay for a consultant to assist in updating the Town’s Open Space and Recreation Plan. It then authorized Town Administrator Mari Enoch to sign for an FY24 allocation from the state of \$5,500 to the Cultural Council.

Returning to the search for a site for five or more war veteran monuments, the Board reviewed a letter to the New Marlborough Land Trust, asking it to consider the donation of a quarter acre of land owned by the Land Trust in New Marlborough village catty-corner from the Village Green. Following a couple of minor clarifications, the letter (written by American Legion Post 350 Commander Ann Riou but going out over the signatures of the selectmen) will be sent to the Land Trust in time for its November 29 board meeting. Addressing the final agenda item, the selectmen appointed Romona Bower to fill a vacancy on the Board of Registrars for the term ending June 30, 2024.

In her updates, Ms. Enoch said she wanted to discuss with the Board a prospective Payment in Lieu of Taxes agreement from Altus, the company that owns the solar field opposite the Highway Department garage. **Board Chair Tara White announced that the Highway Department had succeeded in winning a competitive grant from the state’s Municipal Small Bridge Program that will pay for a state-approved engineer to draw up a design for the repair of the Campbell Falls Stone Arch Bridge.** A grant application for the actual repair of the bridge — most likely to be undertaken in 2025 — will follow completion of the design document.

Finally, Ms. White said that, following the October 31 resignation of human resources consultant Sophia Bletsoe, the Board would consult with Monterey, with which the Town had shared Ms. Bledsoe, on how to meet human resource needs in the future. □

Joe Poindexter

Peter Schuyten has announced his retirement from the staff of the 5 Village News. During a decade of reporting on the activities of the Select Board, he established a standard of excellence we have strived to maintain. Thank you, Peter.

— The Editors

A letter to the Land Trust asks it to consider contributing a piece of land in New Marlborough Village for war veteran memorials.

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FAX: (413) 528-5095

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VIEW FROM THE BOARD

As winter and the threat of bad weather approaches, we would like to remind our seniors that there is an option if you would prefer not to drive. Our town is part of the TriTown Connector, which offers rides for seniors (fifty-five years of age and up), as well as those who may be disabled. The van will pick up riders within the five towns of Great Barrington, Monterey, New Marlborough, West Stockbridge and Stockbridge and, for a small fee, take you where you would like to go. There is further information on our website (www.newmarlboroughma.gov) or you can call TriTown Connector at 413-591-3826 between 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. Their website is www.tritown.org.

Residents who use the Transfer Station have noticed that the swap shop has been closed for the last several months. The shed needed a total clean-out. By the time you read this, new rules for what can and cannot be put into the shed will be posted, and the shed will be

reopened. PLEASE help keep it organized by adhering to the posted list. The Transfer Station Working Group has also been in contact with a new company that will take more recyclable items, including mattresses, furniture, light bulbs, and batteries. The goal is to have this service available by January 1. Grants from the state Department of Environmental Protection have made this expansion possible.

Welcome to Jennifer Greenberg who recently joined the Town Hall staff as our new administrative secretary.

As we enter the hectic holiday season, the Board would like to thank all of our employees, committees, and volunteers for their work this past year. The work is not always easy but together we are all focused on the goal of making New Marlborough a great place to live.

We wish you all the best for a healthy, happy, and safe holiday with your family and friends. □

Tara White

Chair, New Marlborough Select Board

THE PLANNING BOARD

November 8: This bi-monthly meeting of the Planning Board was convened by Chair Bob Hartt, with members Becky Wilkinson, Christian Stovall, and Jordan Archey in attendance. Also in the room were Select Board Chair Tara White and two representatives of Kelly, Granger, Parsons & Associates – Mark Reynolds and Hunter Tranter – who were there to present two Approval Not Required plans. The first ANR was for a nine-acre parcel of land, part of the Cassilis Farm property, that is being sold by Construct, Inc. to abutter Greg Poole. The second ANR is a division of property into two parcels owned by the HLP Group at 82 New Marlborough Southfield Road, creating a three-acre undeveloped lot adjacent to the land on which a recently renovated home stands. Both plans having

the required minimum acreage and road frontage, the Planning Board signed off and bid Messrs. Reynolds and Tranter a good evening.

In setting up the next agenda item, Mr. Hartt reviewed a matter that had surfaced during the October 25 meeting. John Schreiber and Claudette Callahan, representing the New Marlborough Historical Society had come to see if the Board would be willing to partner with the Historical Society in the creation of a by-law that would pertain only to the Town's two Historic Districts – Mill River and New Marlborough Village. The bylaw would allow the creation of an architectural review board that would have a say in the look of any new construction in those districts, for the purpose of preserving the overall historic aspects that give

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them value. Following a few questions by members of the Board, Mr. Hartt left it to the Historical Society to work on a draft of such a bylaw and said that the Board members would discuss the matter further among themselves at the next meeting.

This being that next meeting, discussion now ensued, and it was immediately clear that most, if not all, of the members wanted no part of a historic district bylaw. It was also clear to everyone that the impetus for the proposed measure was the recent construction within the New Marlborough Village's historic district of the large, brick-clad, copper-roofed storage facility owned by Miami-based artist Julio Larraz. Becky Wilkinson said that she liked the look of the building and felt that, regardless of this building's appearance, the creation of an architectural review board could be "a gateway to further restrictions." Christian Stovall emphatically agreed, and Jordan Archey said she believed that this "would add to the hoops one needs to jump through" in the process of home construction.

Mr. Hartt, saying he would take on the role of Devil's Advocate in this discussion, reminded his fellow members that such a bylaw would apply only to the two historic districts, neither of which has very much developable land at this point. He also spoke of the importance of protecting the historic districts from the kinds of development that detract from their existing charm. He said that the engine that draws visitors to these villages – their industry, so to speak – is their beauty. With that, he asked the central question, "Do we care, as a Planning Board, to be involved [with the Historical Society's effort]?" Silence ensued, and Mr. Hartt concluded by saying he would notify Dr. Schreiber that the Planning Board would not be signing on.

Moving to the next item on the agenda, the Board made some movement toward fashioning a draft of a Short Term Rental (STR) bylaw. Mr. Hartt clarified with Ms. White that the Planning Board's aim was to fashion a bylaw that included requirements for establishing and maintaining an STR, but would not address the monetary aspects – room taxes, etc. Ms.

White agreed that taxation would be worked out by the Select Board, to be presented as part of the STR warrant article, or perhaps as a separate article, at the Annual Town Meeting in May.

Mr. Hartt then ran through the rough draft he had assembled before the meeting. The underlying purpose of the bylaw, he said, is to create fair conditions for residents to earn income through one or two rentals, while avoiding the industrialization, or corporatization, of the STR market in New Marlborough. Specifics remain to be ironed out at the next several meetings before the proposed bylaw can be examined by town counsel, after which a public hearing will be scheduled in the early part of 2024.

The final order of business was to approve the contract with Berkshire Regional Planning Commission to work with the Planning Board on the renewal of the Town's Open Space and Recreation Plan. Mr. Hartt said that Town Administrator Mari Enoch will be facilitating the process as well. With the caveat that the dates of beginning and concluding the contract be clarified, Mr. Hartt, with the approval of all attending members, will recommend to the Select Board that the contract be signed. □

Larry Burke



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THERE'S A NEW ADMINISTRATIVE SECRETARY IN TOWN

By Robbi Hartt

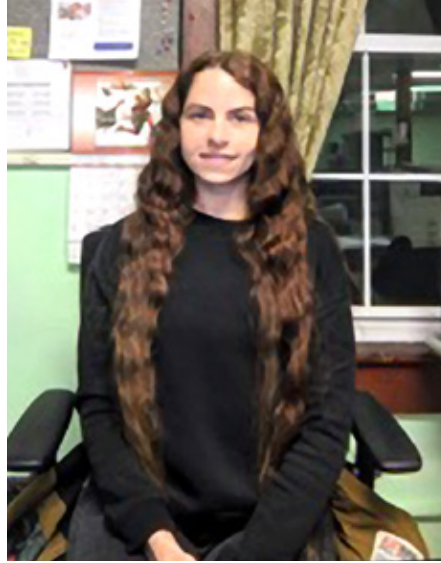
Jennifer Greenberg, the Town of New Marlborough's newly hired administrative secretary, recently filled the position previously held by Michelle Castellano. She learned about the position where most people go for local job postings: *The Shopper's Guide*.

Although Jennifer's educational background is in English (she graduated from Palm Beach State University in Florida with an A.A. in creative writing), she's held a variety of positions in the past, including "barista, complaint department call center rep, and budtender." She currently works thirty hours a week for the town, along with a small shift at Farnsworth Fine Cannabis.

"This new position is an opportunity to understand how local governments operate, and why it is important to be informed and involved in the community," she says, adding "I've always aimed to have a job like this that feels more significant, more personal." In addition, her new role "incorporates many overlapping elements from past jobs"—including providing customer service, responding to phone requests, and using online platforms. Her current workload is manageable, she notes gratefully. "It's a good time to acclimate, but I know things will get busier as we go forward. I'm asking a lot of questions and learning a lot about local history and feeling very welcomed by the community."

What prompted her move to a place whose abundant natural beauty is often veiled in seasonal affective disorder-inducing clouds and mud? In a word, Covid. "I wanted something different and knew a friend-of-a-friend in Sandisfield who offered me a place to stay as I transitioned here." She initially found a place to live in Connecticut but now resides in Otis near the Blandford line, where the peace and quiet of having few neighbors offer "a big change from Florida." Without being asked, she adds, "No, I don't miss the heat."

Besides, New England is in her genes. "While I grew up and lived all my life in Florida, my family tree has roots in Massachusetts and New York as far back as the 1700s, so it's interesting that I found my way here by chance," she notes. Reflecting more, she admits her move to this particular region was also tied to her wish to be near family in New York, in close proximity to the city, and in an area with abundant natural beauty,



Jennifer Greenberg

Photo courtesy of Jennifer Greenberg

places to explore, and things to do.

She admits that there are a few challenges — like feeling a bit isolated (breaking into a small community being more difficult at times), having to plan out everything (due to driving distances), and finding activities for her school-aged daughter — but she isn't letting that keep her from jumping in. As we spoke, she was driving to a meeting with LitNet (an organization based in Lee that tutors Berkshire residents in English language skills) to learn how she could become a volunteer.

She is keenly aware of economic realities that can make it hard to pursue your passion (teaching was initially her goal) and even find an

affordable place to live (the Berkshires offering very little by way of workforce housing). "Ironically, the same situation you see here happens in South Florida," she notes. "In fact, many of the people who vacation here have condos in Florida."

In addition to her role as mother and her part-time jobs, she is an editor/reader for the *South Florida Poetry Journal*. "Writing and editing are personal outlets that I really enjoy," she says. She also enjoys "exploring ruins and artifacts of the old world and hiking through beautiful places in New Marlborough and beyond." Other hobbies and side hustles include "collecting antiques, thrifting, and selling vintage goods online."

The next time you're in town, pop in and introduce yourself — it'll make the sometimes isolated feel of the rural Berkshires a little less daunting. □

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A Pathway Forward

By Larry Burke



es those problems. We need more than just 'no'; we need positive action that looks to children's and community's future."

That's fair enough.

While I don't claim to be one those town or district leaders currently, I have been involved in education for much of my adult life, including six years as an SBRSD School Committee member, four of those as vice chair. So, I would like to offer my thoughts on a positive pathway forward.

The fact that the Berkshire Hills District will now attempt to gain funding to replace the dilapidated Monument Mountain High School with a building suited to a smaller student population needn't be viewed as the end of the story of our two districts' interactions. Rather, it will allow the breathing room required to break down the differences that keep these two separate – but not really so separate – populations at odds.

In my forty-three years of living in New Marlborough, I have seen the divisions that have ruled the relationship between the two districts – some of it the natural result of any interscholastic rivalry, particularly in sports, but much of it due to a long history of distrust, disdain, or outright insult coming from all levels within both school populations. The animosities, regardless of their validity, were not addressed in the plan that was put forward to consolidate the two, an oversight that certainly contributed to its failure. Seventy years or so of rubbing each other the wrong way requires a great deal of sorting out, and the grievances are not all in the past. Even today, I hear of parents pulling their children out of one district and into the other because of a perceived climate of bullying, or of endemic racism, neither of which is countenanced by either school's administrations.



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I do not want to ignore the fact that there have been instances where the two districts worked together to provide opportunities for students that were not available to them at their own school. The Spartan football team, for instance, allows Mount Everett athletes to join, and, likewise, Monument students can play on the Eagles hockey team. During much of the '90s and into the early 2000s there was a successful vocational program that included Lee as well, called the South Berkshire Educational Collaborative, offering students from the three districts courses in the culinary arts, carpentry, automotive, and computer science. While funding for the program was subsequently withdrawn, it stands as a precedent of the districts working in tandem for the betterment of students.

With that in mind then, the way forward as I see it, if consolidation of the two districts is ever to occur, is through a long-term commitment by every stakeholder – the two superintendents, principals, all teachers, the teachers' unions, staff, school committee members, students, and parents – to a plan of collaboration that completely transcends the occasional passes at working together that the district administrations have experimented with over the years. What could this involve? To start with, a directive from the two school committees to their respective school superintendents to make the following happen: To resolve to work together, in a fully cooperative fashion, setting aside differences, to create a comprehensive plan that will marshal the two districts' separate strengths to the advantage of each and every student. Achieving this will involve a rethinking of the schedules and pedagogic goals of the two districts, from Pre-K through 12th Grade, and setting aside significant time for in-service training and collegial interactions of faculty and staff with the specific goal of broadening the scope of shared programs – expanding the collaboration in athletics, yes, but more importantly, in the classrooms, both academic and vocational.

The pandemic made clear that distance learning through Zoom and other computer-based platforms is a viable teaching resource, one that can expand the classroom choices for students whose school may not offer a subject that happens to be available in the other district. A fleet of shuttle buses – which Mount Everett already has – would allow in-person learning for those students needing to attend programs on the two campuses.

The goal, over a span of years, would be to evolve a de facto single district, based on the best interests of all students in the eight towns. Inter-district School Choice, another perennial source of friction between the two districts, might recede gradually, given a greater unity of educational vision between the two. In time, after the barriers are broken down, discussion of a formal merging of the districts may seem appropriate, but if a high degree of collaborative education has been achieved along with a lessening of the internecine differences, that may be all that is needed.

A collaborative effort on this scale would not be without significant monetary investment by the taxpayer, but, if the end result is a singleness of purpose to the benefit of south Berkshire County's children, the money will be well spent. This is a process to be undertaken with the full participation of the many stakeholders mentioned above – inclusive this time around – to build a proper foundation for our children and our community.



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WHAT ARE YOU READING?

In a tradition inspired by Jon Swan, a founder of the *5 Village News*, who was in the habit of asking friends and family, “what are you reading,” we offer another recommendation from a resident of New Marlborough: *All The Frequent Troubles Of Our Days*, by Rebecca Donner.

“This is an exceptionally well-crafted and meticulously researched biography, infusing elements of non-fiction and espionage thriller. Mildred Harnack was an American leader of one of the largest underground resistance groups in Hitler’s brutally totalitarian regime. Rebecca Donner is her great-great-niece



and writes sensitively about Mildred using material only family could find. She shows us how Mildred saw and experienced her world from her childhood to her time in Berlin, where she pulled together a band of political activists, and started spying for the Allies. Her brutal interrogations, trials, and death sentence from Hitler were the result. A remarkable story about a remarkable woman whose life deserves recognition.”

—Hollis North,

Mill River Great Barrington Road ☐

Kenzie Fields

JOIN US!

The New Marlborough Meeting House Gallery Committee is looking for new volunteer committee members and helpers to join us in this collaborative community effort of showcasing local fine art!

Gallery Committee Members - Attend monthly meetings December thru May, help plan the summer shows, help run three gallery opening receptions, be involved in exploring and planning new ideas for possible other events.

Gallery Friends - A lower commitment level that allows you to get a taste of what happens in running the gallery. Step in to help with the three gallery opening receptions from June through September, or as many as you can make it for. Attend a Gallery Committee meeting to get an idea of who we are and to see how involved you would like to be.

Committee Members and Friends do not have to be artists and do not have to be New Marlborough residents.

Please respond to contact@dianebarth.com or caryn@carynking.com

Diane Barth and Caryn King, Co-chairs

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NEW MARLBOROUGH LAND TRUST

Happy Holidays, everyone! As the year comes to an end, I would like to thank the New Marlborough Land Trust Board for all their support. They are a group of passionate people who bring valuable talent to the table. I would also like to thank our donors and volunteers. As board member, Tes Reed often says, it takes a village. Lastly, gratitude to Stefan Zdziarski, our fabulous trail steward whose enthusiasm and work ethic keep our trails open and safe.

The coming year will be a busy one for the New Marlborough Land Trust as we continue our efforts in conservation under the leadership of Martha Bryan, keep our trails and properties maintained, and plan activities for young and old — including Good Times @ Goodnow making its way back next September. Please visit us at <https://www.nmlandtrust.org> to see what is happening in 2024.

As you think about your end-of-year donations, don't forget the New Marlborough Land Trust. We rely on your support to keep us going. You can make a donation at <https://www.nmlandtrust.org/support-our-mission>. New Marlborough Land Trust is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization, and your contribution is tax deductible. Our tax ID number is 22-2753704.

Happy New Year to All. □

Silvia Eggenberger, Executive Director, New Marlborough Land Trust




Photo by Silvia Eggenberger

New Marlborough Land Trust Trail Steward Stefan Zdziarski and volunteer Robert Dvorchik


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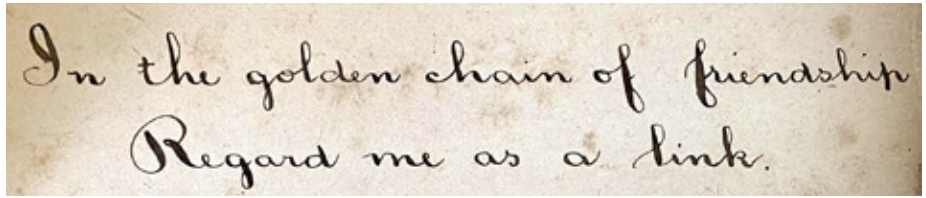
Messages of Friendship

A VELVET AUTOGRAPH BOOK

In an era before digital keepsakes, school-aged children cherished a unique tradition: the autograph book. These small, often velvet-bound volumes served as repositories of treasured memories, with friends inscribing pages with fond recollections, quotes, messages of hope, and heartfelt wishes for the future. One such autograph book, dating back to the late Victorian Era, now resides in the New Marlborough Historical Society's archives. Its elegant velvet cover and faded ink entries transport us to a time when handwritten sentiments held a special significance.

While we do not know anything about the owner of the autograph book, Nellie Neal, the back cover says in newer pen, "Property of Louise Hart and found by W. L. Hart." The book itself, with over twenty pages filled with personalized inscriptions dating from 1889 to 1916 offers a glimpse into the lives of its contributors, their friendships, and the values they held dear.

The time was a period of significant social and cultural transformation as the Industrial Revolution brought about technological advancements that reshaped society. Amidst these changes, the autograph book remained a cherished tradition, offering a tangible way to capture and preserve friendships and life's special moments.



An inscription in Nellie Neal's autograph book from Clara A. Bourke



The late 19th century autograph book has a velvet cover.

Velvet, once a luxury material reserved for the elite, became more accessible during the Industrial Revolution, leading to its wider use in upholstery and other decorative items. Its sumptuous texture and rich colors made it a popular choice for autograph book covers, adding a touch of elegance to these treasured keepsakes.

The first inscription in the book states in lovely script: "Miss Nellie Neal / Received on New Years 1889." Other entries include: "In the golden chain of friendship/Regard me as a link./Very Sincerely/Clara A. Bourke/Sept 6, 1898"; and "A smooth sea never made a skillful mariner;/Your true friend/Ruth R. Greene/April 6, 99

Today, with the ease of digital storage, handwritten sentiments may seem like a relic of the past. Yet, this autograph book from the New Marlborough Historical Society serves as a reminder of a time when words held a deeper meaning, and cherished memories were carefully preserved on paper. It is a testament to the enduring power of friendship and the enduring value of handwritten expressions of affection. □

Rachel Perera Weingeist



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Upcoming: Events Calendar for December and January

December 2: Holiday Market, homemade and handmaid gifts at the Southfield Church, 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

December 2: New Marlborough Central Holiday Fair: Sponsored by the New Marlborough/Monterey Parent Teacher’s Association, a celebration offering games, crafts, shopping, and seasonal festivities, 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

December 16: Vocalis Youth Choir, directed by **Julie Bickford**, 4:00 p.m. at the Southfield Church; a retiring collection in support of Vocalis will be taken at the conclusion of the concert

December 24: A Festival of Lessons and Carols, the annual Christmas Eve celebration with the Southfield Church Community Choir, Manon Hutton-Dewys at the piano with Robert Olsen conducting; 7:00 p.m. at the Southfield Church

January 14: Violin sonatas by Bach, Tchaikovsky, and Franck with Sarah Vonsattel, violin, and Anna Stoytchev, piano, in the seasons’s first Winter House Concert; call (413) 229-5045 for reservations, tickets, and location

DEPARTMENT OF FUN FACTS

Do you see a pattern in this list?

Adams 01220	Monterey 01245
Becket 01223	Sandisfield 01255
Great Barrington 01230	Sheffield 01257
Housatonic 01236	Southfield 01259
Lanesborough 01237	Stockbridge 01262
Lee 01238	West Stockbridge 01266
Mill River 01244	Williamstown 01267

No? Look again.

Right! The ZIP codes are assigned in alphabetical order.

The USPS typically assigns the first ZIP (Zone Improvement Plan) code to a county’s main town or city. In Berkshire County, that would be Pittsfield with 01201 — which has also been assigned ZIP codes up to 01219. (The opening 0 signifies that the county is located in New England.) After that, the ZIP codes are assigned alphabetically by town, so Adams, at the top of the county alphabetically, is 01220. Williamstown (the last post office alphabetically) gets the county’s highest number: 01267.

Maybe not the most important thing you learned today, but importance isn’t everything.

Barry R. Shapiro

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NEIGHBORS



Dr. Charles W. Parton, or **Charlie**, as he was known throughout New Marlborough, passed away on October 30 at the age of ninety-eight. Charlie grew up in Bronxville, New York, graduated from Kenyon College, and received his medical degree from Cornell University. His long medical career included years as a pediatric surgeon, hospital administrator at Mount Sinai Hospital in Hartford, Connecticut, and the North Hartford Medical Clinic. For two years, 1963-65, he was a Peace Corps volunteer and deputy director in Sabah, Malaysia on Borneo.

After many years of spending summers on Martha's Vineyard, Charlie and his wife, Teena Zanetti Parton, moved to West Tisbury in 1980 to take ownership of Alley's General Store. Charlie continued his medical career in Hartford for two more years, returning on weekends to join Teena in the store. Moving on to yet another set of challenges, Charlie and Teena sold the business in 1986 and moved to North Carolina to raise sheep.

They returned to Martha's Vineyard in 1994, and in 2002 moved to New Marlborough. They both immediately became involved in community activities and developed a wide circle of friends. Charlie served on the Planning Board for several years, and joined the 5 Village News staff, primarily reporting on Select Board activities, meetings, and decisions.

A gathering in Charlie's honor was held on Sunday, November 12; the Southfield Church even cancelled its services that day so that members could join the group. Guesstimates of the size of the gathering ranged from sixty-five to ninety; in any event, the Meeting House Gallery was crowded in support of Charlie's memory. Several of Charlie's New Marlborough friends offered to share their remembrances of Charlie, his varied careers, and his warm friendships.

Anne O'Connor and **Glen Chamberlin** remember many years of friendship: We first met Charlie at the New Marlborough Meeting House where he and Teena were selling their yarn at a holiday market. We quickly learned of their days as sheep farmers and formed an immediate friendship over our shared love of animals. But, of course, being a sheep farmer was only one facet of Charlie's full and remarkable life.

We loved hearing stories of his time in the Navy, his medical career, time in the Peace Corp in Borneo, and of his time in Martha's Vineyard and North Carolina. An easy conversationalist, Charlie was naturally curious, full of questions, and loved hearing about other people's lives. We were always warmed by his effusive greeting whenever we would see him around town.

We're so fortunate that Charlie and Teena settled in New Marlborough, easily gathering friendships here as they had elsewhere. Some of our fondest times were spent sharing one of Teena's delicious meals and hearing their tales of friends and places they had lived.

We'll miss Charlie's warmth, sincerity, and his ready laugh, often echoed by Harry, their grey parrot, who was always eavesdropping on our conversations when we visited.

Larry Burke, of New Marlborough, remembers Charlie and his contributions to the NM5VN: Anyone who knew Charlie knows that no subject was beyond his interest. His sense of curiosity was absolutely boundless. Compound that with his innate good humor (a quality that must be genetically ingrained, judging by the wonderful friendliness of all the Parton family members who gathered with local friends in fond remembrance of Charlie at the Meeting House on Veteran's Day), and you had the makings of a truly enjoyable – often educational – encounter every time your paths crossed.



Charlie nursing a lamb

photo courtesy of the Parton Family

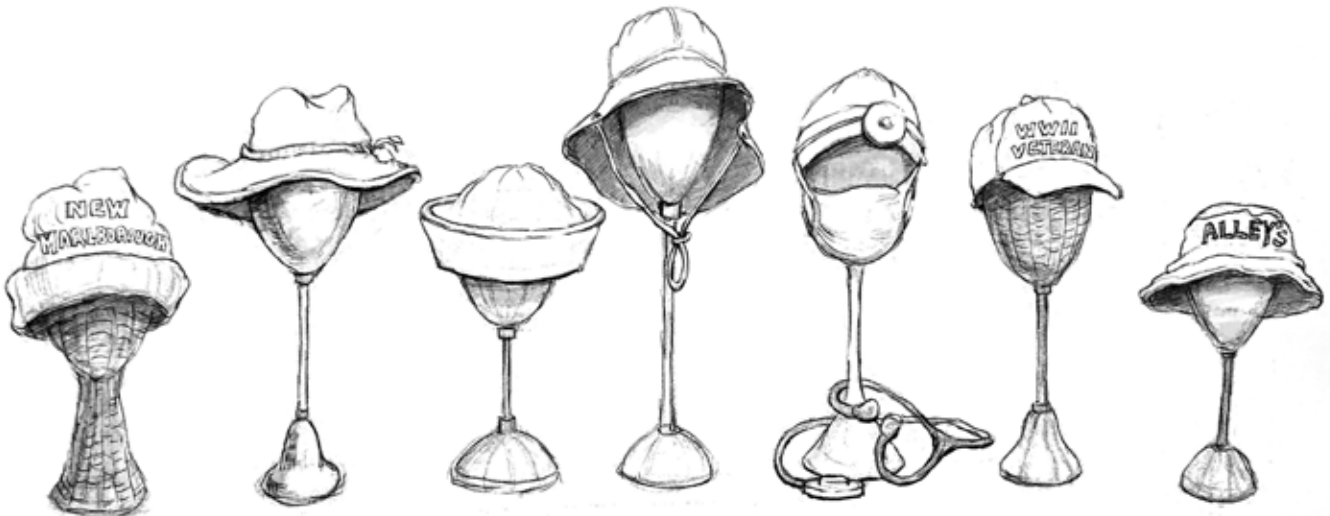


Charlie at a 5 Village News staff meeting years ago

Photo by Larry Burke

Knowing that Charlie could never say ‘no’ to a challenge or a request, we on the NM5VN staff recruited him, by then in his early 80s, to take on the task of covering the Select Board meetings. Willing to a fault, Charlie, who was then a relatively recent New Marlborough resident, accepted the challenge and dutifully reported the goings-on in Town Hall for three years, starting in 2005. For this, along with his many observations of the natural world around him that made their way into the Wildlife Neighbors column, we add our appreciation of Charlie Parton. His was the definition of a life well lived.

Brian Mikesell and John Weinstein, formerly of Mill River, highlight the importance of Charlie and Teena to them: Our friendship with Charlie Parton is so deeply intertwined with our lives in New Marlborough that we cannot imagine having experienced one without the other. We met Charlie and his beloved wife Teena at a holiday crafts fair in the Meeting House Gallery on a snowy winter weekend a few years after we moved to our house in Mill River, and that moment catalyzed a friendship and our involvement in town activities. Looking back, it feels as if we knew almost no one before we met the Partons, and then we suddenly knew people all around this wonderful town. Charlie’s lifetime of community engagement, in every community of which he was a part, was a model for us, with Brian as library trustee and Cultural Council member, and John as a member of the Conservation Commission. Charlie and John shared the same birthday, with Charlie forty-six years John’s senior. We know that on their birthday in January, when Charlie would have turned ninety-nine, we will miss him at our birthday table, but his presence will always be with us. □



A few of the many hats worn by Charlie Parton

drawings by Shawn Fields

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'ONCE MORE INTO THE BREACH!'

What Mount Everett Students Learn from a Performance of Henry V

By Maria Black

"It's an emotional roller coaster of a time," says Madeleine "Maddy" Maggio, a co-director of *Henry V* at this year's Fall Festival of Shakespeare at Mount Everett High School. "And that's exactly what's happening in Shakespeare's plays! I mean, there are *huge* emotions — betrayal, passion, love, loyalty, honor. High-schoolers can understand that in a much more immediate way sometimes than adult actors. When you get older, you forget what it's like to kiss someone for the first time." Ms. Maggio, a tall thirty-something with an open face and an easy smile, has long experience with the Shakespeare festival. She grew up in Egremont and participated in it herself, as a middle- and high-school student at Mount Everett.

She has directed the Festival at her alma mater for the last seven years and loves her work there. This year she is co-directing with Jerald Wheat, a fellow actor, new to the Festival, who recently came to Shakespeare & Co. from an MFA program at Florida State University. Kevin Coleman, founding member of Shakespeare & Co. and current education director, oversees the Festival, trains new directors, and, given his deep reservoir of experience and knowledge, is the go-to for all questions. For smoothing logistical bumps in the road, Courtney English, Mount Everett's band leader and theater director, has proven indispensable as well, Ms. Maggio says.

The Fall Festival began thirty-five years ago with a single high-school production at Lenox High. This year almost 500 students across ten schools are involved: Williamstown, Pittsfield, Lenox, Lee, Berkshire Waldorf, Mount Greylock, Monument Mountain, Mount Everett, Taconic Hills, Chatham, and Springfield Central. Shakespeare & Co. can costume thirty students per school, but there are myriad backstage "tech" roles, from stage managing to lighting and sound design, for other students who may wish to be involved. The sets? A lot of fabric and vertical el-



Mount Everett's entry in the Fall Festival of Shakespeare was *Henry V*.
Photos courtesy of SBRSD

ements, Mr. Coleman says, laughing. "The rule is it all has to fit in a van."

Students took the stage at Mount Everett for three performances of *Henry V* on November 9 and 11. The sets then had to be broken down at lightning speed at the end of the school run, crammed into a van, and transported to the Tina Packer Playhouse in Lenox for Tech Week, when students from all ten schools came together to learn how to work in an entirely new space with new requirements. At that point, school performances had already taken place, so the students knew the adrenaline rush of performance and what a performance requires. "It's a huge rehearsal," says Ms. Maggio of

Tech Week, "so the kids know — they *know* — they *have* to be extra on and extra focused. That," says Ms. Maggio, is "when the inside jokes start, and they really start to bond."

The final ten productions were performed in Lenox, November 16 through 19, with four plays back-to-back on November 18. Granted, each play had been cut,

but ten Shakespeare plays in four days by middle- and high-schoolers? That's the definition of intense. "We have five minutes of load-out at the end of a show," Mr. Coleman says, leaning forward in his seat, eyes wide, "then ten minutes of set-up for the next show. Intermissions are half an hour, so fifteen minutes for the set exchange, then fifteen minutes for the fight and dance calls, and then we open the house."



A duel scene in Act IV

Students, says Mr. Coleman, generally are motivated by competition: "What's your ranking, what are your grades, our team's gonna kick your team's ass." The Festival model, by comparison, is one of celebration and cooperation. "There are no prizes, trophies, or ribbons. It's just the work itself and what happens to the students when they do the work," he says.

For Ms. Maggio, now an equity actor with Shakespeare & Co., that work was life changing. "Doing the

Festival made me want to become an actor,” she says. “As a student, I gained so much confidence in myself. I’m probably dyslexic, it was always hard for me to read, and the Festival made me feel really *smart* ... like I knew how to understand Shakespeare and I knew how to *decode* Shakespeare.”

Other students have been similarly affected. At age three, Ms. Maggio’s sister, Eliza, saw Maddy in *As You Like It*, and now she’s costume designing and into her second year of outfitting Festival students at Mount Everett and Monument Mountain. Will Danz, who was in the Festival at Mount Everett from 2007 to 2012, confirmed what “an incredibly positive force” the Festival was in his life at the time. “I played a villain in three out of five productions, eighth grade through twelfth, which was a perfect outlet for me as an angsty teenager and a great way to incorporate myself into the school as a new kid. People were into it, full throttle.”

Andrea Drake, who participated in the Festival from 7th through 12th Grade at Mount Everett, calls it “one of the most transformational educational experiences of my life.” In her senior year, she was asked to share in the role of Prospero in *The Tempest*. “Having spent years comfortably hidden behind the scenes, the prospect of coming out of my shell, memorizing pages and pages of lines, and being seen by all was absolutely terrifying,” she recalls. “As with most challenging things, therein came the greatest reward.”

Odie Fields, a Mount Everett student from Mill River, also began with the Festival in 7th grade and stayed with it through high school. “Fall Festival gives students a space where they can express themselves,” Mr. Fields says, “at an age when the norm is to fit in. Acting requires you to be someone else. It builds muscles of empathy and understanding the experiences of others, which ironically leads you back to understanding yourself. The directors push you to dig deeper and stretch yourself beyond what feels initially possible.”

Week one of the ten-week process begins with a training session for directors, led by Mr. Coleman. Then work at the schools begins. Students have eight weeks to put the play together and perform before their own classmates. They play theater games in which Ms. Maggio and Mr. Wheat feed the students text so that they can begin speaking Shakespeare. “It can be frightening for some,” Ms. Maggio says. “A lot of kids haven’t ever read Shakespeare, but we give them a way to succeed without it being scary, or something that might cut cer-

tain kids with different abilities out.

“In a professional model,” she continues, “you’d know the play you’re casting for, but in this model we meet the kids, we play with them, we see who they are and give them opportunities to show how big they’re willing to go.” Then the directors pick the play. Why *Henry V*? It has it all, comedy, tragedy, battles. It also has a big cast that could accommodate the many middle-schoolers who wanted to be involved, and there are a lot of wonderful roles, making it a great ensemble play. Moreover, it’s a coming-of-age story about a young man growing into tremendous responsibilities, which speaks to young people.



An exhortation from the king.

Instead of reading the play as a student might in English class, the cast delves into the play scene by scene, even speech by speech. The directors bring dictionaries and Shakespeare lexicons so that the students can look up unfamiliar words. In this way they can paraphrase their lines for understanding, not only the sense but the feelings underlying

them. Then comes the hard part: memorizing the lines.

During this eight-week period, Mr. Coleman leads four master classes in which students from all participating schools come together for training in stage combat, movement and dance, technical theater, and performance. It’s in the master classes, Ms. Maggio says, when students from different schools meet, compare notes, make friends, and, in the way of high school, develop crushes.

The final Festival performances at the Tina Packer Playhouse is “a mob scene,” says Ms. Maggio. “So many kids! It’s like a rock concert! At Mount Everett, I’ll see an upperclassman holding a seventh grader’s hand and leading him through the mob of ninth through twelfth to show him to the bathroom... *that’s* what I love.”

To Ms. Maggio’s mind, the Festival’s biggest impact is the way it builds community. “Every rehearsal begins with a check-in,” she says, “where every student says how they’re doing in that moment, and at the end of rehearsal we do a “reinforcement,” where we say something intentionally positive about our experience together that day.” It is after a return to Mount Everett and during a final “reinforcement,” that the most insightful observations emerge. “They are so *caring* for each other,” says Ms. Maggio. “I mean, last year one of my older students said to the younger ones, ‘If you guys have something you want to talk about, or if you’re feeling sad, if you’re struggling with something, come find me.’ I just love that.” □

THE LOG

Police Department (selected entries)

- Oct. 1 4:00 p.m. The Department assists in procuring a tow for a vehicle that has run off Canaan Southfield Road.
- Oct. 3 11:58 a.m. A Southfield resident reports that a three-foot iguana has been found in a field on her property by a farmer mowing the field.
- Oct. 4 2:28 p.m. A Mill River resident reports a scam call requesting a fee to receive a Publisher's Clearing House award of \$4 million.
- Oct. 6 2:45 p.m. Spectrum is notified after a caller reports wires down on Alum Hill Road.
- Oct 7 3:19 p.m. A resident reports an intruder at his Southfield property.
- Oct. 8 10:17 p.m. An officer removes a downed tree on Canaan Southfield Road.
- Oct. 12 8:41 a.m. A Clayton resident reports that the glass door at the rear of a guest house has been shattered either by a stray bullet or a rock.
- Oct. 15 1:30 p.m. An officer assists in getting help with a vehicle disabled on Clayton Mill River Road.
- 2:01 p.m. National Grid is alerted to a tree on wires on Campbell Falls Road.
- Oct. 16 11:47 a.m. A New Marlborough village resident is advised to inform the Federal Trade Commission of a scam call asking for repayment of a non-existent Small Business Administration loan.
- 6:29 p.m. An officer instructs a Clayton resident to extinguish an illegal outside fire.
- Oct. 18 12:53 p.m. An officer investigates a Mill River mailbox damaged apparently by a passing vehicle.
- Oct. 20 1:48 p.m. An officer investigates an apparent trespass on a Mill River property.
- Oct. 21 10:34 a.m. An officer, investigating a vehicle parked to the side of Stone Manor Drive, determines that the driver was simply programming his GPS.
- 9:51 p.m. The Department is alerted to a tree down and blocking Hartsville New Marlborough Road.
- Oct. 23 6:32 p.m. A motorist reports hitting a deer on South Sandisfield Road.
- Oct. 24 12:20 p.m. Two hikers lost in the woods off South Sandisfield Road call for assistance.
- Oct. 25 7:47 p.m. A caller reports a trespasser on her Southfield property.
- Oct. 26 3:25 p.m. Following up on a report of a possibly disabled person lying in the woods off Mill River Great Barrington Road, an officer discovers discarded clothing.
- Oct. 29 1:52 a.m. An officer investigates a truck parked in the mile-long cornfield on Clayton Mill River Road.
- Oct. 30 10:26 a.m. A caller reports a cow loose on South Sandisfield Road.

Graham Frank, Chief of Police



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FIRE AND RESCUE

Oct. 2	5:23 p.m.	Clayton Mill River Road CO Alarm	Oct. 24	11:04 a.m.	New Marlborough Sandisfield Center Road MVA
Oct. 5	3:29 p.m.	Hartsville New Marlborough Road Medical Call	Oct. 24	12:20 p.m.	New Marlborough South Sandisfield Road Hiker Assistance
Oct. 7	12:30 p.m.	Mutual Aid to Monterey Medical Call	Oct. 27	12:22 a.m.	Hartsville New Marlborough Road Medical Call
Oct. 8	2:11 p.m.	South Sandisfield Road Medical Call	Oct. 29	12:55 p.m.	Clayton Mill River Road Shed Fire
Oct. 14	6:20 a.m.	Rhoades and Bailey Road Smoke in Building	5:45 p.m.	Hartsville Mill River Road Fire Alarm	
Oct. 20	1:13 p.m.	Mutual Aid to Great Barrington Medical Call	Oct. 31	8:13 a.m.	Hartsville New Marlborough Road Medical Call
Oct. 20	5:40 p.m.	Mutual Aid to Sandisfield Medical Call			
Oct. 21	2:57 p.m.	Mill River Great Barrington Road Fire Alarm			



On Fire Prevention Day, October 13, Firefighters Jon James, Rob Scott, Brittney Lane, and Campbell Ingersoll, and Firefighter/EMT Kevin Brown visited New Marlborough Central School and met with students in pre-kindergarten through third grade, sharing information on fire safety, 911, and the importance of working smoke detectors and having an escape plan and meeting space in the event of an emergency.

Students practiced stop-drop-and-roll, examined firefighter gear, and got to meet firefighters wearing the gear. They finished their sessions with a tour of Engine 1 and Rescue 1—and asked tons of great questions.

(If you have questions about 911 numbers or smoke/CO detectors, reach out to NMF&R at 229-8100. In case of emergency, dial 911.)

Heating Season Reminders: Please be sure to have your chimneys and all wood-burning stoves cleaned and inspected.

- Most chimney fires occur because of a build-up of creosote, a tarry by-product of burning wood. Have your chimney flue cleaned before each heating season, and burn only dry, well-seasoned, hardwood to reduce creosote accumulation.
- Check that the damper is open before lighting the fire. A closed damper will result in an accumulation of smoke and carbon monoxide in the home. Do not close the damper until the fire is out and the embers are cold.
- Do not use flammable liquids to start a fire.
- Never leave children unattended near the stove.
- Use a fireplace screen to prevent flying sparks and embers from falling out on to the floor.
- Ashes that are cleaned from a stove or fireplace should be shoveled into a metal bucket with a metal lid and placed on ground away from the building. Do not store the ashes on a deck or a porch, inside a garage, in a cardboard box or a plastic container. A live ember can continue to smolder unnoticed for quite some time.
- Install smoke and carbon monoxide alarms. Both types of alarms are required by law in Massachusetts. Problems with heating systems are the number one source of carbon monoxide in homes. □



Fire Company President David Smith

HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT NEWS

As you travel through New Marlborough, you probably do not realize that you are constantly passing over culverts, the tunnels beneath roadways used to direct water flow from one side to the other. In fact, New Marlborough has more than a thousand of them. Since twigs, rocks, and mud tend to collect within them, they require constant attention. The Highway crew had a busy season removing this debris. It is a messy, time-consuming task, but essential for maintaining proper road drainage.

The Department has also been busy installing new drainage systems. This year, we tackled Foley Hill Road, a steep gravel road that has required costly maintenance to address wash-outs after heavy rain. A new drainage system was installed, consisting of culverts and catch basins, and so far, Foley Hill Road has held up.

It was part of a very productive year for the Highway Department. As part of the pavement management process, a top coat was applied to sections of Mill River Great Barrington Road and Adsit Crosby Road. Additionally, the entire length of Knight Road underwent a full depth reclamation and resurface. Due to successful past applications, we once again used an asphalt rubber surface treatment on Knight Road, Hatchery Road, Hartsville Mill River Road, Adsit Crosby Road, and Mill River Great Barrington Road. This combination of hot liquid asphalt and recycled tire pieces is expected to extend the life of these roads for eight to ten years.

Route 57 in New Marlborough is finally complete. We utilized a \$1 million grant from the state to complete the five-year plan. Drainage was installed this summer and the highway was reclaimed and resurfaced.

We are excited to announce that the Town received a \$25,000 grant from the Municipal Small Bridge Program. Funds will be spent to restore and repair our

1820's era stone arch bridge on Campbell Falls Road. Design and engineering is phase one. After the first phase is complete the restoration and repair phase will begin. This bridge is a hidden gem on Campbell Falls Road and one of last, still-functioning stone arch bridges in Berkshire County. After a little TLC, we expect it to be restored to its original glory. Thanks to The New Marlborough Historical Society, Town Manager Mari Enoch, and Highway Office Manager Laura Worth for working together to make this possible.

With five highway workers, one working foreman, and the superintendent, the Highway Department is geared up for whatever this winter brings. We will provide reasonable snow and ice control to public roads and properties. Our highest concern will continue to be personal safety, environmental protection, and cost. Please use common sense and recognize that you are traveling at your own risk in inclement weather. With close to ninety miles of road to maintain, we ask for your patience and cooperation.

On school days, bus routes take priority. After the paved roads are plowed, unpaved roads are addressed. During a rain storm, when road temperatures drop below 32°F, unpaved roads ice over almost instantly, and the sand that is applied quickly freezes. We will treat roads during a storm and right after the storm passes, but please be aware that it is almost impossible to keep unpaved roads passable at all times.

The Town provides sand for residents to use on their own property (no contractors, please). Sand is located under the shed on the left upon entering the highway yard at 603 Mill River Southfield Road in Mill River village. Please look for the posted sign. We ask that you take no more than two buckets at a time. Highway workers do their best to avoid damaging private property when plowing. Anything in the Town's right-of-way (mailboxes, fences, signs, etc.) is placed there at the owner's risk. Mailboxes should be placed as far from

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the road as possible. Creating an apron where the mail carrier can pull off the road to make deliveries is ideal. Because roads vary in condition, please use your best judgment and understand that the Town does not reimburse for property damaged by snowplows. Privately owned installations should be inspected regularly to insure that they are secured properly and that posts have not rotted.

Please review the following guidelines:

- Use common sense and refrain, when possible, from driving during a snowstorm.
- Reduce your speed and drive cautiously.
- Avoid distractions. Massachusetts law prohibits motor vehicle operators from using electronic devices while driving, unless the device is used in hands-free mode.
- Contrary to what your tire dealer or local garage may tell you, all-season tires work that work well in the

southern states are not the best choice during winter months in New England. There is no substitute for good quality snow tires. Studded snow tires are recommended if you travel on unpaved roads. We are responsible for the roads, not for your poor tires and bad driving.

- Do not park your vehicle on any road or property that is maintained by the Town. Vehicles parked in driveways should be far enough off the road to allow plow trucks to pass safely.
- Plowing or blowing snow into Town roads is illegal and dangerous. Please find proper means to dispose of snow on your property. Violators can be ticketed by the police.
- Tune in to local weather forecasts and pay attention to changing conditions.

Please drive carefully. □

Charles Loring
New Marlborough Highway Superintendent

THE FAILING YORK LAKE DAM

The past season's visitors to York Lake should be forgiven if they were alarmed by the parlous condition of the dam at the southern end of the lake. Its failing parapet indicates that the integrity of the dam itself may be questionable. Ilyse Wolberg, a spokesperson for the state Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR), which maintains York Lake and the surrounding Sandisfield State Forest, indicates there is reason for concern. The dam, she writes, "is a Significant Hazard Potential Dam in Poor Condition. It is currently under a design contract to construct repairs that when complete would bring it into compliance with dam safety regulations."

DCR is on the case. "Until repairs are completed, Ms. Wolberg adds, the Office of Dam Safety (ODS) has a frequent monitoring plan in place, as well as an Emergency Action Plan prepared." As of this writing, however, a sense of urgency seems to be lacking. "ODS anticipates construction to take place within the next several years," writes Ms. Wolberg. "Once started, the construction timeline will be approximately 12 months."

The lake, named for Samuel A. York, commissioner of the state's Department of Conservation from 1933 to '35, was built by the the Civilian Conservation Corps and completed in March 1934. Four years later



A guard rail on the roadway over the York Lake dam is failing.

photo by Larry Burke

it was assaulted by the hurricane of 1938 and required repairs. In 1955, following a battering by Hurricane Diane, the dam was rebuilt. According to Ms. Wolberg, it required additional repairs in the 1990s.

Even when repair is underway, the Lake will continue to welcome swimmers. "ODS," writes Ms. Wolberg, "does not anticipate needing to close the park to complete construction." Could the dam fail in the meantime, flooding residents on Sandy Brook, downstream of York Lake? Let's put our faith in the Emergency Action Plan and worry about something else — for instance, global warming. □

Joe Poindexter

RECIPE OF THE MONTH

On a recent trip to Montreal, our waitress at a Syrian restaurant prodded us to order the Fattoush salad. We were delighted by its exotic and delicious flavors. It isn't often that salad can take center stage at a holiday meal, but this side dish is sure to get applause. Feel free to be creative and add sliced radishes, green and/or red bell pepper, pea shoots, etc. (Aleppo pepper, sumac, za'atar, and pomegranate molasses can be found at Guido's). Enjoy!

Marjorie Shapiro



photo by Barry Shapiro

Pomegranate Fattoush Salad

Ingredients

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1 tsp dried mint | ½ cup yellow bell pepper cut into ½ inch dice |
| ½ tsp flaky Aleppo pepper | 15 fresh mint leaves coarsely chopped |
| 1 tbsp ground sumac | 2 tbsp coarsely chopped flat leaf parsley |
| 3 cups chopped romaine lettuce
(about one head) | ½ cup pomegranate seeds |
| 1 medium tomato, cut into 1 inch dice | 2 crispy spiced pitas, cut into small rectangles
(recipe below) |
| 1 English cucumber, seeded and
cut into ½ inch dice | pomegranate molasses vinaigrette to taste
(recipe below) |

Crispy Spiced Pita

- 2 white pitas
- ½ tsp za'atar
- ½ tsp ground sumac
- Salt and pepper
- 2 tbsp olive oil

Pomegranate Molasses Vinaigrette

- 1 tbsp lemon juice
- 1 tbsp apple cider vinegar
- 1 tbsp pomegranate molasses
- ½ tsp salt
- 2 tsp honey
- ½ cup olive oil

Preparation

- **For the crispy spiced pita:** Cut the pita into small bite-size pieces. Heat 3 tbsp olive oil in a large pan until shimmering. Add the pita bread. Fry briefly until browned, tossing frequently. Using a slotted spoon, transfer the fried pita chips to a plate lined with paper towel to drain. Season with za-atar, salt, pepper, and sumac.
- **For the pomegranate molasses vinaigrette:** In a bowl, combine all the ingredients for the vinaigrette except the oil. Slowly whisk in the oil.
- **For the Fattoush salad:** Place all the Fattoush ingredients in a large bowl. Reserve a few mint leaves. To serve, add the vinaigrette, the crisp spiced pita pieces, and mix. Top with the mint leaves.





The New Marlborough Library's Halloween Spooktacular was a huge success! Over 200 people attended the event. The weather was perfect and the moon was full, lighting the way for our hayride and spooky trail walk. We were joined by Big Elm Brewery and a had tasty feast provided by Ginny Dawson of The Two Sisters. Our storyteller John Porcino mesmerized the audience by the light of our bonfire.



photos by Deb O'Brien and Terry Lush

THE NEW MARLBOROUGH PUBLIC LIBRARY

NEW ACQUISITIONS

Adult Fiction

Absolution, by Alice McDermott

Day, by Michael Cunningham

The Enchanters, by James Ellroy

Exchange: After the Firm, by John Grisham

Because I Loved You, by Donaldson Brown

Resurrection Walk, by Michael Connelly

Spy Coast, by Tess Gerritsen

Adult Nonfiction

*The Oceans and the Stars: a Sea Story, a War Story,
a Love Story*, by Mark Helprin

*Most Costly Journey: Stories of Migrant Farmworkers in Vermont,
drawn by New England Cartoonists*, by Marek Bennett

Children's Fiction

Every Dreaming Creature, by Brendan Wenzel

Are You Mad at Me?, by Tyler Feder

Lawrence & Sophia, by Doreen Cronin

The Most Magnificent Thing, by Ashley Spires



LIBRARY HOURS

Mon. Wed. Sat. 10:00 am – 5:30 pm

Tues. / Fri. 1:30 pm – 7:30 pm

Thurs. 1:30 pm – 5:30 pm

229-6668



Friends of the Library Raffle

An Ann Getsinger 40" x 30" Giclee Print

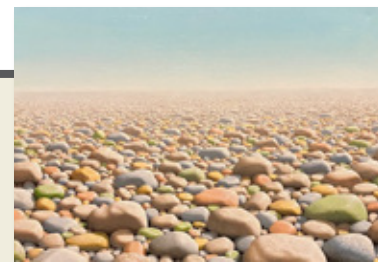
Printed by M. Craft, Norfolk, Connecticut, from an original Getsinger oil; retail value: \$175. Tickets, \$10 each or three for \$25, are available at the Library.

The drawing will be held at the Library on December 21 at 3:00 p.m.

KEN OTSUKA OPENING RECEPTION New Marlborough Library's Art Exhibit

I have come to believe that time does not exist where no change occurs and that nature's constantly changing cycles allow time to exist. When this time exists beyond the scope of our feeling and recognition, we tend to call it "timelessness." Rocks, sand, and water became my symbolic subjects for timelessness, and trees (and leaves) and seashells as symbols of "change" or ephemeral existence. I would like to create peace, serenity, and meditative space in my art through timelessness.

— Ken Otsuka



**New Marlborough Library's
December Art Exhibit**
Please join us
for an opening reception
December 3
from 1:00 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Please fill in the form and send with your contribution to:
 New Marlborough 5 Village News
 P.O. Box 243, Southfield, MA 01259

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

Board of Selectmen: Every Monday at 6:00 p.m.
Town Administrator: Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, 8:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.
Planning Board: May - August, 2nd Wednesday at 6:00 p.m.
 September - April, 2nd and 4th Wednesdays
Board of Health: First Tuesday of the month at 7:00 p.m.
Conservation Commission: Third Thursday of the month at 5:00 p.m. or Zoom
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: By appointment only; call 413-229-0277
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) 229-6003
 Window hours: Monday - Friday 11:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.
 Saturday 9:00 - 11:30 a.m.
Southfield (413) 229-8476
 Window hours: Monday - Friday 9:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. and 1:30 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.
 Saturday 9:00 - 12:00 p.m.
Town Treasurer: Monday and Tuesday, 8:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.
Tax Collector: Monday 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m., Tues. and Thurs. 8:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.
Selectmen's Administrative Secretary: Monday - Friday 9:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.
Animal Control Officer: Graham Frank, (413) 229-8161
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

Transfer Station Hours:

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

PERMITS ARE DUE JULY 1

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www.newmarlborough.gov.
 Please enclose a self-addressed,
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 without a permit after August 15

Emergency calls:

Police, Fire, Medical
911

New Marlborough Highway Department

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

We welcome advertisements from businesses owned by New Marlborough residents. Call Barbara Lowman: 229-2369

NM5VN Editorial Team

Joe Poindexter, issue editor; Diane Barth, designer;
 Maria Black, Martha Bryan, Jane Burke, Larry Burke,
 Kenzie Fields, Shawn Fields, Robbi Hartt, Ruben Kier,
 Barbara Lowman, Zoë Kogan, Barry Shapiro,
 Marjorie Shapiro, Rachel Perera Weingeist

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New Marlborough 5 Village News

appears monthly,
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www.nm5vn.org

The next issue will be dated January 2024.
 All copy must be submitted no later than December 17.
 For advertising, contact Barbara Lowman,
 tel: 229-2369 PO Box 243, Southfield, MA 01259
5villagenews@gmail.com

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